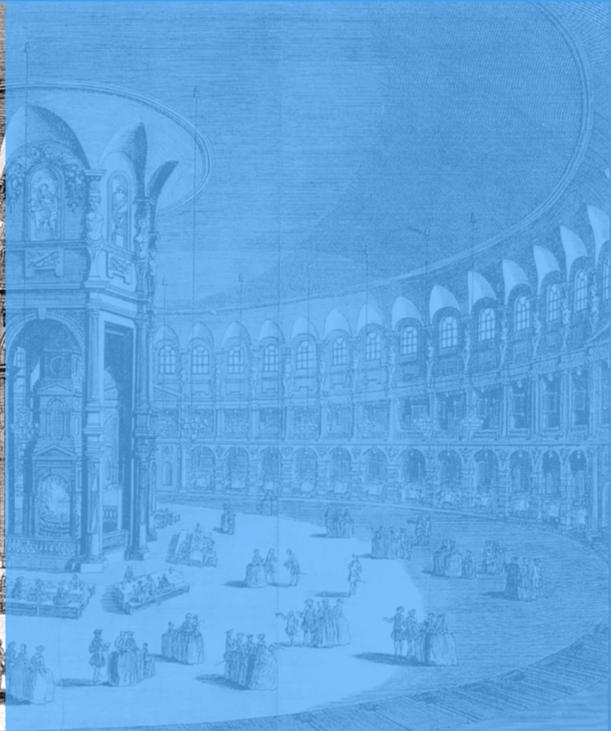
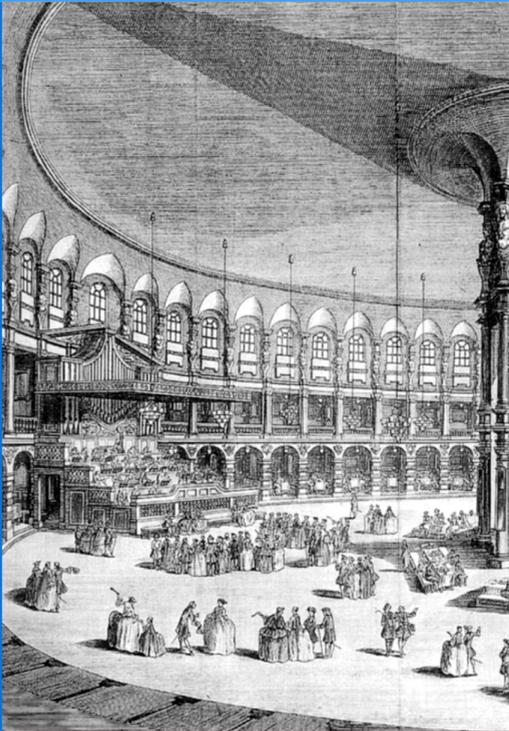


Jürgen Schaarwächter

**Two Centuries of British Symphonism
From the beginnings to 1945**



Olms

Vol. I

Jürgen Schaarwächter · Two Centuries of British Symphonism I

Jürgen Schaarwächter

Two Centuries of British Symphonism

From the beginnings to 1945

A preliminary survey

With a foreword by Lewis Foreman

Volume I



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The inside of the Rotunda in Ranelagh Gardens, engraving after Canaletto, 1754.

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‘Yes, there *are* British symphonies.’

(Josef Holbrooke, *Contemporary British Composers*, London 1925, p. 321.)

For Gerd

Contents

Volume I

Foreword, by Lewis Foreman	ix
Preliminary note and acknowledgements	xi
Abbreviations	xix

Part I: Creating an identity

1. British symphonies? An introduction.....	3
a) The reception of the British symphony. Comparison with the evolution of the creation of symphonies on the European continent.....	3
b) On the choice of subject and material. Definition of terms and methodological considerations. What makes a composer British?.....	8
2. Early beginnings in the eighteenth century	19
a) From Arne to Clementi: London and international influences	21
b) Provincial musical life.....	61
3. 'Post-Classical' symphonism, with special emphasis on the Royal Academy of Music. First inklings of a British Musical renaissance	81
4. The influence of the 'great German tradition' and the foundation of the Royal College of Music.....	163
5. Brian, Harty, Elgar and the end of the Victorian era.....	273

Part II: Uniqueness in diversity

6. Traditional form and expansion of the 'academically feasible'	355
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a) Traditionalists. Works by teachers and pupils	357
b) Attempts of expansion	417
c) Sibelius's reception in Great Britain	447
7. The programme symphony after 1914.....	487
a) 'Exotic' subjects. Irish, Celtic, Scottish, English, Greek, Swiss, South African etc. symphonies.....	490
b) Other 'programmes'	548

Volume II

8. The tradition of the choral symphony, with a few remarks on the solo vocal symphony.....	591
Excursus: Solo vocal symphonies	685
9. New directions of twentieth-century British symphonism in the twenties, thirties and early forties	693
a) Jazz influences and livelier accents	694
b) The teacher Hindemith. 'New simplicity' and the counter-movement against Straussian bombast.....	731
c) Symphonies for strings or brass.....	750
d) Schoenberg, Stravinsky and 'new music'. Stretching of tonality and other progressive techniques. Possibilities for younger generations	761
10. The particularly British in the evolution of the British symphony. Final and summarizing remarks	795

Appendices

I. Alphabetic catalogue of British symphonies up to 1945.....	801
II. Bibliography	1019
List of illustrations	1143
Index.....	1147

Foreword

by Lewis Foreman

For many years we were brought up to believe that there were no significant British symphonies before Elgar. This was always far from the truth. While many earlier works may no longer have been played and were unknown by the mid-1920s and 1930s, it only needed enterprising conductors, the BBC and record companies to explore them for the wider public to appreciate, *in performance*, that here was a large worthwhile repertoire deserving investigation. Bit by bit as recordings have appeared the wider concert and academic public have had to acknowledge that there were many worthwhile British symphonies before Elgar, and of course a remarkable literature of symphonies written after him, starting with Vaughan Williams.

And yet not all the symphonies that we can document from programmes and newspaper reviews have survived. An essential part of such explorations is knowing just what once existed and where surviving scores and performance material may be found. Jürgen Schaarwächter's doctoral thesis *Die britische Sinfonie 1914–1945* (Köln, 1995) is just such an invaluable study. It is good news therefore that he has not only expanded it back to the earliest days, developing it as a narrative history and also producing this English-language edition which it is my pleasure to introduce.

The development of the symphony in England reflects the development and growth of concert life. The impact of Haydn's residence in London in the 1790s and the reception of his 'London' Symphonies was long reflected in their many arrangements for chamber ensembles for home performance by an enthusiastic amateur audience of instrumentalists. The pioneering aristocratic concert-giving organisation, the Philharmonic Society of London, founded in 1813, heard symphonies by William Crotch and Lord Burghersh in its early years. For much of the nineteenth century the over-reaching model and inspiration was Beethoven, and Cipriani Potter who was an early champion of piano concerti by Mozart and Beethoven was soon known as a significant early advocate of Beethoven's symphonies when writing his own. We do well to remember that the Philharmonic Society of London did commission Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*.

An increasing number of British composers wrote symphonies during the nineteenth century. After Haydn and Beethoven, British symphonies were successively modelled on Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms, sometimes within a short time of their inspiration being first heard by a London audience. However, only a very few of these had any staying power over time but a few did become repertoire works at the time and Sir William Sterndale Bennett's late Symphony in G minor, Op 43 (1864-7) was the first British symphony to find a regular place in the repertoire until well into the twentieth century. Later came Parry and Stanford, and in the early twentieth century a growing number of young composer. Now when these works are revisited in performance we find that they fully deserve revival in their own right.

What is true is that the power of Elgar's First Symphony in 1908 did much to eclipse those of his predecessors at the time. Soon afterwards Vaughan Williams established a major place with his *London Symphony* and was followed by Bax, Bliss, Walton, Moeran, Rubbra and with them a generation of lesser names yet all with something individual to say. It has been left to a much later generation of enthusiasts to explore what was actually written and evaluate it. And, as Schaarwächter's researches demonstrate, the full story is still being unearthed. There are discoveries for future performance to be made in these pages and the author's relentless appetite for unearthing archives and collections has ensured that many works that are just names in catalogues can now at least be seen and heard.

It is curious that at various points in this story the symphony was repudiated as an outdated form and yet it continued to prosper. Notable symphonies by, particularly, Russian, American and French composers of the mid-Twentieth century have kept the form of the symphony before an international public, and symphonies have continued to be written across the world. This creativity is notable in the UK. In bringing the story up to date Schaarwächter reminds us of the continuing vitality of that very fruitful and expressive musical construct the symphony, and now seeing the twentieth century as a whole he makes one of the first published attempts to survey the full span of British creativity in this time. The outcome is startlingly large. To have revealed such an amazingly extensive creativity makes it a valuable study indeed. Even where many of these substantial scores have been forgotten, to know of their existence and history is but a step to renewed assessment in performance and on recordings. Schaarwächter's reward will surely be renewed interest in this whole repertoire, as interested listeners want to explore further, with many delightful scores still to be discovered by a wider audience.

Preliminary note and acknowledgements

When I prepared the German version of a portion of this book (*Die britische Sinfonie 1914–1945*) as part of my Ph.D. thesis (submitted to the Universität zu Köln in 1995), I not infrequently encountered irritation, even disapproval and I was even treated with contempt for the choice of topic.¹ British music, music from a ‘land without music’? Was there such a thing as symphonies in Great Britain, and if so, were they any good? Had they been one-day wonders, and if so, why? And if not, why had they failed to attain even this status? In addition to this scepticism, which was of course to some extent rooted in Carl Dahlhaus’ view that the period between Beethoven and Brahms was a ‘dead time’ of the symphony in general, a view which has meanwhile been largely overcome,² in Germany the published version of my thesis³ received some not entirely favourable reviews due to its encyclopaedic approach, although one reviewer spoke of a ‘new reference publication’⁴ and another of a ‘comprehensive survey’.⁵ In Germany, such ‘guides to research’ are typically either ignored or strongly criticized, since it is usually felt that individual works are not treated in sufficient detail. I am bound to agree with them, but studies focussing on single works often do not only fail to mention the context of the works, but usually show an appalling ignorance of the ‘contextualising’ music in general. I was therefore all the more surprised and delighted to see that the few reviews published in the United Kingdom (to that date the book was available only in German; though, as Julian Rushton stressed, it contained plenty of quotes in English, making it equally readable for non-German readers) were full of praise. One reviewer even heralded the book as ‘quite simply the most important book on British music to have been published in years’.⁶ In other words, the attribute that was complained about in Germany was praised in England. In fact, the dissertation – along with extracts

1 All the more am I grateful to my doctoral supervisor Professor Dr. Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller for accepting the topic and accompanying the growing of the thesis benignly.

2 Cf. Wolfram Steinbeck/Christoph von Blumröder, *Die Symphonie im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, 2 vols., Laaber 2002 (Handbuch der musikalischen Gattungen, 3).

3 Verlag Dohr, Köln, 1995.

4 Christoph Schlüren, review of *Die britische Sinfonie 1914–1945*, in: *FonoForum* 42/6 (1997), p. 26.

5 Lewis Foreman, ‘The British Symphony in Wartime: Musical Responses to 1939–1945’, in: *Bms news* 70 (1996), p. 230.

6 Martin Anderson, review of *Die britische Sinfonie 1914–1945*, in: *Tempo* 50/197 (1996), p. 38.

published in English (largely in the *British Music Society Newsletter*) – generated quite a stir, demonstrating not only the vivid interest in the subject, but also leading to the revival of numerous works I had rediscovered, both on CD and in concert and by reprinting original scores.⁷ This is certainly more than many Ph.D. theses are able to accomplish. In addition, the book sparked new research in a field that had hitherto been largely unploughed. That my thesis was subsequently awarded the Offermann-Hergarten Foundation Prize in 1996 shows that at least in some sections its importance had been understood; and it may also not be too surprising that some comparable publications have since been published on German, Polish and Italian symphonism respectively.⁸ Also was I invited to write entries for several dictionaries of music, including the two most important ones, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edition, 2001), and *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (2nd edition, contributions 2002-06). After Stephen Banfield had published his epoch-making study on English song as early as 1985,⁹ some studies at least on some genres of British music have since been published, amongst them piano sonatas, oratorios, opera, and light music.¹⁰

Since its original publication in 1995, additional research by myself and others, notably the most influential authority on British orchestral music, Dr. Lewis Foreman, has led to the rediscovery of several further works of the period 1914-45. In 1997-99 I was able to obtain a research grant from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation) to continue my research on British symphonies. In addition to this boon, Professor Dr. Stephen Banfield, then Elgar Professor at Birmingham University (later CHOMBEC, University of Bristol), recommended me for an Honorary Research Fellowship, which I held from 1997 to 1998. Since there were already several research projects on post-Second World War British symphonism in progress at that time (none of which has culminated in an actual publication to date), I decided to devote myself to the symphonism prior to the First World War. In fact, because both literature on the topic and the material regarding

7 For several of these scores, published by the Musikproduktion Höflich of München, I was commissioned to write scholarly introductions.

8 Matthias Wiegandt, *Vergessene Symphonik? Studien zu Joachim Raff, Carl Reinecke und zum Problem der Epigonalität in der Musik*, Ph.D. dissertation Freiburg 1995, Sinzig 1997 (Berliner Musik-Studien, 13); Rebecca Grothjahn, *Die Sinfonie im deutschen Kulturgebiet 1850 bis 1875. Ein Beitrag zur Gattungs- und Institutionengeschichte*, Ph.D. dissertation Hannover 1997, Sinzig 1998 (Musik und Musikabnschauung im 19. Jahrhundert, 7); Stefan Keym, *Symphonie-Kulturtransfer. Untersuchungen zum Studienaufenthalt polnischer Komponisten in Deutschland und zu ihrer Auseinandersetzung mit der symphonischen Tradition 1867–1918*, professorial dissertation, Leipzig 2008, Hildesheim 2010 (Studien und Materialien zur Musikwissenschaft, 56); Stefan König, *Die Sinfonie in Italien 1900 bis 1945: Werke, Rezeption, Quellen*, Ph.D. dissertation, Marburg 2006, München/Salzburg 2011 (Musikwissenschaftliche Schriften, 46).

9 Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility and English Song: Critical Studies of the Early 20th Century*, Cambridge/New York/New Rochelle/Melbourne/Sydney 1985.

10 Eric Walter White, *A History of English Opera*, London 1983; Barbara Mohn, *Das englische Oratorium im 19. Jahrhundert: Quellen, Traditionen, Entwicklungen*, Ph.D. dissertation, Bonn 1999, Paderborn/München/Wien/Zürich 2000 (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Musik, 9); Lisa Hardy, *The British Piano Sonata, 1870–1945*, Woodbridge (Suffolk)/Rochester (New York) 2001; Geoffrey Self, *Light Music in Britain since 1870: A Survey*, Aldershot (Hampshire)/Burlington (Vermont)/Singapore/Sydney 2001; Paul Rodmell, *Opera in the British Isles, 1875–1918*, Farnham (Surrey)/Burlington 2013. This list is not intended to be complete.

scores etc. appeared less extensive than that available on the inter-war period, I dared to approach British symphonies from their very beginnings in the eighteenth century all the way up to 1914. It soon became clear that also a huge number of works from this period had been unjustly forgotten, and when I showed my list of British symphonies to Lewis Foreman, my research again spurred numerous first recordings of 'lost' works. I began giving lectures regularly and became involved in several composers' societies, especially in the Havergal Brian Society (for which I became European Representative in 1998), and later (in 2001) also in the British Music Society and the Robert Simpson Society; for the British Music Society, I now act as German Representative, and for the Robert Simpson Society, I am publishing the annual periodical *Tonic* and in 2007 have been elected chairman.

Of course, projects of this magnitude would not be possible without the help and encouragement from myriad individuals, and the assistance and support of the most diverse kind – those who claim otherwise simply do not acknowledge their sources and quite frankly smack of ingratitude. I am extremely grateful to all those I have had the pleasure of meeting or having contact with since I started my research on British music late in 1990; by the age of twenty-three, I knew I could not do without British music. One daren't forget the financial side of the equation, either – how many people are fortunate enough to be able to spend several months entirely devoted to research following their Ph.D. examinations? This kind of freedom is a luxury usually reserved for either extremely wealthy people or (occasionally) university professors. Help and assistance can take the most diverse forms, from providing answers to purely factual questions or offering stand-alone suggestions. This assistance opened up completely new names, works and areas of research, and even led to the access of musical material (which proved to be quite complicated at times). How often have I received an email asking whether I knew this or that work? Thank you, dear friends. The library staffs of the different institutions in Great Britain and Germany have been a tremendous help to me and are particularly deserving cordial thanks. I am exceedingly grateful for the financial support furnished not only by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service), the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes (Research Foundation of the German Public) and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation), from whom I received research grants, as well as for the prize money supplied by the Offermann-Hergarten Foundation which completely went into further research. My family, above all my grandmother (who out of modesty refused to accept the dedication of the German version) and my parents (the dedicatees of the German version) generously gave much more than mere financial support. A very special thank-you also goes out to all those who have invited me for either a highly interesting afternoon or evening or even a longer stay, among the latter especially to Professor Dr. Stephen Banfield, Dr. Morag Chisholm, Dr. Lewis Foreman, Professor Michael Hurd† and Professor Dr. Lionel Pike. Virtually hundreds of people have fielded larger or smaller enquiries of mine, from relatives of composers, composers themselves (I had the luck to make contact with the late Alan

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Abbreviations

Journal citations are abbreviated only in the footnotes of the main text; in the main text itself and in the bibliography, they are written out in full.

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission
Add. MS	Additional Manuscript (the British Library, Manuscripts Collection)
B.B.C.	British Broadcasting Corporation, London (BBC abbreviated nowadays)
BL	British Library, London
<i>BM</i>	<i>British Music, journal of the British Music Society</i> and <i>British Music Society Journal</i>
BMS/bms	British Music Society
C.U.M.S.	Cambridge University Musical Society
d.n.	<i>datum nescio</i> (date of publication unknown)
<i>DT</i>	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>
(ed.), (eds.)	(editor/s)
Ex.	Music example
<i>Grove6</i>	Stanley Sadie (ed.), <i>The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians</i>
i.p.	Publication in preparation
I.S.C.M.	International Society of Contemporary Music
l.n.	<i>locum nescio</i> (place of publication unknown)
LoC	Library of Congress, Washington (D.C.)
<i>M&L</i>	<i>Music & Letters</i>
<i>M&M</i>	<i>Music and Musicians</i>
<i>MB</i>	<i>The Music Bulletin</i>
<i>MG</i>	<i>The (Manchester) Guardian</i>
min.	minutes
<i>MM</i>	<i>The Musical Mirror (and Fanfare)</i>
<i>MMR</i>	<i>The Monthly Musical Record</i>
<i>MO</i>	<i>Musical Opinion (and Music Trade Review)</i>
<i>MQ</i>	<i>The Musical Quarterly</i>
<i>MR</i>	<i>The Music Review</i>
MS Add.	Additional Manuscript (Cambridge University Library)
MSS	Manuscripts

<i>MT</i>	<i>The Musical Times</i>
<i>NEW</i>	<i>The New English Weekly</i>
n.n.	<i>nomen nescio</i> (author's name unknown)
<i>NZfM</i>	<i>Neue Zeitschrift für Musik</i>
<i>O&C</i>	<i>The Organist and Choirmaster</i>
<i>ÖMZ</i>	<i>Österreichische Musikzeitschrift</i>
<i>PRMA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the (Royal) Musical Association</i>
<i>RAM</i>	Royal Academy of Music, London
<i>RCM</i>	Royal College of Music, London
<i>RCMM</i>	<i>The R·C·M Magazine</i>
<i>RPO</i>	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
<i>SABC</i>	South African Broadcasting Corporation
<i>SJCC</i>	St. John's College, Cambridge
<i>ST</i>	<i>The Sunday Times</i>

Part I

Creating an identity

1. British symphonies? An introduction

‘The term συμφωνία was used by the Greeks, first, to denote concord in general, whether in successive or simultaneous sounds ...’¹

a) The reception of the British symphony. Comparison with the evolution of the creation of symphonies on the European continent

In Great Britain very much more so than in any other country on earth, composers have devoted themselves to writing about other contemporary or late composers. This is not surprising, given the strongly musicological/historical bias of their musical education, especially at the conservatories and universities. There are no independent musicological institutes; these are usually incorporated into the faculties of music. Hubert Parry wrote a book on Bach;² Robert Simpson on Sibelius, Nielsen and Bruckner;³ Julius Harrison on Brahms;⁴ Frederick Corder on Wagner;⁵ R. O. Morris on Renaissance counterpoint;⁶ Alan Bush on Palestrina counterpoint;⁷ Peter Dickinson on Lennox Berkeley;⁸ Peter Warlock on Gesualdo;⁹ Norman Demuth on Ravel, Roussel, Dukas, Gounod and Franck;¹⁰ Thomas Dunhill on Elgar and Sullivan,¹¹ etc.; this list does not include the countless articles written about compatriot fellow-composers. On the European continent, this sort of interest in

1 Donald Francis Tovey, *The Forms of Music*, New York ²1956, p. 238.

2 Hubert Parry, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, London ⁸1946.

3 Robert Simpson, *The essence of Bruckner*, London 1967; Robert Simpson, *Sibelius and Nielsen*, London 1965.

4 Julius Harrison, *Brahms and his Four Symphonies*, London 1939.

5 Frederick Corder, *Wagner*, London 1922; Frederick Corder, *Wagner and his Music*, London/Edinburgh 1912.

6 Reginald Owen Morris, *Contrapuntal Technique in the Sixteenth Century*, London etc. 1922.

7 Alan Bush, *Strict Counterpoint in Palestrina Style*, London 1948.

8 Peter Dickinson, *The music of Lennox Berkeley*, London 1988.

9 Peter Warlock, *Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa: Musician and Murderer*, London 1926.

10 Norman Demuth, *Albert Roussel*, London 1947; Norman Demuth, *Ravel*, London 1947; Norman Demuth, *César Franck*, London 1949; Norman Demuth, *Paul Dukas*, London 1949; Norman Demuth, *Gounod*, London 1951.

11 Thomas Dunhill, *Sir Edward Elgar*, London/Glasgow 1938; Thomas Dunhill, *Sullivan's Comic Operas*, London 1928.

other composers is shown only by a handful of composer-writers such as by Pierre Boulez and Dieter Schnebel; other books, such as those by Claude Debussy, Hans Werner Henze etc., illuminate more their own points of view or are largely anecdotal. Publications of this kind also exist in considerable number in Great Britain.

Up into the 1920s,¹² musicologists often endeavoured to survey the British musical situation appropriately; in the early 1930s, the study of British music began to decline. Numerous authors since then take Great Britain only cursorily into account, or only up to the eighteenth century at the latest, and issue judgments which exude unambiguous ignorance of the matter.¹³ Instrumental music of the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries are still hardly addressed in Great Britain at all; the most important contributions

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- 12 Henry Davey, *History of English Music*, London 1895, ²1921; Arthur Elson, *Modern Composers of Europe*, Boston 1904, ²1907; Frederick Niecks, *Programme Music in the Last four centuries*, London/New York 1906; Georges Jean-Aubry, *La Musique et les Nations*, Paris/London 1922; Adolf Weißmann, *Die Musik in der Weltkrise*, Berlin/Leipzig 1922, ²1925; Edward Dent, 'Moderne: Engländer', in Guido Adler (ed.), *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, 1924, vol. 2, Tutzing ³1961, pp. 1044–1057.
- 13 Hermann Klein, *Thirty Years of Musical Life in London, 1870–1900*, London 1903; Camille Maclair, *Histoire de la Musique Européenne, 1850–1914*, Paris 1914; William Henry Hadow, *The Viennese Period. The Oxford History of Music, V*, Oxford/London 1931; Edward Dannreuther, *The Romantic Period. The Oxford History of Music, VI*, Oxford/London 1931; Percy Young, *Pageant of England's Music*, Cambridge 1939; Paul Schweser, *Das Konzertbuch (Sinfonische Werke)*, Stuttgart ³1940; David Ewen, *The Complete Book of 20th Century Music*, New York 1952, ²1953; Kurt Blaukopf (ed.), *Lexikon der Symphonie*, Köln 1952; Otto Schumann, *Handbuch der Orchestermusik*, Wilhelmshaven ⁴1954; Homer Ulrich, *Symphonic Music*, New York ²1955; Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music*, London etc. 1959, ³1989; Donald Jay Grout, *A History of Western Music*, London 1962; E. D. Mackerness, *A Social History of English Music*, London/Toronto 1964; Rudolf Kloiber, *Handbuch der klassischen und romantischen Symphonie*, Wiesbaden 1964, ²1976; William Austin, *Music in the 20th Century from Debussy through Stravinsky*, London 1966; Peter Yates, *Twentieth Century Music*, New York 1967; Wilfrid Mellers, *Caliban Reborn*, New York etc. 1967; Francis Routh, *Contemporary Music*, London 1968; David Ewen, *The World of Twentieth-Century Music*, Englewood Cliffs etc. 1968, London ²1991; Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, *Deutschland und Mitteleuropa*, München 1971; Hans Vogt, *Neue Musik seit 1945*, Stuttgart 1972, ²1982; Klaus Schweizer, *Orchestermusik des 20. Jahrhunderts seit Schönberg*, Stuttgart 1976; Henry Raynor, *Music and Society Since 1815*, London 1976; Kurt Pahlen, *Symphonie der Welt*, Zürich 1976, ³1987; Elliott Schwartz/Barney Childs (eds.), *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music*, New York ²1978; Edward Downes, *Everyman's guide to Orchestral Music*, London etc. ²1978; Preston Stedman, *The Symphony*, Englewood Cliffs 1979; Carl Dahlhaus, *Die Musik des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden/Laaber 1980; William Martin/Julius Drossin, *Music in the Twentieth Century*, Englewood Cliffs 1980; Carl Dahlhaus, *Musikalischer Realismus*, München 1982; Martin Hürlimann (ed.), *Musiker-Handschriften aus fünf Jahrhunderten – von Monteverdi bis Britten*, Zürich 1984; Michael Trend, *The Music Makers*, London 1985; François-René Tranchefort (ed.), *Guide de la musique symphonique*, Paris 1986; Arnold Whittall, *Romantic music*, London 1987; Robert Stradling/Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance 1860–1940*, London/New York 1993 (this book marks a low in musicological research: missing names, ignorance of works and incorrect interpretations of compositions appear with huge numbers of actual mistakes; on the other hand, however, the book carefully details social and political circumstances, to be further developed by Andrew Blake, *The land without music. Music, culture and society in twentieth-century Britain*, Manchester/New York 1997); Meinhard Saremba, *Elgar, Britten & Co.*, Zürich/Sankt Gallen 1994; Otto Karolyi, *Modern British Music*, Cranbury 1994; Mark Evan Bonds, *After Beethoven. Imperatives of Originality in the Symphony*, Cambridge (Mass.)/London 1996. See Wilibald Nagel's investigations on music in England written from 1894 to 1902, which ends in the year 1710 with Handel's arrival on the British Isles, Gustav Becking's contribution to the *Handbuch der Englandkunde* of 1929, Johannes Wolf's article 'English Influence in the Evolution of Music', in Charles Maclean (ed.), *Report of the Fourth Congress of the International Musicological Society London 1911*, London 1912, pp. 83–89 or Ernst Křenek's *England zum ersten Male gesehen*, in: *Melos* 27 (1960), pp. 212–215.

are Stanley Sadie's and Nicholas Temperley's Cambridge Ph.D. dissertations, both from the late 1950s and unpublished in their entirety.¹⁴ Kenneth Thompson's *Dictionary of twentieth-century composers*,¹⁵ which only lists deceased composers (and therefore excludes Havergal Brian and Kaikhosru Sorabji from its pages), at least mentions Delius, Elgar, Holst and Vaughan Williams and thus contains only a few impermissible gaps (most notably Frank Bridge). One of very few exceptionally thorough compilers is Alfred Baumgartner,¹⁶ whose entries are unfortunately frequently inaccurate by 'condensing' information. To his credit, however, he rarely omits a composer of even minor importance.

On the other hand, authors neglecting – or rather ignoring – their own contemporary music can be found as early as 1919 in the United Kingdom.¹⁷ This may perhaps be explained by the fact that it was only in about 1922 – when Arnold Bax with his *First* and Arthur Bliss with his *Colour* Symphony stunned the public – that a real tradition gathered momentum; Elgar had to a large extent overshadowed the scene, even though there were many other composers around by the early twentieth century. Due to the (then and sometimes still now) common opinion that the United Kingdom bore very few (if any) composers of high international renown, it is impossible to write a history of British music as a history of masterworks, as Dahlhaus and many of his predecessors called for. The widespread aesthetical understanding of music history until the 1980s also impeded efforts to write about the topic. We have to deal with musical landscapes instead of masterworks (which anyway can be designated such only with respect to 'non-masterworks'), and describe the highs and lows as well as the peaks and huge valleys, in which quality sinks to the lowest levels. We also have to contend with composers who are seemingly enveloped in a kind of fog, and who used to be very much disputed (and often still are), such as Kaikhosru Sorabji or Havergal Brian; and sometimes we have to abandon a sense of absolute value and instead gauge composers relative to each other – so that Holst, Foulds and Bridge are accorded the merit they deserve.

At this juncture it must be noted that our interest is directed on *British*, not simply on *English*, music. 'The small mention of Scotland, Ireland and Wales is very noticeable',¹⁸ wrote Percy A. Scholes as early as 1918 in his observations on British music, and numerous authors in fact facilitate their task by not classifying Scottish, Irish and Welsh

14 Stanley Sadie, *British chamber music, 1720–1790*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1958, 3 vols.; Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, 3 vols.

15 Kenneth Thompson, *A dictionary of twentieth-century composers (1911–1971)*, London 1973. Brian Morton/Pamela Collins (eds.), *Contemporary Composers*, Chicago/London 1992 is only concerned with living composers, apart from those who passed away during the preparation of publication, including Lennox Berkeley († 1989), Fricker († 1990), Bernstein († 1990), Copland († 1990), Panufnik († 1991), etc., but not with Kaikhosru Sorabji, who died in 1988.

16 Alfred Baumgartner, *Musik der Klassik*, Salzburg 1982; *Musik der Romantik*, Salzburg 1983; *Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Salzburg 1985 (*Musikgeschichte in Einzeldarstellungen*).

17 Clement Antrobus Harris, *The Story of British Music*, London/New York 1919.

18 Percy Scholes, *An Introduction to British Music*, London 1918, p. 121.

music as such.¹⁹ We too alas will not be able to deal here with independent Irish music²⁰ (although composers of Irish origin or orientation – such as, for instance, Stanford, Bax, Harty or Moeran – are among those who lent especially strong impetus to the entire musical evolution of Great Britain), but we will try to touch upon the beginnings of Welsh symphonism (pp. 558–562);²¹ it is hoped that the importance of composers of Scottish origin such as Erskine, Macfarren, Wallace, Bantock, McEwen, Chisholm or Moonie will become sufficiently clear; and furthermore, the Celtic field of culture will be given extensive mention (pp. 490–521). Our task is somewhat tricky in that a British identity only began to take shape after the *Act of Union* of 1707, which was fortified by several further innovations under the reign of Queen Victoria.

British symphonism started out very much influenced by other European countries, especially Germany and Italy. French music was not accorded the same degree of respect, however; neither Pleyel nor Berlioz was ever truly embraced. Prior to 1825, far too much material has been lost to estimate the number of British symphonies written up to then,²² and though later estimates are far from accurate (one may recall the works submitted to the Alexandra Palace Composition Competition in 1876, see pp. 194–196), they at least give an indication of the general situation. A look at the number of symphonies in international comparison after 1825, when the composition of full-length symphonies became more common in Great Britain (until c. 1800, it was quite usual to collate symphonies into cycles of six, not only in the UK but everywhere),²³ shows a strong prominence of continental Europeans; the increase of the continental European creation of symphonies in fact turns out to be disproportionately high. Until after the First World War, the production of symphonies in the USA and the sphere of the former USSR was more or less comparable;

19 Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, ‘Chasing a myth and a legend: “The British Musical renaissance” in a “Land without music”’, in: *MT* 149/1904 (2008), pp. 53–54.

20 On this topic Axel Klein has published *Die Musik Irlands im 20. Jahrhundert*, Ph.D. dissertation Hildesheim 1995, Hildesheim/Zürich/New York 1996 (Hildesheimer Musikwissenschaftliche Arbeiten, 2).

21 In a letter to the author dated 2 June 1993, A. J. Heward Rees, director of the Welsh Music Information Centre, writes: ‘In answer to your request, it is true that Welsh Symphonies composed during your relevant period (1914–1945) are *very few indeed* apart from, perhaps, one or two which have eluded me because they were submitted as composition exercises for University degrees etc. and have not since seen the light of day.’ Rees himself only mentions the compositions of Jones and Williams.

22 Numerous Ph.D. theses announced on several matters of British orchestral or instrumental music from 1966 to 1987 have apparently been abandoned, among them those by I. Barrie, G. W. Heard, Murray Charters, Derek A. Cooke and Stephanie A. C. Fountain. Jennifer Burchell (née Pickering) has abandoned her general project on British eighteenth century symphonism in favour of closer research of a few towns.

23 The information summarised is drawn mainly from the big music encyclopedias, particularly Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 20 vols., London etc. 1980 (*Grove6*). In order to compile the knowledge represented here, the present author strove to create a list of all symphonies composed from 1825 to 1975. Although this list is by no means complete and may in certain respects even be slightly inaccurate – numerous undated symphonies could not be included, for example – it certainly represents an approximation of the total situation.

from 1926 onwards, the Americans were in the lead.²⁴ After 1850, an almost exponential increase in the number of *composers* occurred (Leonid Sabaneev notes that between 1850 and 1930, the average number of composers increased ten-fold, from about 1560 to more than 16500²⁵); as it happens, this boom was not distributed in a geographically uniform way. Up to 1880, the Austr(o-Hungar)ian Empire, what is today the Czech Republic and Slovakia (then part of this Empire but of equal importance in its own right), Belgium, France and Germany were the leaders within Europe, followed by Italians (Malipiero), Poles, Danes and others. The first Cuban and therefore Latin American symphony was reportedly penned in 1879 (by Ignacio Cervantes, strongly influenced by his New Orleans teacher Louis Moreau Gottschalk). The presumably first full-size Australian symphony was written in 1880 (Leon Caron's choral symphony *L'Idéal*). Rhoderick McNeill's most recent study on Australian symphonism is extremely meritorious because he is the first to consider not only the symphonic development in Australia, but also provides a brief overview of the symphonism in the British Dominions.²⁶

It is striking that the British creation of symphonies was fairly stagnant until 1825. From 1826 onwards, at least one symphony per year is reported to have been composed, and as early as 1833, five symphonies seem to have been premièred or composed. British symphonism really gathered steam from the 1870s onwards, increased disproportionately from 1929 on and climaxed in the 1960s, when Cheltenham became the centre of British orchestral music. With regard to the situation in Europe, particularly from 1914 to 1945, the dominance of Scandinavia can be seen (1915-17, 1923-24 and again in 1939) – the Swede Hilding Rosenberg and the Finn Jean Sibelius deserve top billing here. In 1921, productivity was especially pronounced in the Balkans, in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Even after the onset of the Great Depression, productivity returned as early as 1932 to its old heights, with a single further setback in the year of the outbreak of war. That no sharper incision after 1939 remained, is probably thanks to the emigration, for example, of Bohuslav Martinů, a prolific symphonist in his own right; other, lesser known composers who did not emigrate were tolerated by the Nazi government or even supported it and were thus able to continue composing. Austria experienced a peak in musical activity in 1928, perhaps stimulated by the Schubert Centenary Competition of the Columbia Graphophone Company, in which Kurt Atterberg's Sixth Symphony in C major Op. 31 took first prize; Havergal Brian's *Gothic Symphony* took second in the British section, Hans Gál's First Symphony second in the Austrian section. Germany saw bursts of creativity in 1926, 1932, 1938 and 1940; the Rheinberger pupil Julius Weismann (1879–1950), Günter Raphael (1903–1960) and Max Butting (1888–1976), member of the committee of the

24 Except for the years 1935, 1938, 1965-66 and 1971-72 – the works of Russians Vissarion Shebalin, Boris Assafiev, Revol Bunin, Nikolai Peiko, Boris Tishchenko, the Estonian Arvo Pärt and the Ukrainian Andrei Shtogarenko gave the former Soviet Union a distinct edge in these years.

25 Leonid Sabaneev, 'Some social causes of the present musical crisis', in: *M&L* XIII (1932), p. 76.

26 Rhoderick McNeill, *The Australian Symphony from Federation to 1960*, Farnham/Burlington 2014.

German section of the Society of Contemporary Music from 1925 to 1933, deserve special mention here.

The reception of British music on the European continent was – to put it gently – tepid even as far back as the eighteenth century; British instrumental music simply did not export well to continental Europe. It was only at the end of the nineteenth century until the advent of the First World War that quite a number of first performances (indeed world premières) were to take place (Tovey, Smyth, Delius ...); after this, British music was, very much in accordance with its reputation as the ‘Land ohne Musik’, forgotten. The reception of British music in Great Britain, however, also remained appallingly lukewarm. Freely according to the motto that ‘What is ours cannot belong to the best’, the British tended to cling to their inferiority complex with respect to the arts. They judged their creations not, as for instance in the field of poetry and theatre, according to universal measures, but often allowed their estimation of their national composers to be shaped by the opinions of their continental colleagues. That frequently wrongheaded (due to ignorance) – if not completely perverted – judgments resulted is thus hardly surprising. ‘We have produced no Berlioz, no Chopin, no Debussy, no Schönberg, no Stravinsky’, writes Neville Cardus.²⁷ In order to be accepted in the land of origin – Great Britain – the praise of foreign countries was required first. Even in 2013, Alain Frogley argues that the British symphony ‘represents a continued dependence on Germanic tradition and the cult of absolute music, and an inherent conservatism and resistance to modernism’.²⁸

b) On the choice of subject and material. Definition of terms and methodological considerations. What makes a composer British?

The decision to concentrate on a specific aspect of the wide, mainly unploughed field of British music was extremely obvious from the very beginning; given that the song and the opera already had already been the subject of scrutiny,²⁹ it seemed prudent to focus on instrumental music.³⁰

That the symphony ended up being the centrepiece of my research was more or less happenstance,³¹ with the following words in mind:

27 Neville Cardus, ‘The English and Music’, in Neville Cardus, *Talking of Music*, London/Glasgow 1957, p. 258.

28 ‘The symphony in Britain: guardianship and renewal’, in Julian Horton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony*, Cambridge etc. 2013, p. 376–377.

29 Eric Walter White, *A History of English Opera*, London 1983; Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility and English Song*, Cambridge etc. 1988.

30 Meanwhile, Lisa Hardy has published *The British Piano Sonata 1870–1945*, Woodbridge/Rochester (New York) 2001, and it is hoped that similar books are to follow on other genres.

31 Nonetheless, my decision was certainly to some extent influenced by Manuel Gervink’s *Die Symphonie in Deutschland und Österreich in der Zeit zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*, Regensburg 1984. Gervink (who happened to be a teacher of

‘When a composer settles down to writing a symphony he means business of the first musical importance. Beethoven has taught us this, and ever since we have, rightly or wrongly, come to regard the symphony as the most highly organised of our instrumental forms – a form that puts the whole of the composer’s creative faculties to the severest test, that challenges all the resources of his intellectual and emotional powers. In short, to write a symphony is to give the totality of both one’s musical experience and one’s artistic personality. This has been essentially the view of most symphonic writers since Beethoven.’³²

Several composers have understood the symphony similarly – amongst them Robert Simpson, Edmund Rubbra and Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, who in 1879 wrote the article on the symphony for the first edition of George Grove’s *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*³³ – without suspecting that the traditional form of the symphony was about to be modified comprehensively.³⁴ Thirty or forty years later, Parry would have had to revise his former position – also with respect to his own music.

Naturally, ‘symphony’ has meant different things over the centuries, starting from works for modest orchestral forces in part deriving from the operatic symphony and the concerto grosso, and continuing along ‘Romantic’ lines to the very diverse concepts of symphony in the twentieth century, an era which many authors cite as marking the dissolution of the symphonic form or the decay (not of creative transformation³⁵) of tradition.³⁶ We shall

mine in the mid-1980s) does, however, depart from a selective rather than an encyclopaedic approach.

32 Mosco Carner, *Of men and music*, London 1945, p. 156.

33 Hubert Parry, ‘Symphony’, in Henry Cope Colles (ed.), *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. V, London etc. 1928, pp. 201–235 (the more recent development is described by Richard Aldrich, pp. 235–242).

34 Cf. also Gerd Rienäcker on the congress of the Gesellschaft für Musikforschung, Mainz 25 September 1997.

35 The earliest exponents to speak of creative transformation are Walter Wiora, ‘Zwischen absoluter und Programm Musik’, in Anna Amalie Abert/Wilhelm Pfannkuch (ed.), *Festschrift Friedrich Blume zum 70. Geburtstag*, Kassel etc. 1963, pp. 381–388, Ludwig Finscher, ‘“Zwischen absoluter und Programm Musik”. Zur Interpretation der deutschen romantischen Symphonie’, 1972, in Christoph-Hellmut Mahling (ed.), *Über Symphonien. Beiträge zu einer musikalischen Gattung. Festschrift Walter Wiora zum 70. Geburtstag*, Tutzing 1979, pp. 103–115 and Siegfried Oechsle, ‘Niels W. Gade und die “tote Zeit” der Symphonie’, in: *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning XIV* (1983) (1984), pp. 81–96 and *Symphonik nach Beethoven. Studien zu Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn und Gade*, Kassel 1992 (Kielener Schriften zur Musikwissenschaft, 40).

36 Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!* Harmondsworth 1948, pp. 230–231 (Lambert, however, sees an exception in Sibelius; Hugh Ottaway, ‘Edmund Rubbra and his Fifth Symphony’, in: *Hallé 23* (1950), pp. 1–2 refers to the fact that with Sibelius came the enlargement of the symphonic idea); Paul Collaer, *Geschichte der modernen Musik*, Stuttgart 1963, p. 486; Wilfried Brennecke, ‘Symphonie. Die Entwicklung der Symphonie in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz von etwa 1885 bis zur Gegenwart’, in Friedrich Blume (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 12, Kassel etc. 1965, col. 1850–1864; Rudolf Stephan, ‘Symphonie’, in Rudolf Stephan (ed.), *Das Fischer Lexikon Musik*, Frankfurt/Hamburg 1966, pp. 316–328; Josef Häusler, ‘Zwischen Sonatensatz und Aleatorik. Die Symphonie im 20. Jahrhundert’, in Ursula von Rauchhaupt (ed.), *Die Welt der Symphonie*, Hamburg/Braunschweig 1972, pp. 275–292; Carl Dahlhaus, ‘Traditionszerfall im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert’, in Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht/Max Lütolf (ed.), *Studien zur Tradition in der Musik*, München 1973, pp. 177–190; Carl Dahlhaus, ‘Zur Problematik der musikalischen Gattungen im 19. Jahrhundert’, in Wulf Arlt/Ernst Lichtenhahn/Hans Oesch (ed.), *Gattungen der Musik in Einzeldarstellungen*, Berlin/München 1973, pp. 840–895.

examine – implicitly, that is – how the evolution of the symphony was to unfold over some two hundred years, from its beginnings to 1945. Certainly, doubts such as those expressed by Kaikhosru Sorabji, who wrote in 1947 that ‘German pedantry’ would usually carry out considerations on musical forms ‘in vacuo et abstracto’, are not entirely unfounded.³⁷ ‘Such people will say that a masterpiece of coherent musical thought and intense inner logic as [Delius’s] *The Song of the High Hills* is formless’³⁸ – amongst the non-academics attaining ‘significant form’,³⁹ he counts Berlioz, Delius, Sibelius and Bernard van Dieren. Robert Simpson, in his way a ‘pupil’ of Havergal Brian and Edmund Rubbra and himself a composer of several symphonies, commented sarcastically: ‘People who write symphonies usually do it because they feel able to – a lot of those who don’t feel able tell everyone else the symphony is dead. If they think this, they are quite right not to attempt symphonies.’⁴⁰

Musicological research over the last decades indicates that it is a widening and metamorphosis rather than a downfall of symphonic form that has taken place from the eighteenth century to the present day – this is a notion already endorsed by Paul Bekker in 1919.⁴¹ In his 1931 book on Sibelius, Cecil Gray wrote:

‘The truth is that symphony is not, and never has been, a form in the sense in which, for instance, the fugue or the sonnet are forms, prescribing as they do certain definite procedures in defiance of which they cease to have any right to the titles at all. No poet would dream of calling a piece of blank verse a hundred lines long a sonnet, but so far as form is concerned practically anything can be called a sonata without violating any law or principle. (...) It may be impossible to give a satisfactory formal definition of what constitutes a symphony, but the word nevertheless has certain precise implications. (...) There was once a French critic, it may be remembered, who roundly condemned the D minor Symphony of César Franck, declaring that it could not properly be regarded as a symphony at all, for the simple reason that the score contained a part for the cor anglais.’⁴²

Other authors in pursuit of the elusive definition of the symphony stress the relationships of tonality within a work (among other things, the enormous influence of Heinrich Schenker in Great Britain and North America is surprising in this respect), but these alone cannot be used to define the concept. Others have put forth a formal basic framework to which a work must adhere if it is to properly be described as a symphony; to discuss musical forms on such a purely abstract level is, as will be proven, a pronouncedly difficult and, as some Britons would say, rather Germanic attitude. Perhaps it would be most appropriate to instead define the form much more broadly – although the basic idea behind many diverse

37 Kaikhosru Sorabji, *Mi contra Fa*, London 1947, p. 49.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 51.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

40 Robert Simpson, ‘Symphonies’, in: *The Listener* 89/2299 (1973), p. 521.

41 Paul Bekker, *Neue Musik*, Stuttgart 1919.

42 Cecil Gray, *Sibelius*, London etc. 1931, pp. 153–154.

works considered symphonic, as Robert Simpson explains, is clearly uniting. The definition of a symphony as ‘an essay in the “large-scale integration of contrasts”’ strikes Simpson as too simplistic; the term is better described as a conflation of the sonata form with some kind of symphonic nature.⁴³ The sonata form is not the only hallmark, however (Sibelius’s Seventh Symphony): the more concentratedly the material is processed (both emotionally and intellectually), the more symphonic thinking can be found in the work.⁴⁴

When I first concentrated on the years between the world wars, Peter J. Pirie’s comment provided the final impetus for my final decision: ‘If a composer wrote his best music between the wars, as did Bax, van Dieren, Szymanowski, Ireland, Walton, and many others, he is at the moment under a cloud; for some reason (possibly traumatic) few are prepared to defend him.’⁴⁵ Additional research widened my scope, and it soon became obvious that those who had written extensively on the so-called British Musical renaissance⁴⁶ had not adequately researched what had exactly taken place in nineteenth-century Britain. The symphony in Britain before 1914 has, as a matter of fact, been dealt with to an even smaller extent than any aspect of twentieth-century British symphonism. So there is a real need to fill the gap with at least an overview as to what existed and what kind of specifications emerged from the beginnings, when no differentiation was made between ‘symphony’, ‘Sinfonia’ and ‘overture’, up to works as diverse as Ethel Smyth’s *The Prison*, Bantock’s *Pagan* Symphony or even Sorabji’s First Choral Symphony. In German musicological writings, authors usually attempt to issue as little judgment as possible, but not without pointing out the outstanding qualities of any of the works under discussion. If I am able to help rediscover even one work out of the treasure-trove of British music, I will have fulfilled my aim.

Further, it must be mentioned that only a fraction of the scores I came across was available in recorded form, forcing me to refer, apart from my own analytic findings, on the comments of others who had either actually heard the music or devoted themselves to it in greater detail than time and space allow me here. Naturally, the comments of the composers themselves as well as of their fellow-composers are especially important in the consideration of single works.

It can of course never be said exactly how many symphonies were composed during a specific period even if one limits the investigation to complete symphonies, particularly

43 The term ‘symphonic’, indeed derived from the word ‘symphony’, nevertheless also derives from ‘symphony orchestra’ – hence the ‘big symphonic gesture’ or Schumann’s *Sinfonische Etüden* for piano and Liszt’s *Concertos Symphoniques*. Richard Strauss studiously avoided the term ‘Symphonische Dichtung’ and correspondingly created the word ‘Tondichtung’ (‘tone poem’) as a subtitle for e.g. *Don Juan*, *Macbeth*, *Ein Heldenleben*, or *Also sprach Zarathustra* – a term which has subsequently been used e.g. by Arnold Bax. Due to this definition of the technical aspect it can be explained why in Germany, the symphony with vocal participation, particularly when the vocal participation is not subordinate to the instrumental component (e.g. Beethoven’s Ninth, Mendelssohn’s *Lobgesang* or Liszt’s *Faust* Symphony), often causes methodological problems that e.g. the Briton might find perplexing.

44 Broadcast discussion 1964, in: *Tonic* 11 (2001), p. 8.

45 Peter Pirie, ‘World’s End’, in: *MR* 18 (1957), p. 89.

46 Most authors writing about the ‘English Musical renaissance’ are most interested in the description of the situation up to 1914, which they believe contains the ‘Renaissance’.

given the dearth of research as intense as that on printed pre-1800 music for the *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*.⁴⁷ The knowledge of nineteenth-century music is nowadays – particularly in the case of scores of ‘Auch-composers’ (i.e. those who wrote very few compositions and never became professionally active with their works, or quasi ‘composed for the drawer’) – still exceptionally murky. Much music of the eighteenth century has been lost, and very probably numerous works of the twentieth century were also either deliberately destroyed or unclaimed by the composers’ heirs – in part due to complete abandonment of the inheritance, in part consciously. One is largely dependent on the material that considerate estate managers or larger libraries have carefully preserved. In many cases, the widows (very few symphonies composed by women are known, and even fewer have been preserved) or children (or even great-grandchildren, such as Barry Sterndale-Bennett) take an active role in the music’s legacy; strangely enough, few grandsons really seem interested in preserving the works of their grandparents. How representative the material presented here is is not always discernable. Had Robert Simpson, Malcolm MacDonald, Lewis Foreman and Alistair Hinton not existed, far more material from the hands of Havergal Brian, John Foulds, Kaikhosru Sorabji and even Arnold Bax would surely have landed in the rubbish bin.⁴⁸ Furthermore, in more recent times, publishing companies have often abandoned or liquidated their archives either fully or at least to a considerable extent, with the effect that numerous works formerly published are now almost irretrievably lost (unless one is as lucky as the Havergal Brian Society, which as a result of an advert campaign was able to preserve the complete full score of Brian’s opera *The Tigers*).⁴⁹ Additionally, the losses incurred during several wars must be tallied along with those caused by the ignorance of estate managers.

47 While prints up to 1800 have been made accessible, manuscripts from the same era have not yet been catalogued in their entirety. Therefore, the only possibility, apart from occasional strokes of luck, was to consult Cudworth’s and LaRue’s catalogues concerning overtures and symphonies in Great Britain in the eighteenth century: Charles L. Cudworth, ‘The English Symphonists of the Eighteenth Century’, in: *PRMA* 78 (1951–52), pp. 31–49 (discussion pp. 49–51); Charles L. Cudworth, *Thematic Index of English Eighteenth-Century Overtures and Symphonies*, London 1953 (Appendix to *PRMA* 78); Charles L. Cudworth/Jan LaRue/Richard Andrewes, ‘Thematic index of English symphonies’, in Christopher Hogwood/Richard Luckett (ed.), *Music in Eighteenth-Century England*, Cambridge etc. 1983, pp. 219–244.

48 The situation had nevertheless been improved in 1903 thanks to the trust established by Ernest (later Lord) Palmer with the objective of providing young composers with the opportunity to see their orchestral works performed – at the Royal College of Music. The Scottish composer William Wallace wrote in a letter to the *Times*: ‘(...) to set the Royal College of Music in a position to which it is scarcely entitled – namely that of being the authoritative body *par excellence* to be entrusted with the future of British music (...) No musician can close his eyes to the fact that the Royal College of Music is associated with a certain phase of thought which is academically antagonistic, if not openly inimical, to every modern tendency (...) We want British music not Royal-College-of-Music music.’ (*The Times*, 30 May 1904, p. 3; quoted from Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and other Lectures*, London 1968, pp. 81–83, corrected according to Lewis Foreman (ed.), *From Parry to Britten. British Music in Letters 1900–1945*, London 1987, pp. 27–28.)

49 For the general situation cf. Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Lost and Only Sometimes Found*, London 1992.

This book cannot hope to offer a general history of the symphony from the very beginnings; other authors have written general introductions trying to supply thorough overviews.⁵⁰ The hazy beginnings of the symphony in Great Britain, with more or less deliberately chosen work-titles and with trios, sonatas, quartets and many other forms indeed being able to fill symphonic forms⁵¹ (sometimes, e.g. in the cases of John Marsh and George Rush, in the eighteenth century, the word ‘Quartetto’ indeed meant a *Sinfonia* in four parts, i.e. for strings), require one to find a way to navigate, to limit oneself and to make the task consistent. The only decent way to go about identifying early symphonies was to consult, insofar as possible, the intentions of the composers themselves. Doing so forced me to exclude quite a number of eighteenth century works counted by others as symphonies, and on the other hand, to include cantatas named symphonies or *sinfonie* (sacre) by the composer.

The boundaries between *little symphony* and *Sinfonietta* logically overlap – this was apparent even before Schumann’s *Overture, Scherzo und Finale*, which was first called *Suite* and then *Symphonette*, receiving its final title only later.⁵² In R. O. Morris’ *Sinfonia in C*, the title pages from draft to final score show the evolution that the title of a work can run through: in this case, from *Little Symphony* to *Sinfonietta* and *Symphonia* finally to *Sinfonia*, which in several respects consciously recalls the form of the Italian *Sinfonia* of the eighteenth century. The intensified use of the words *Sinfonia* or *Sinfonietta* in this era reflects the receding height of aspiration, which clearly achieved its climax in ‘neo-classicism’.⁵³

Similarly fluent are the boundaries between the *Sinfonia concertante* and the ‘ordinary’ symphony, although the ‘concertante’ element is easily discernible from the *Sinfonie* in contrast to the eighteenth-century *Sinfonie concertante*. Some symphonies were later renamed *sinfonia concertante*. In some cases, the ‘concertante’ was later deleted;⁵⁴ Bax’s *Winter Legends* was only unofficially called a *Sinfonia concertante*. It was a difficult decision to leave out concertante symphonies while chamber symphonies – as far as determinable⁵⁵ – found continuous treatment. The choice was made in light of the fact that in England the term of the Concerto for Orchestra (cf. Paul Hindemith, Walter Piston, Albert Roussel, Goffredo Petrassi, Zoltán Kodály, Béla Bartók, Witold Lutoslawski) and Strings (e.g. works by Michael Tippett, Herbert Howells and Havergal Brian) also encompasses works of a symphonic nature,⁵⁶ as well as numerous of those *Sinfonie concertante* theoretically relevant to us (like

50 Stefan Kunze, *Die Sinfonie im 18. Jahrhundert. Von der Opernsinfonie zur Konzertsinfonie*, Laaber 1993 (Handbuch der musikalischen Gattungen, 1); Wolfram Steinbeck/Christoph von Blumröder, *Die Symphonie im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, 2 vols., Laaber 2002 (Handbuch der musikalischen Gattungen, 3).

51 Jan LaRue, ‘Der Hintergrund der klassischen Symphonie’, in Ursula von Rauchhaupt (ed.), *Die Welt der Symphonie*, Hamburg/Braunschweig 1972, p. 99.

52 In the twentieth century, a similar entitling was used by Arnold Bax, Edgar Bainton and Arnold Cooke, who wrote in 1927 *Overture, Elegy and Rondo*, 1924 *Pavane, Idyll and Bacchanal* and 1931 *Passacaglia, Scherzo and Finale*, respectively.

53 Cf. also Rudolf Stephan, ‘Überlegungen zur neueren Geschichte der Symphonie’, in: *ÖMZ* 36 (1981), pp. 392–393.

54 This happened in Gordon Crosse’s *Sinfonia concertante* Op. 13 (rev. 1975 as Symphony No. 1).

55 In several catalogues so-called ‘Chamber Symphonies’ run under the heading of ‘Chamber Music’.

56 Johann Nepomuk David uses for such works the title *Partita* (cf. Rudolf Stephan, ‘Überlegungen zur neueren Geschichte der Symphonie’, in: *ÖMZ* 36, 1981, p. 393).

those of Abel, Bach, Walton, Williams and Rubbra). These have however pronouncedly *concertante* elements⁵⁷ that are far stronger than the underlying structure, such that they can hardly be called ‘symphonies’.

Finally, the inclusion of symphonies with more or less vocal participation, in which the sung word (or vowel) is in different ways subordinate to the form, deserves some explanation. The tradition of the *Sinfonia sacra* (title of Edmund Rubbra’s Ninth Symphony of 1971-72 and subtitle of two of Parry’s symphonies and one of Davies’) harks back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Giovanni Gabrieli, Heinrich Schütz, Hans Leo Haßler) and was carried through – albeit with interruptions – well into the twentieth century. Naturally, in some ways, it may be considered a by-pass to the term of ‘the symphony’. However, this branch is in British music (although extensively ignored in many important books, including Josef Holbrooke’s⁵⁸) particularly strongly developed, and, in the early twentieth century, was mainly spiritually orientated (Parry’s *Sinfonia sacra* *The Love that casteth out fear* and *The Soul’s Ransom* and Henry Walford Davies’ *Lift up your Hearts*; later Ethel Smyth’s *The Prison*,⁵⁹ Cyril Rootham’s Second Symphony). Some ‘vocal’ symphonies have vocal participation restricted to one movement only (Rootham, Wilson, Boughton, Vaughan Williams’ *Pastoral Symphony*), while others are indeed more cantatas than symphonies – but it would have been quite pointless to omit some of them and include others.

This book is divided into two parts. The first half concerns, in mainly chronological fashion, the period up to 1914 (due to many fewer compositions and directions of composition); the second half continues rather systematically from 1914 onwards (the few vocal symphonies from earlier times are treated in the second part). Due to the complexity of the modification process of the form of the symphony over the decades both in formal and semantic respects, some special measures must be taken to present these two aspects both individually and correlatively. The investigation of exemplary tendencies in this respect also steps into the foreground with regard to the total sum of British symphonism, although single peculiarities, even if they cannot be given extensive analysis here, must nonetheless not be neglected. I very consciously refrain from issuing any generalizations about the British symphony until the final chapter – especially since British symphonism in fact encompasses a number of disparate directions whose common characteristics may indeed be dismissed by malicious tongues as a merely ‘least common denominator’. I on the other hand believe that these features elucidate the special quality of British symphonism in the best possible way. In this respect, I shall, in compliance with many British thinkers, abstain from stubbornly adhering

57 E. T. A. Hoffmann already in 1814 considered Beethoven’s Piano Concertos as ‘symphonies with piano obligato’, so this is rather the opposite concept of ‘symphonic concertos’ (E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Schriften zur Musik. Nachlese*, München 1963, p. 452).

58 Josef Holbrooke, *Contemporary British Composers*, London 1925, pp. 130 and 175.

59 The same subject as treated by Smyth was also be dealt with e.g. in Elgar’s *The Dream of Gerontius* (1899–1900) and Parry’s *A Song of Darkness and Light* (1898).

to a strict terminology at all costs, a practice that German scholars tend to lose themselves in (insofar as criticism of this characteristic⁶⁰ is rather inappropriate).⁶¹

Formally, omissions (also in quotations) are marked by round parentheses (...), additions by angular ones []. In the case of bar information, the angular parentheses [] give the rehearsal mark as well as the number before or thereafter the number of bars before or after this rehearsal mark to indicate which bar(s) we are dealing with, e.g. 4 [M] i.e. 4 bars before rehearsal mark M. Quotation marks suggesting work titles have consistently been replaced by italics. Typing errors were corrected discreetly, and all quotations (where necessary) were translated throughout. Due to the extensive amount of material, the holders of the rights to the music examples and the sung texts are listed only in the acknowledgements, in the case of illustrations and in appendix a), but not after each music example.

Finally, there must be an attempt to define 'British composers' and to distinguish them from 'non-British' composers. This task proves rather tricky, as we have to determine the degree of 'Britishness' necessary in order for a composer to qualify as a Briton. I find Ernest Walker's simplistic definition of English music as music 'made in England'⁶² unacceptable in any case.

Numerous composers who left their land of origin, Great Britain, for professional reasons (Pearson, Sherwood, Bell, Chisholm, Albert Coates, Hart and Bainton) are often regarded as non-local due to their services in their adopted 'native' countries (South Africa, Australia, America), even if they received their entire artistic upbringing and/or evolution on the British Isles.

On the other hand, we have composers such as Brian Boydell, who studied in Cambridge and at the Royal College of Music, but always felt himself an Irishman and returned to Ireland even before the beginning of the Second World War⁶³ and became a professor at Trinity College, Dublin.⁶⁴ Healey Willan, actually educated only as an organist and choirmaster in England, emigrated in 1913 to Canada and wrote his First Symphony there in 1936, though he is considered English by many Englishmen. Similar cases are found with Henry Litolff, who became a French citizen, Georges Onslow, born French because his English father (a former member of Parliament) had been compelled to emigrate to France, and Eugène d'Albert, who became German. Henry Hugo Pearson, who changed his name to Pierson in Germany, constitutes a kind of exception.

60 Cf. Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, p. 94 and his criticism of Anthony Payne.

61 E.g. Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music*, London etc. ³1989, pp. 252–270 looks at Vaughan Williams's Sixth Symphony. This book too hardly contains the space for thorough analyses, given its topic of all British symphonies of the mentioned period.

62 Ernest Walker, *A History of Music in England*, London etc. ⁶1952, p. vi.

63 So it was with the born Scotsman Eugène d'Albert, who not only gained fame in Germany but never felt British in the first place.

64 Brian Boydell to the author, 16 March 1993.

Then there are Britons who may have absorbed strong non-British influences from having studied abroad or by virtue of their foreign descent. Kaikhosru Sorabji, in spite of being born in London and having an English mother, proudly praised his ‘part-alleged’ Persian, Italian and Spanish roots,⁶⁵ and was especially influenced by the music and aesthetics of Alkan, Liszt and Busoni. Similarly, Berkeley⁶⁶ took inspiration from his teacher Boulanger. Cooke, Rawsthorne, etc. admired Hindemith. Due to his youth spent in Russia, Coates was closely connected to Scriabin, Tchaikovsky and other Russian composers, which is clearly reflected in his conducting activity. Delius, according to Sorabji, had no more to do with Great Britain than somebody from Hong Kong, an Iroquois or a Gibraltarian.⁶⁷

In the eighteenth century, immigrants were always welcome in musical Britain – not only Handel, but also Abel, Salomon, Johann Christian Bach or the Italians Francesco Geminiani and Muzio Clementi; most of these composers eventually came to be regarded as British rather than cosmopolitan. Later, immigrants like Bernard van Dieren or Victor Hely-Hutchinson were, similar to the emigrants of the twentieth century, eyed with a certain amount of distrust. When Holst at the beginning of the First World War was confronted with his German descent,⁶⁸ he replied: ‘(...) the only German thing about me is my upspringing hair’.⁶⁹ Later immigrants who entered British ground – for instance in the 1960s – had a simpler time gaining acceptance. This exodus had already begun in 1932 with Walter and Alexander Goehr’s,⁷⁰ and later Robert Müller-Hartmann’s, Hans Gál, Egon Wellész’s, Franz Reizenstein’s, Mátyás Seiber’s, Karl Rankl’s and Berthold Goldschmidt’s immigration in their flight from the National Socialists. They were followed by the Spaniard Roberto Gerhard, the Pole Andrzej Panufnik (who was later knighted) and, for other reasons, the Australian Malcolm Williamson, who in 1975 became Master of the Queen’s Musick.⁷¹

65 Alistair Hinton reports: ‘He believed passionately in racial identity and took a just pride in his possibly unique mixed heritage’ (Alistair Hinton in Paul Rapoport (ed.), *Sorabji. A Critical Celebration*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1992, p. 23), and Sorabji himself wrote: ‘English law, with a perverse and original oddity recalling the ‘mad Englishman’ of the eighteenth century – that stimulating and engaging eccentric that this land used to produce when it was still inhabited by individuals, rather than the members of a cinema audience, and when a capacity to think and feel for themselves had not been roller-milled out of them by an educational process which leaves them with the correct ideas about everything and the right ideas about nothing – English law decrees that a kitten born in a kennel is a *puppy*, a piglet born in a stable a horse.’ (Kaikhosru Sorabji, *Mi contra Fa*, London 1947, p. 76.)

66 Cf. e.g. Lennox Berkeley, ‘Nadia Boulanger as teacher’, in: *MMR* LXI/721 (1931), p. 4. Berkeley also stresses Boulanger’s strict studies in counterpoint, which strongly call to mind Stanford’s and Morris’s teaching practices.

67 Kaikhosru Sorabji, ‘Was Delius British?’, in: *MO* 75/893 (1952), p. 297.

68 Holst’s grandfather had lived with his Russian wife in Riga and had Scandinavian antecedents and German relatives. He came to England early in the nineteenth century.

69 Clifford Bax, *Ideas and People*, London 1936, p. 55.

70 Alexander Goehr writes in a letter to the author on 18 May 1993 on his father’s symphony: ‘My father had nothing to do with Inter-War symphony, as all his orchestral compositions were written in Germany before he came to England in 1932.’ Cf. also Burkhard Laugwitz, ‘Arnold Schönbergs Berliner Schüler. Burkhard Laugwitz im Gespräch mit Alexander Goehr über dessen Vater Walter und dessen Onkel Rudolph Goehr’, in *Das Orchester* 49/11 (2001), pp. 19–24. Here he also does not mention his father’s compositions, some of which have subsequently been revived.

71 An overview of the musicians emigrating from Nazi Germany to Great Britain has been described by Jutta Raab

At the same time, Malcolm Williamson's case raises the question of 'Britishness' all the more. Why *shouldn't* we describe musicians born in other countries of the Commonwealth but not so closely connected to Britain as British composers (but as South African, New Zealander, Australian)?

As an answer to this conundrum, we propose that British composers be defined as:

- composers born in Great Britain;
- composers not born in Great Britain but who spent an essential part of their life in Great Britain; here, the degree of the 'Britishness' is to be determined individually in each case; and
- composers not born in Great Britain but who had their musical evolution in Great Britain and left the British Isles later for professional or other reasons, excluding, however, individuals denying their British influence. (It can thus be explained why the British came to regard Handel as one of their own; it is still difficult with Johann Christian Bach, however.)

These considerations follow numerous conversations with Britons asked whom they would classify as British composers.⁷² The same principles could be applied in exactly the same way to composers of any other nationality.

Hansen, *NS-verfolgte Musiker in England. Spuren deutscher und österreichischer Flüchtlinge in der britischen Musikkultur*, Hamburg 1996 (Musik im 'Dritten Reich' und im Exil, 1), p. 34ff. Raab Hansen points out that peaks in the number of German musicians emigrating to England occurred in the years 1933, 1938 and 1939 (p. 34).

72 Sue Tronser (ABC Federal Music Library) wrote in a letter to the author on 30 November 1993 that Bainton was regarded by the Australians as an Australian composer. Conversations with Morag Chisholm, Lewis Foreman, Stephen Banfield, Alistair Hinton and Martin Anderson yielded a wide field of definitions that nonetheless all tended to emphasize the characteristics of specific composers. However, the British influence on the composers dealt with here is by no means absent.

2. Early beginnings in the eighteenth century

Thomas Augustine Arne p. 21 – William Boyce p. 23 – Carl Friedrich Abel p. 27 – Johann Christian Bach p. 33 – Thomas Norris p. 41 – François-Hippolyte Barthélemon p. 41 – John Collett p. 43 – John Abraham Fisher p. 46 – William Smethergell p. 48 – Samuel Arnold p. 49 – James Hook p. 50 – John Wall Callcott p. 51 – Muzio Clementi p. 52 – Thomas Haigh p. 60
Thomas Alexander Erskine p. 62 – William Herschel p. 67 – Thomas Linley sen. p. 71 – John Valentine p. 72 – John Marsh p. 72

*The eighteenth century: 'the dark age' of English music¹
The first and most important Symphonic writer may be said to have been Joseph Haydn.²*

The growth of the creation of 'symphonies' in Great Britain in the eighteenth century took, as the research results of Jan LaRue, Ernest Warburton, Richard Platt and Barry S. Brook have shown, comparatively slowly. For a long time the term 'symphony' was used synonymously with the Italian 'sinfonia', that is with the Italian (Neapolitan) or French overture. Most sinfonias were indeed written for stage works, oratorios or cantatas, or for odes or anthems. The development from the operatic 'sinfonia' to the symphony for the concert hall took some thirty years to become properly established in England, and, as so often in British music, German composers were important in this respect. Furthermore, the 'Handelian' type of the concerto (grosso) remained very widely used, as in Francesco Geminiani's Concerti grossi (5 cycles, published 1732-46 plus five single works and two sets of reworkings of Corelli, published 1726-61), Michael Festing's Twelve Concertos a 7 (1734), John Stanley's Concertos a 7 (1742), Francesco Barsanti's Overtures a 4 (c. 1743) and Concerti grossi Op. 3 (1742), Charles Avison's Concertos a 7, 8 or 4 (7 cycles, published 1740-69) or Maurice Greene's Overtures in 7 parts (1745), which indeed resemble William Boyce's Eight Symphonies of 1760 to quite an extent. This was in part caused by the interests of

1 William Henry Hadow, *English Music*, London 1931, p. 105.

2 Charles Villiers Stanford, 'A Sketch of the Symphony', in Charles Villiers Stanford, *Interludes. Records and reflections*, London 1922, p. 81.

the Academy (1710-92) and Concerts (1776–1848, whose revival was attempted in 1867) of Antient (or Ancient) Music, which maintained the old tradition up to after 1800.³ Similarly, a definite change of terminology from ‘sinfonia’ to ‘symphony’ can be found in England only after 1800; in Germany the choice of the wording ‘Sinfonie’ or ‘Symphonie’ is even harder to pin down insofar as several composers, including Richard Strauss and Ludwig van Beethoven, occasionally preferred the German spelling, while numerous musicologists prefer the French one.

In fact, the very beginnings of the term ‘symphony’ in Great Britain can be traced back to as early as the 1690s, only a hundred years after the word’s first appearance in Italy (Giovanni Gabrieli, 1597), when by ‘symphony’, preludes or interludes to vocal compositions were still meant (this usage of the term, for example in the case of Edward Knight, occasionally still surfaced in the early nineteenth century). Henry Purcell composed symphonies to so-called ‘symphony anthems’, named after the opening orchestral ‘symphony’, and to some of his operas, for example *The Faery Queen* (1692); in 1702, symphonies followed to Croft’s *The Twin Rivals*, in 1703 to Barrett’s *Tunbridge Walks*.

It was just a short step from the theatre to pleasure gardens such as Marylebone (from 1650; rebuilt in Vauxhall style in 1738 and enlarged 1753-78), Vauxhall (1661–1859) and Ranelagh (1742–1805). These venues exercised a strong influence on the native symphony: the short span of attention of strollers and beer drinkers called for brief and lively instrumental works; anything more complicated would have flopped.⁴ Elsewhere, the informal character of preludes, interludes and postludes can be imagined from the myriad of publications with titles such as ‘The favourite Songs from the opera call’d X compos’d by Mr. Y ..., together with their symphonys’. Reversing the process, many composers adapted currently popular songs into slow movements, while echoes of reels or strathspeys found their way into numerous symphonic finales.

With entertainment as the chief requirement, it is therefore not surprising to find a concentration on brevity and sprightliness in the early British symphony – notwithstanding, of course, the talents of its composers. Though popular circumstances dictated the general tone of the native symphony much of the time, according to several criteria that he has found applicable to continental symphonies, Jan LaRue stresses that several British symphonists were, compared to their continental-European counterparts,

3 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, p. 342 stresses that the Concerts of Antient Music performed until 1813 also included music by Martini, Geminiani and Avison, but after that date, nearly exclusively the music of Handel was played. Only music by composers who had been dead for 20 years was permitted to be performed – this rule was first broken in 1833 by the inclusion of Beethoven’s music. It may be noted that these concerts were exclusively aristocratic, as observed by William Ayrton in the *Harmonicon* of 1825: ‘The ancient concert is not exactly a public one, and we are well aware that it can only be enjoyed through the medium of the most respectable introduction.’ (Quoted from Temperley, p. 15.)

4 For an appropriate illustration, see Eric Blom (ed.), *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 5, London etc. 1954, plate 41 (opp. p. 374).

‘not altogether in the rearguard. As one example, with respect to thematic contrast and differentiation, an essential aspect of mature sonata forms, composers such as Collett, Fisher and Smethergell not only confirm the dominant modulation with suitably contrasting material but also connect primary and secondary areas with convincing transitions. In a number of works one can even find parallels to the highly active closing techniques perfected by Haydn to carry the momentum over the double bar into the development – one of the significant refinements of the original binary plan.’⁵

Charles Cudworth eventually attempted to assemble a few specifically English traits. Here he referred to ‘a distinctive English style of melody, brief, but often of haunting charm, usually displayed in the small-scale slow movements’.⁶ It is somewhat difficult to interpret these words in any more specific way, particularly since the Britons’ natural association with English melody might be ‘open-air’ rather than ‘haunting’. Among the traits more concretely identifiable as English, of course, is the use of popular songs (as opposed to traditional or folk melodies) as thematic material. If we look at the eighteenth-century symphony as a whole, instances of borrowed melody are rather infrequent, and quotations of currently popular songs are even rarer, except in England.⁷

The development of the concert symphony in England came into being with the growth of middle-class culture, which saw not only the building of concert halls but also the establishment of middle-class music-making in provincial music societies. Certainly the symphony’s development in England was not entirely individual, but due to the prominence of the middle-class, the English trajectory differed from its counterpart in Germany, which was dotted with many minor aristocratic courts.

a) From Arne to Clementi: London and international influences

Thomas Augustine Arne (London, 12 March 1710–London, 5 March 1778) is the first to be mentioned as a symphonist in the nearly independent sense of the word, although all of his ‘symphonies’ are in fact overtures and have been published as such. Born in the same year as William Boyce and Charles Avison, Arne had the disadvantage of being a Catholic, which debarred him from many professional appointments, especially as an organist. Ostensibly coming from a wealthy family, he was sent to Eton and later articled to a solicitor, where he served three years’ apprenticeship in the law before persuading his

5 Jan LaRue, ‘The English symphony: some additions and annotations to Charles Cudworth’s published studies’, in Christopher Hogwood/Richard Lockett (ed.), *Music in Eighteenth-Century England*, Cambridge etc. 1983, p. 215. Still, international research has largely ignored the British symphony, as e.g. in Marie Louise Göllner, *The Early Symphony: 18th-Century Views on Composition and Analysis*, Hildesheim 2004 (Studien zur Geschichte der Musiktheorie, 5).

6 Charles Cudworth, ‘The English Symphonists of the Eighteenth Century’, in: *PRMA* 78 (1951–52), p. 47.

7 Cf. Jan LaRue, ‘The English symphony: some additions and annotations to Charles Cudworth’s published studies’, in Christopher Hogwood/Richard Lockett (ed.), *Music in Eighteenth-Century England*, Cambridge etc. 1983, p. 215.

father of his intention to embark upon a career as a musician. Indeed, his reputation did not rise as high as Boyce's, probably because of his lack of formal training – apart from a few violin lessons from Michael Festing, he was largely self-taught. For this reason he had to write lucrative pot-boilers for theatres (his first great success being *Comus* for Drury Lane in 1738) and pleasure gardens, which remained of high importance until well after the establishment of concert rooms in London. Vauxhall Gardens in fact remained in use until 1859. After problems obtaining a doctorate himself (due to being a Catholic), Arne received an Honorary D.Mus. of Oxford University only in 1759, and in contrast to Boyce, became a more or less conscious modernist, often decidedly 'galant' in style (although also able to write vigorous and powerful stage music, for example *Caractacus*, 1776). Disliking old-fashioned music such as Handel's, Purcell's and Boyce's (but opposing it without lasting success), Arne encouraged a number of young composers, such as Samuel Wesley and Charles Dibdin, at the start of their careers. When Arne died a year before Boyce, he was buried at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, not far from his birthplace; Boyce found his last rest at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Arne's symphonies of 1751 proved to be the first items to establish a tradition of considerably independent orchestral compositions called symphonies in Great Britain; another series of four works followed in 1767, but was rather unsuccessful. The works are nearly all in the form of the Italian *sinfonia*, that is a slow movement flanked by two faster ones, and show far more willingness to suit the current tastes than, for example, William Boyce's. Arne's symphonies have 'little in common with the tradition of Handel; his use of dynamics and orchestration was probably influenced by J. C. Bach.'⁸ Only a few of his symphonies are not entirely in this scheme, for example Nos. 4 and 7 of the Eight Overtures in 8 parts, where (in No. 4) a slow movement is placed last or (in No. 7, the overture to *Comus*) the middle movement opens fast and only ends *Adagio*. Even more interesting is No. 8 (the overture to *The Judgment of Paris*), the first movement of which not only opens with a slow introduction (thus to some extent drawing on the French tradition, as also No. 1 and No. 6, the latter of which indeed sports a French overture proper as its first movement), but also closes slow, which is a feature of the Baroque Concerto grosso.

The *Comus* overture 'begins with a *maestoso* of great authority which at once arrests our attention and commands our respect. There is nothing feeble here; nor is there in the fugue, which again impresses by its virility.'⁹ The overture to *The Judgment of Paris* starts with a *Largo* and a fugue, which are followed by a minuet and a spirited *gigue* for strings. Four of these overtures open with fast movements and each has three movements. In the introductory movement to No. 2 in A major, the violins 'arouse our excitement by some remarkable scale passages which, each time they occur, lead up to two emphatic chords.'¹⁰ In 1934 George Széll revived two symphonies by Arne to high acclaim. It is interesting that Széll's advocacy (as his

8 Richard Platt, Preface to the edition of No. 1 of the *4 New Overtures or Symphonies*, Oxford 1973.

9 Hubert Langley, *Dr. Arne*, Cambridge etc. 1938, p. 102.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 102.

advocacy for example for Liebermann) did not have any lasting influence, or that Richard Platt's 1973 edition of the Four New Overtures (it should be noted that no modern edition of the first cycle has been published yet) did not succeed in resuscitating the composer's work. These four later overtures, with very short slow movements, were much more adventurous than the earlier cycle; note the lyrical second subject in the first movement of No. 1:

Ex. 1



Nos. 2 and 3 have finales in minuet style, and there is, according to Roger Fiske,

'a fine heroic quality about the one in no. 2. No. 4, the most remarkable in the set, starts with that rarity, a first movement in a minor key; it is a remarkably passionate movement, with numerous dynamic contrasts (eight in the first four bars), and the ending is superb. Unfortunately the other two movements are less remarkable.'¹¹

The overture to the oratorio *Judith* (1761), published independently in 1766, already contains Mannheim *crescendi* and thus demonstrates the possibilities of variety of which Arne was capable.

Ex. 2

The image shows a musical score for two staves, likely piano and bass. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music starts at measure 17 with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *cresc.* marking. It then reaches a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The score includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings.

Like Arne, **William Boyce** (London, September 1711–Kensington, London, 7 February 1779) was mainly known as a composer of stage and church music. His symphonies, too, were nearly all derived from stage compositions and festal odes; his first collection was published in 1760. In contrast to Arne, however, Boyce came from a lower-class family. His father, a cabinet-maker, succeeded in making him a chorister at St. Paul's, and until 1734, a pupil of Maurice

11 Roger Fiske, 'Concert Music II', in H. Diack Johnstone/Roger Fiske (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century. The Blackwell History of Music in Britain*, vol. 4, Oxford/Cambridge (Mass.) 1990, p. 221.



Illustration 1. Thomas Augustine Arne, engraving, after 1778.



Illustration 2. William Boyce, etching by John Keyse Sherwin, 1788. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

Greene's. Greene was then Master of the King's Musick and one of the pioneers of public concert-giving, for which England became famous before anywhere else. At the end of the seventeenth century, Greene usually held musical evenings at the Devil Tavern in Fleet Street,¹² and was later said by Pepusch to have been 'the most learned theorist then in London'.¹³ At about the same time Boyce took up his first appointment as a London organist and wrote his first large-scale work, the masque *Peleus and Thetis* (c. 1740), but his best work was probably the serenata *Solomon* (1743). Knowing that he would soon become deaf, Boyce pursued his career energetically, becoming concert director in London, Cambridge (where he obtained the degrees of B.Mus. and D.Mus.) and at the Three Choirs Festival, founded in c. 1715. He also took over prestigious organists' posts, eventually succeeding Greene as Master of the King's Musick in 1755. It was in this position that he wrote many occasional odes, whose overtures

12 Cf. Percy Young, *Pageant of England's Music*, Cambridge 1939, p. 81. In 1738 Greene helped to found the Royal Society of Musicians, whose mission was to give financial support to destitute members of the profession. In 1765 Johann Christian Bach was entered as a member; in 1847 Michael Costa appears in the register. Handel was entered from 1738 onwards, and Abel was a member without interruption from 1761 to 1784. (Betty Matthews (ed.), *The Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain List of Members 1738–1984*, London 1985.)

13 Charles Cudworth, 'Symphonys of William Boyce', in: *Music* II/3 (1953), p. 27.

were collected, along with a number of earlier ones, in his two collections of symphonies/ overtures (others were published in *Musica Britannica*, edited by Gerald Finzi). With total deafness closing in on him, Boyce increasingly relinquished his professional commitments and used his retirement to teach and prepare a collection of English church music.

Charles Cudworth has pointedly compared Arne and Boyce as personalities:

‘What of the two men themselves? In physical appearance they were opposites, at least in later life. Arne was thin and spare, almost to the point of emaciation, and no Adonis, although a professed man of pleasure, and if his portraits are to be believed, his face was as often as not screwed up into a frown of disapproval. Disappointment had no doubt embittered him to some extent with the passing of the years. Boyce was as fat as Arne was thin, and his broad, honest face seems positively wreathed in double chins in the well-known portrait by Sherwin. Their characters differed as widely as their appearance. Arne, according to Burney (who had been his artiled pupil), was an erratic teacher, lacked the domestic virtues, treated his wife badly, was unbusinesslike and absent-minded and often quarrelsome, even with old friends like Garrick. Boyce, on the other hand, was a good teacher, husband and parent, and one who, far from quarrelling with his fellow-men, went out of his way to be friendly with them. “The moral character of Dr. Boyce comprised veracity, honour and justice; while his manners manifested the mildness and urbanity of his disposition. He was remarkably communicative of his knowledge; and incapable of envying others.”¹⁴

Burney usually referred to Boyce as “my worthy friend Dr. Boyce” and averred that “there was no professor [that is no professional musician] who I was ever acquainted with that I loved, honoured, and respected more”. To this we may add the curious testimony of Jonathan Battishill, who having forfeited the Doctor’s good graces by helping himself to all his “Mountain wine” and scoffing all his biscuits, lamented ever afterwards that by that one act he lost the esteem “of the only man in the musical profession whose friendship I had laboured years to gain”.¹⁵ Such hero-worship may seem a little excessive to us, but we must remember that to a Georgian musician Boyce was at the head of his profession, not only as Master of the King’s Band, but also as a notable theorist, teacher and composer. Boyce’s “mildness and urbanity” were never more apparent than in his dealings with the youthful Samuel Wesley; he had heard from another brilliant youngster, Thomas Linley junior, that the younger son of the Rev. Charles Wesley was an infant prodigy. “Sir”, said Dr. Boyce, “I hear you have got an English Mozart in your house” – a characteristic beginning which led to an odd friendship between the two. Boyce perused the boy’s compositions, commented favourably upon them – “This boy writes by nature as true a bass as I can by rule and study” – and sent his “compliments and thanks to his ingenious brother-composer, Mr. Samuel Wesley”.^{16,17}

14 Thomas Busby, *Concert Room and Orchestra Anecdotes of Music and Musicians, Ancient and Modern*, vol. 3, London 1825, p. 176.

15 John Trend, ‘Jonathan Battishill’, in: *M&L* XIII (1932), p. 266.

16 James Lightwood, *Samuel Wesley, Musician. The Story of his Life*, London 1937, p. 22.

17 Charles Cudworth, ‘Boyce and Arne: “The Generation of 1710”’, in: *M&L* XLI (1960), pp. 139–140.

Boyce's symphonies were, in contrast to Arne's, revived in the twentieth century (first in 1928 by Constant Lambert's edition for Oxford University Press), and recognized as more than mere imitations of Handel's, although they in fact also equally belong to the period of late Baroque and thus share general stylistic characteristics (an earlier version of Symphony Op. 2 No. 5 is called in a manuscript a Concerto¹⁸), especially in the slow movements.

Ex. 3

Moderato e dolce

sempre p

In some of his orchestral compositions, for example the fifth of the Twelve Overtures of 1770

Ex. 4

Spiritoso

or the third of the Eight Symphonies of 1760,

18 British Library: Add. MS 71539 (7).

Ex. 5

Jigg

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled 'Jigg'. It is written in 6/8 time and has a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bass staff begins with a bass clef and contains a simple accompaniment of dotted eighth notes and rests. The piece concludes with the word 'etc.' written at the end of the treble staff.

he indeed shows musical imagination, linking the period of Handel with that of Abel, J. C. Bach and the Mannheim school. Cudworth stresses Boyce's orchestrational abilities:

'his orchestration will sound like Handel's should sound (but rarely does!) with lots of oboes doubling the violins, even where they have difficulty in keeping pace with their more nimble brethren of the catgut. Or, as Dr. Boyce himself wrote at the top of his scores, "The Hautboys with the Violins, excepting when they go too high, then take them eight notes lower for a bar or two, as you find occasion. Observe the same if they get too low."¹⁹

Many of Boyce's symphonies are in Italian overture style, with movements that are Quick-Slow-Quick, but he, like Handel, did not disregard the French overture (slow opening followed by a fugue) – unlike his contemporary Augustine Arne. Deafness prevented him from hearing the new style, the Mannheim symphonies and the Bach-Abel concerts, and he thus lost touch with contemporary fashions.

The first composers to write concert symphonies in the meaning used for the Mannheim or Austrian Classical symphonies were Thomas Alexander Erskine (see p. 62), Carl Friedrich Abel and Johann Christian Bach; two of them were thus German by birth, the third a former member of the Mannheim Court Orchestra.

Unlike his British counterparts (especially Arne and Samuel Arnold, but also Smethergell and Herschel), **Carl Friedrich Abel** has already been thoroughly researched.²⁰ Abel (Cöthen, 22 December 1723–London, 20 June 1787) received his first studies of music undoubtedly from his father, Christian Ferdinand Abel, who was then a musician to the court of Prince Leopold August of Anhalt-Cöthen. It is not clear how much music was cultivated after the prince's death in 1728, especially since his widow, Friederike-Henriette, was not really interested in music; it is very probable that at least after 1733 the situation deteriorated immensely – Abel's brother Leopold left the court, and it is known that Abel's father, shortly before his death in 1737, was no longer even able to earn a living from the court. In c. 1739 Abel went to Leipzig to study with Johann Sebastian Bach and in 1743, at the age of twenty, became gambist (later called the 'last virtuoso' of this instrument) in the

19 Charles Cudworth, 'Symphonys of William Boyce', in: *Music* II/3 (1953), p. 28.

20 Walter Knappe has not only dealt extensively with, but has also edited most of Abel's symphonies.

court orchestra in Dresden under Hasse. There he very probably became a friend of Johann Adam Hiller's, who from 1781 directed the Gewandhaus concerts in Leipzig, as well as of Johann Christian Bach (see p. 33). He left Dresden by 1758. The following year he went – probably via Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Darmstadt, Frankfurt and Paris – to London, where he gave his first concert on 5 April 1759, nine days before Handel's death.²¹ In 1760 George III was crowned, which, perhaps coincidentally, marked the turning point, that is an upturn in the situation. In 1761-62 Abel was appointed member of the Royal band and also chamber musician to the Queen. He established an extremely fine reputation, was dubbed the best gambist in the world by the Duke of York and even elicited high praise from Burney. Pupils included Lady Pembroke, James Cervetto and John Crosdill, the latter two regular performers at the Bach-Abel concerts in later years.

Abel and Bach moved in together in 1763, sharing rooms in Meard's Street, Soho. The first of the Bach-Abel concerts took place on 29 February 1764; Abel was active as a string player, but could also be seen at the harpsichord and played French horn. In 1771 the men took separate residences; Bach's new house was in Queen Street. He first shared it with the flautist Johann Baptist Wendling and his wife, and then with Wilhelm Cramer and his family, who left to live with Abel in 1776, probably because Bach married Cecilia Grassi in that same year. Abel meanwhile moved to 201 Oxford Street, near Orchard Street, and then in 1778 to 6 Duke Street. Charles Burney wrote:

'Abel's musical science in harmony, modulation, fugue, and canon, which he had acquired under his great master Sebastian Bach, and taste under Hasse and the great singers employed in the performance of his operas at Dresden, had made him so complete a musician, that he soon became the umpire in all musical controversy, and was consulted in difficult and knotty points as an infallible oracle. (...) As Abel's invention was not unbounded, and his exquisite taste and deep science prevented the admission of whatever was not highly polished, there seemed in some of his last productions a languor and monotony, which the fire and fertility of younger symphonists and composers of his own country made more obvious. His last quartets, of which he did me the honour to make me a present of his original score as a specimen of his science and care in the composition and arrangement of the parts, though not abounding in new melody, are in point of harmony and selection of sounds, models of perfection, and if printed in score, would be excellent studies for young contrapuntists.

Abel, like other great professors of his own country, played on several instruments, besides that to which he had chiefly pointed his attention. On the harpsichord, though he had not a great hand for lessons, he used to modulate, in arpeggio, with infinite variety and knowledge; and, indeed, when he was in spirits and fancy,

21 The best biographical account of Abel to date is by Walter Knappe, *Karl Friedrich Abel. Leben und Werk eines frühklassischen Komponisten*, Bremen 1973. Charles Sanford Terry, *John Christian Bach*, 1929, London etc. ²1967, p. 76, gives as Abel's first performance a concert at the Dean Street Concert Room, the former palace of the Venetian ambassador on 27 March 1759.



Illustration 3. Carl Friedrich Abel, oil painting by Thomas Gainsborough, 1777. Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California.

I have heard him modulate in private on his six-stringed base with such practical readiness and depth of science, as astonished the late Lord Kelly and Bach, as much as myself.²²

Thomas Gainsborough's 1777 portrait of the composer shows an elegantly dressed, highly sophisticated demeanour. Abel is seated at a table, quill-pen in hand, with viola da gamba and bow at his side, his dog under his chair – and with a jovial, rather mischievous twinkle in his eye. The general impression conveyed by the portrait – that of ease, elegance and grace – is very similar to the one that is conveyed by a general survey of Abel's music. He was perhaps not one of the greatest composers of his time, but, as is so often the case in the history of music, his gifts made an admirable contribution and served as a foil to the greater facility and technical prowess of his more distinguished and adventurous colleague. He is quite rightly overshadowed by J. C. Bach, whose interests and abilities in composition covered a much wider range, but he should be considered Bach's equal as a guide and cultivator of popular taste. In this respect, his music is of crucial importance as a key to trends in musical composition in England between 1760 and 1780. The symphonies and chamber music seem to have made a rapid and immediate impression with their straightforward style, clear-cut formal construction, and simple melodic and harmonic appeal.

The symphonies are probably the works for which he was best known in his lifetime; they appeared regularly in sets of six and were eagerly embraced and played by English musicians of the time. In 1759 Abel's first collection of Six Symphonies, composed back in Dresden, was published and immediately received high acclaim in England, although the symphonies were first published by Jean Julien Hummel in Amsterdam (the first English edition, though undated, was very probably published in 1760 – Op. I is, by the way, the only collection of his symphonies that is not dedicated to anybody).²³ Numerous other symphonies soon followed, both in composition and publication (among them five further cycles consisting of six symphonies each, but also a number of individual items); 44 have definitely survived (compare: c. 50 by J. C. Bach, 34 by Boyce, 24 by W. Herschel, but only nine, of 39 composed, by Marsh; in this comparison, however, Boyce's symphonies have to be regarded mainly as operatic overtures, in contrast to most of the other symphonies mentioned in this comparison). They represent a rather international style, sometimes rather Prussian, as in the first movement of Op. X No. 1, in E major,

22 Charles Burney, *A General History of Music from the earliest ages to 1789*, vol. IV, London 1789, Baden-Baden 1958, pp. 1019–1020.

23 Contemporary sources inform us that Johann Gottlieb Immanuel Breitkopf bought the MSS of the symphonies, but no copy of any publication has ever turned up.

Ex. 6

Allegro

p *mf*

and sometimes thoroughly British (see Burney's description of Abel's considerations how to write slow movements), for example in the rather Handelian slow movement of the same symphony.

Ex. 7

Andante

p *tr*

And here he certainly influenced Mozart's early symphonies, Mozart having had lessons from J. C. Bach. Still, the first movement of the E \flat major Symphony Op. X No. 3 actually opens with a motif similar to that of Beethoven's *Eroica*.

Ex. 8

Allegro

f *p* *f* *tr*

Abel, as Mozart or early Beethoven were to do later, occasionally preferred the subdominant key for the middle movement of a three-movement work, as is the case in four symphonies

of the Op. XIV set as well as in 24 of 36 of his symphonies.²⁴ The delicacy of phrases also seems to foreshadow Mozart, for example in the minuet of Op. XIV No. 2, which is compared by Gwilym Beechey to *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (Serenade in G) K. 525 (it may be remembered that for a very long time Op. VII No. 6 was, due to an existing manuscript copy in young Mozart's hand, presumed to be an early Mozart symphony, K. 18),²⁵ the trio being written for oboes and bassoon alone:

Ex. 9



Abel's writing for woodwind with pedal notes clearly shows his affinity for the Classical Viennese symphony, as in the opening movement of the Symphony in C major Op. XVII No. 4. Many of Abel's contemporaries praise his melodic invention, but his simple, joyous character is similarly reflected in his compositions, suggesting that he would probably have been incapable of the comparatively highly complicated conceptions and ideas of for example Haydn. Johann Adam Hiller, a pupil of Abel's, wrote, announcing the Symphonies Op. VII: 'Abel belongs, as everybody knows, to the pleasing and good composers. He writes with an admirable brightness, and this is to be found in all of his compositions.'²⁶ Accordingly, his slow movements are among the best ones of his time. Gwilym Beechey even stresses that 'often in symphonies and overtures published in England between 1750 and 1780 one will find a good first movement followed by two feeble ones – one substantial piece succeeded by a couple of shorter and inferior companions with little or no melodic, harmonic or rhythmic interest.'²⁷ On the other hand, however, it is true that Abel, avoiding the fashions of his times, wrote practically no vocal compositions – he had no official posts and was thus not required to write odes on a regular basis, unlike William Boyce. His only important contributions to London operatic life were the overtures for the operas *Love in a Village* (1762) and *The Summer's Tale* (1765), by Arne and Arnold, respectively. Apart from his symphonies, Abel wrote orchestral music, mainly concertos, nearly exclusively for flute or cello (his friendship with Johann Baptist Wendling is reflected here). With particular

24 Sanford Helm, *Carl Friedrich Abel, Symphonist: A Biographical, Stylistic, and Bibliographical Study*, Ph.D. dissertation Ann Arbor 1953, p. 101 lists all other techniques for the slow movements: Op. I No. 2, X No. 3 and XIV No. 6 are in the dominant key, Op. I No. 2, X No. 4 and XVII No. 4 in the minor tonic, Op. I No. 5, VII No. 6 and XIV No. 2 in the parallel minor key, and Op. I No. 4, 4 No. 3 and 4 No. 2 in the tonic key.

25 Cf. Gwilym Beechey, 'Carl Friedrich Abel's Six Symphonies, Op. 14', in: *M&L* LI (1970), p. 283.

26 Johann Adam Hiller, 'Fortsetzung der neuen practischen Werke, die im Jahr 1767 in Frankreich zum Vorschein gekommen', in: *Wöchentliche Nachrichten und Anmerkungen die Musik betreffend* III/30 (1768), p. 231.

27 Gwilym Beechey, 'Carl Friedrich Abel's Six Symphonies, Op. 14', in: *M&L* LI (1970), p. 281.

reference to the *Love in a Village* overture, Roger Fiske lists Abel's 'galante style' Mannheim procedures, ending:

'For his third movement Abel followed English rather than *galante* convention and wrote a gavotte. Two years earlier the "Scotch Gavotte" that ended Arne's overture to *Thomas and Sally* had been made into the 'hit' song of the year. Arne tried another gavotte finale in his *Artaxerxes* overture of 1762; luckily for him its banality passed unnoticed in the furore this opera created. (There is an even worse "Scotch Gavotte" in Hook's early pantomime overture, *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia*.)²⁸

It must be stressed that the subscription concerts, in spite of often comparatively small orchestras (often no more than two first violins were available; at Vauxhall, meanwhile, the orchestra seems at times to have contained as many as eight first violins), were often of decent quality. The concerts performed in the countryside were presumably inferior to those given in London, where virtuosos and well-taught musicians worked together to obtain impressive results. This may indeed be another reason why the Mannheim tradition, not only with reference to form, but especially concerning dynamics, became highly successful – the better the orchestra, the better the effect, and the London orchestral forces were of considerable calibre.

Bach received a highly-attended funeral and was eventually buried in Westminster Abbey. When Abel died only five years later, his death was hardly noticed. *The Gentleman's Magazine* ran the following obituary:

'At one o'clock, after three days sleep, without pain, Mr. Abel, the celebrated composer, whose great musical ability was an honour to the age in which he lived. – If he was not styled so great a man as Handel, it was because fashion had ruined music before he took up his pen. His overtures, quartets, and other works, will, however be always in high estimation. Among those who are capable of discerning the inspiration of genius, the subjects of his movements, and the elegant combinations of his harmony, will for ever be attended with admiration.'²⁹

Johann Christian Bach (Leipzig, 5 September 1735–London, 1 January 1782) arrived in London in 1762 after he had been director of music in Milan for six years and established a reputation as a composer of church music and operas³⁰ (shortly afterwards some Italian composers came to England, for example Luigi Borghi, arriving around 1770). When the Mozart family came to London in 1764 they were heartily welcomed by Bach, who had become Music Master to Queen Charlotte (a born princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz), who remained a good friend until his death, and even taught eight-year-old Wolfgang.³¹ For quite

28 Roger Fiske, *English Theatre Music in the Eighteenth Century*, London etc. 1973, p. 291.

29 Obituary, in: *The Gentleman's Magazine* LVII/1 (1787), p. 549.

30 On Bach's biography cf. e.g. Charles Sanford Terry, *John Christian Bach*, 1929, London etc. ²1967.

31 Frederick Hudson, 'Musikalische Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und England im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung Händels, Mozarts, Haydns und Mendelssohns', in: *Musica* 12 (1958), p. 403.

a while Bach and Abel shared a house in King's Square Court, and then moved to Queen Street, Golden Square, before taking separate residences in 1771. On 23 January 1765 the first of the Bach-Abel concerts took place in Mrs. Teresa Cornelys's Rooms in Carlisle House, Soho Square;³² in 1768 they were moved to 'Mr. Almack's Great Room' in King Street, St. James's. In 1774 they returned, after Mrs. Cornelys's bankruptcy, to Carlisle House, and then in summer of the same year, the Hanover Square Rooms were established and used from 1 February 1775. Sometime after May 1773 Bach married the singer Cecilia Grassi, moving to 80 Newman Street before January 1774.³³ In 1776 Bach and his wife moved to Richmond to be closer to the royal court, but when a thieving housekeeper withheld £1,100–1,200, he was forced to give up his household as early as 1779.



Illustration 4. Hanover Square Rooms, watercolour by Thomas Hosmer Shepherd, 1830. There appears to be no earlier pictorial documentation of this famous concert venue.

32 Another concert room had been 59 Dean Street, Soho, which had been in use by Felice Giardini (1716–1796) starting in 1751. Giardini became the music director of the Italian Opera at the King's Theatre in 1755, took charge of the Three Choirs Festival orchestra, was Music Master to the Duke of Gloucester, performed in the Bach-Abel concerts and often led the Pantheon Concerts at Oxford Street from 1774 to 1779; he left England in 1784 after failing to revive his reputation in London; he eventually died in Moscow. From 1738 until 1779, though by no means exclusively for musical purposes, Mr. Hickford's Room was used.

33 Charles Sanford Terry, *John Christian Bach*, 1929, London etc. ²1967, p. 138.

One year prior to Abel, Bach was painted by Thomas Gainsborough, and if his portrait is a true likeness, he was robust in appearance. His premature death therefore invited allegations against his character. Macfarren, in *The Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography*, did not scruple to assert that while Bach's marriage to Cecilia Grassi may have cured him of his gallantry, it did not check his propensity to drink, and that in his last years, 'he [...] rarely wrote save under spirituous excitement.'³⁴ Charles Sanford Terry countered that 'There is not a tittle of evidence to support either reckless accusation. Mrs. Papendiek appears to attribute Bach's premature death in chief measure to financial worries and declining popularity. They would hardly depress a constitution inherently robust.'³⁵ His younger sister predeceased him in August 1781, and both may have inherited to a lesser degree the physical disability which carried off so many of their elders in the old Leipzig home.

Unlike Abel's, many of Bach's symphonies were composed for operas, as was usual for most composers in London. Bach's style was, in comparison to Abel's, already quite advanced fairly early on; Italian influences are clearly evident, possibly intensified by the operatic tradition he had been nurtured by. Bach seems to have been rather less impressed by Boyce or the Prussians – as will be obvious already in the finale of the D major Symphony Op. III No. 1 (published 1765). Similarly, we can easily find movements which show how much the London musical scene influenced Mozart, for example the slow movement of Op. III No. 4.

Ex. 10

Andantino, sempre piano

The musical score for Ex. 10 is arranged in five staves. The top staff is for 2 Ob. (Oboe). The second and third staves are for VI. I and VI. II (Violins I and II). The fourth staff is for Vla (Viola). The bottom staff is for Vc. e Basso (Violoncello and Bass). The tempo and dynamics are marked 'Andantino, sempre piano'. The VI. II staff includes the instruction 'staccato assai pizz.' (staccato very much pizzicato). The Vla and Vc. e Basso staves also include 'pizz.' (pizzicato). The music consists of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

34 George Alexander Macfarren, 'John Christian Bach', in: *The Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography, comprising a series of original memoirs of distinguished men, of all ages & all nations*, ed. by John Francis Waller, vol. 1, p. 323.

35 Charles Sanford Terry, *John Christian Bach*, 1929, London etc. ²1967, pp. 164–165.



Illustration 5. Johann Christian Bach, oil painting by Thomas Gainsborough, 1776. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for J.S. Bach's Op. 8 No. 4. The first system shows the beginning of the Minuet in G major, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. It includes a violin part with a triplet of eighth notes, a piano part with a steady eighth-note accompaniment, and a cello/bass part with a simple harmonic accompaniment. The second system shows the beginning of the Andante in G major, also in 3/4 time. It features a violin part with a melodic line, a piano part with a steady eighth-note accompaniment, and a cello/bass part with a simple harmonic accompaniment. The word 'arco' is written above the cello/bass part in the second system.

Bach's Op. 8 No. 4 was apparently written while he was still in Milan or shortly afterwards; this is suggested by the hybrid binary sonata structure of the first movement and the minuet finale. Lombardic rhythm, which appeared in the opening material of the second group in the first movement, dominates the Andante.³⁶ Minuets as finales, as found in Haydn but also in Giovanni Battista Sammartini (?1700/01–Milan, 15 January 1775), one of Bach's senior contemporaries in Milan, are comparatively rare in British symphonism, but can be found in a number of Bach's symphonies (Op. III No. 4, Op. 8 No. 4, Op. XVIII No. 5 and Op. 9=XXI No. 2 (the cycle has two different opus numberings; the first was derived from a London pirate imprint by Longman & Lukey, the predecessor firm to Longman & Broderip, which after Bach's death edited a third edition of Op. XXI – which shows the symphonies' popularity).

In some respects Bach was very advanced for his time. New research indicates that in as early as 1773 he was already using clarinets instead of the usual oboes – although several contemporary editions replaced these clarinets parts with the more usual and – more importantly, available – oboes. It may be recalled that clarinets are present in scores in as

36 Cf. Ernest Warburton, 'J. C. Bach', in: *Carl Friedrich Abel · Johann Christian Bach*, ed. by Franklin B. Zimmerman, Ernest Warburton and C. R. F. Maunder, New York/London 1983 (*The Symphony 1720–1840*, EII), pp. xxviii–xxix.

early as c. 1710, by the 1740s at the latest; in England, the instruments were well known from operas and other works by Handel, Arne and Bach himself from as early as 1727. The use of the clarinet in symphonies was doubtlessly strongly influenced by the Mannheim school, although Vivaldi and Rameau also used it in some of their compositions.

Bach also frequently wrote for double orchestra, a comparatively rare sight in the British symphonies which have come down to us – the only known exceptions are three symphonies by Bach (in Op. XVIII, probably published in 1781, very close to Bach's death) and one by John Marsh (1778). Only the woodwind are divided into separate groups (oboes and bassoons on one side, flutes on the other); both orchestras contain strings. An 1805 account tells us that Bach's 'symphonies are considered infinitely more original than either his songs or his harpsichord pieces. His symphony for a double orchestra in the key of C (composed for his own concerts) is perhaps one of the most original, and effective compositions ever heard.³⁷ There is no proof of a Symphony for double orchestra in C, and for this reason another example is furnished (the beginning of the E major Symphony Op. XVIII No. 5).

Ex. 11

Vln., Vla., Vlc., Cb.

p

Fl. I e II, Vln., Vla., Vlc., Cb.

pp

37 William Thomas Parke, *Musical Memoirs; Comprising an Account of the General State of Music in England*, vol. I, London 1830, pp. 349–350.

Late in his life Bach also wrote a four-movement symphony (the work in question was published only posthumously in 1782), thus touching upon a genre which remained very rare in Britain until the end of the century (among the first examples one has to count Collett's Symphony Op. 2 No. 5 of c. 1755, see p. 44, Marsh's Symphonies Nos. 4–6 of his 6 Favourite Symphonies, published in c. 1796, see pp. 75ff., and Wesley's Sixth Symphony of 1802, see pp. 90ff.).

Ex. 12: Op. XVIII No. 6, fourth movement

Bach's most important achievement is the extension of musical phrases in which two linked and still contrasting musical thoughts are combined, a device typical of the Classical symphony that can also be found in Abel's later symphonies.

Bach and Abel were highly regarded internationally, and Burney caught wind of their praise even in Italy. Abel never married and was well known for his alcoholism, which nonetheless made him play even better than when sober (it well may be that Macfarren mistakenly assigned Abel's alcoholism to Bach). When Bach died in 1782, Abel took pains to continue the concerts (in part to reduce Bach's debts), but then left London for two years to see his family in Germany (other sources assert that he fled because he was in debt himself³⁸). He returned to London in 1785 to participate in the concerts which had meanwhile continued under the name of the Professional Concerts and were organised by Lord Abingdon. The participating instrumentalists included, among many others, Johann Peter Salomon (who was baptized in Bonn, 20 February 1745, coming to London in 1781 and dying there on 28 November 1815, two years after becoming a founding member of the Philharmonic Society), François-Hippolyte Barthélemon, Muzio Clementi, Mannheim-born Wilhelm Cramer (later Abel's successor as director of the orchestra) and Johann Samuel Schröter, a pupil of both Abel's and Bach's. The orchestra of 1783 consisted of 16 violins, 3 violas, 2 basses, 2 of each woodwind (including clarinets and bassoons) and 2 horns.³⁹

38 Max Schwarz, *Johann Christian Bach: sein Leben und seine Werke, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Symphonien und Kammermusik, nebst einem Kataloge seiner sämtlichen Kompositionen und zwei noch nicht veröffentlichten Briefen*, Ph.D. dissertation Berlin 1901, in: *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 2 (1900/01), p. 420; part print Leipzig 1901, p. 24.

39 Quoted from Walter Knappe, *Karl Friedrich Abel. Leben und Werk eines frühklassischen Komponisten*, Bremen 1973, p. 76.

Simon McVeigh has surveyed the situation extensively, listing the entire programmes of nearly all concerts given in London in 1783-93, which most evidently showcases the rise of Haydn's music. In this pre-copyright era, Haydn tried (as Beethoven would later on) to sell as new works of his that had already been played elsewhere; in this case, however, it was the rival concert societies which caused him considerable distress.⁴⁰ After Abel's death in 1787 and following the Society's failure to establish composer Ignaz Pleyel as a counterpersonality to Haydn (promoted by Salomon from 1791 on), the Professional Concerts ended in 1793.⁴¹ (A comparable situation emerges later in the history of the Philharmonic and the New Philharmonic Society – see pp. 110f.)

Thomas Norris (Mere, Wiltshire, baptized 15 August 1741–Himley Hall, nr. Stourbridge, 3 September 1790) began his career as a chorister at Salisbury Cathedral and soon became a famous and highly successful countertenor soloist, singing at the Three Choirs Festivals of 1761 until 1788, at the same time holding organist and lay clerk posts at the University of Oxford (St. John's College, Christ Church and Magdalen College). He composed mainly church music, catches, canons and glees and some eight overtures and symphonies, with a first set of six published in c. 1772 and the last one (to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*) written in 1784. Roger Fiske feels that Norris's early first movements are remarkable for their lack of form. All have clearly defined second subjects (those in Nos. 2 and 6 are especially attractive), and in all but No. 3 the exposition is repeated, a practice which was still unusual in England at the time. 'Norris had perhaps noticed that Bach did not always recapitulate his first subject; the trouble is that he does not return to the second subject either, or indeed to anything at all except briefly in no. 5. Thus the second parts of his first movements, which are sometimes shorter than their first parts, never satisfy modern expectations.'⁴² His compositions are neither melodically nor harmonically especially interesting; consequently, they – and he – have been nearly entirely forgotten.

François-Hippolyte Barthélémon (Bordeaux, 27 July 1741–London, 20 July 1808), already a highly-praised violinist in France, came to London in 1764 at the instigation of Thomas Alexander Erskine (see p. 62), performing there for the first time at the Spring Garden concerts on 5 June at the benefit for the Mozart children. He was Arnold's (see p. 49) bandleader at the Marylebone Gardens concerts, but was also performing in many other places, and composing and performing stage music (his first wife and first daughter were singers). He wrote only little independent instrumental music, with fourteen cycles of

40 Simon McVeigh, 'The Professional Concert and Rival Subscription Series in London, 1783–1793', in: *The Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 22 (1989), pp. 9–10.

41 A comprehensive overview of the situation is given by Simon McVeigh, 'The Professional Concert and Rival Subscription Series in London, 1783–1793', in: *The Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 22 (1989), pp. 1–135.

42 Roger Fiske, 'Concert Music II', in H. Diack Johnstone/Roger Fiske (eds.), *The Eighteenth Century. The Blackwell History of Music in Britain*, vol. 4, Oxford/Cambridge (Mass.) 1990, pp. 223–224.

works being applied with opus numbers only. Among them we find the Six sinfonies (Op. 3, published in Paris 1769) and Six Overtures Op. 6 (published in London 1776). Barthélémon's style has been described as charming, but without real personality and invention.

Barthélémon's instrumental music contains three orchestral sets: six symphonies, six concertos, six overtures, plus one 'orchestre quartett', a typical description for an orchestral composition in four parts. Barthélémon can by no means be considered a symphony specialist. Nevertheless, his handling of the medium is assured, if not attaining great heights.

Five of the Six Overtures, Op. 6 have the three-movement plan *Allegro – Andante (Adagio) – Allegro*, but one (No. 5) has only two movements, *Allegro* and *Ciaccona*. In this respect they are somewhat removed from the Mannheim style of symphony of four movements with a minuet, (which was, as mentioned above, rare in Britain anyway), although they do display certain other features indicative of an interest in if not a total adherence to Mannheim, such as a carefully controlled use of dynamic effect. His sonata movements show considerable thematic differentiation, the likes of which can be seen in the works of J. C. Bach and Abel, and the recapitulation sections are complete rather than truncated.

Overture Op. 6 No. 1 has its two outer movements in G major and uses the full orchestra. The wind instruments are not used independently, but mostly double the strings or play sustained harmonies over string figurations. The first movement is in sonata form; the last movement is a fugato in which the string entries of the short triadic theme are each time doubled by a wind part. Some entries in the latter part of the movement are entrusted to the wind alone.

Ex. 13

Finale. Allegro

The middle movement is in E \flat major and for strings only. It is in ternary form and gracefully *galant* in style in contrast to the more robust, larger and orchestrally conceived effects of the outer two movements.⁴³

43 Cf. Susan Kirakowska, 'François-Hippolyte Barthélémon', in: *The Symphony and Overture in Great Britain. Twenty Works*, ed. by Richard Platt, Susan Kirakowska, David Johnson and Thomas McIntosh, New York/London 1984 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EI), p. lxxxix.

One of **John Collett's** (c. 1735–Edinburgh, 1775) symphonies was the first British four-movement symphony (Op. 2 No. 5), but nonetheless with the note that either the minuet or the finale be played (both movements are in triple time). Little is known about Collett except that he was a violinist at the Vauxhall Gardens and the Foundling Hospital for years. He was probably the son of Richard or Thomas Collett. Indeed, John and Richard are frequently confused. Richard, too, was a well-known and eminent violinist. The 'Deed of Trust' of the Royal Society of Musicians dated 28 August 1739 contains the names of both Richard and Thomas Collett, Richard having been one of the twelve governors elected at the time. John Collett did not join the society until 5 June 1757, when the signature 'J. Collett' appears in the admission book. In 1745 Richard Collett was leader of the band at Vauxhall. Mortimer's *Universal Director* of 1763⁴⁴ lists him as Richard Collett, senior, first violin at Drury Lane Theatre. 'Senior' was presumably used to differentiate him from John Collett, who is also listed as a violinist living at Queen Street, Golden Square. Wellész and Sternfeld describe Collett as 'cruder than Kelly as a composer, nevertheless [he] shares his rhythmic vigour, clear grasp of form, and even some aspects of Mannheim dynamics, though applied on a smaller scale.'⁴⁵ Well-known, and also possessing Mannheim dynamics, was Collett's overture to *Midas* (1764), which was published in his collection of symphonies as Op. 2 No. 3.

John Collett's earliest publication, the set of *Six solos for the violin with a thorough bass for ye harpsichord* (c. 1758), reveals a very capable composer who understood how to write effectively for the violin. In 1766 Collett (the dedication page of Op. 2 suggests by the wording 'young Adventurer' that he was still a young man at that time) wrote the music for one of Garrick's Drury Lane pantomimes, *The hermit, or Harlequin at Rhodes*, and the overture, recitatives and songs from it were published in the same year. He also wrote some songs for the pleasure gardens; John and Richard Collett both had songs published as 'Sung by Mr. Lowe at Marybone Gardens' (c. 1765).

John Collett moved to Scotland and remained there for the rest of his life. The minute books of the Aberdeen Musical Society (established in 1748) in June 1770 record him as having 'taken a lodging in Town, and stands in need of some assistance for furnishing it.' He was given ten pounds and advanced another ten pounds from his salary by the Society. He appears to have remained in financial straits, however, for on 31 May 1771, an *ex gratia* payment 'owing to the distressed circumstances of her family' was made to Mrs. Collett, who had sung for them. In September 1771 John Collett's employment with the society ended.

Collett moved to Edinburgh, where he found employment with the Edinburgh Musical Society (see p. 62) in November 1771. The Society at that time was fashionable and influential,

44 Thomas Mortimer, *The Universal Director: or, the Nobleman and Gentleman's true guide to the Masters and Professors of the liberal and polite arts and sciences, and of the mechanic arts, manufactures, ... established in London and Westminster, and their environs, etc.*, London 1763, part I, p. 32.

45 Egon Wellész/F. W. Sternfeld, 'The Early Symphony', in E. Wellész/F. W. Sternfeld (eds.), *The Age of Enlightenment, 1745–1790. New Oxford History of Music*, vol. VII, London etc. 1973, p. 430.

attracting visiting performers from London and abroad; the Earl of Kelly (see p. 62) was its deputy governor, which may have affected Collett's decision to go there. The accounts list several payments to Collett, including the purchase of 'a Sett of his Overtures' for twelve shillings in 1774. He also became a member of the Cape Club, a social club to which many poets, artists and musicians belonged. Through the Cape Club he probably became acquainted with the poet Robert Fergusson, whose words he set to a cantata, *The Ode on the Rivers of Scotland* (c. 1772, lost). The *Birthday Cantata for Andrew Crosbie*, also composed in Edinburgh (c. 1773), has survived: it is for soprano, violin and bass, and is very much in the tradition of English vocal music, such as that of Boyce or Arne. Collett died in 1775, apparently in arrears for a subscription to a 'fund for decayed Musicians'.

The first edition of John Collett's set of *Six Symphonies or Overtures in 8 & 10 parts with a thorough bass for the Harpsichord*, Op. 2, was published by Bremner probably around 1766. Collett stated that they had been performed at 'Vauxhall, Marybone Gardens, & the Theatres'. Collett's dedication to 'The Right Honourable Thomas Earl of Kelly' reveals a close association between the two men, and links Collett to the music of Johann Stamitz. Kelly was the first British composer to write in the Mannheim style, and even though he did not train any pupils, he may have set an example for the younger English symphonists of the 1760s. Kelly's *Six Overtures* Op. 1 were published by Bremner in 1761, and Collett's style is very similar to Kelly's in these early works, albeit somewhat cruder in detail. They have a good sense of form and rely on rhythmic vigour, the use of violin tremolos, and the newly fashionable *crescendi* and dynamic contrasts. Jan LaRue compares the slow movements of Op. 2 No. 2, with respect to 'melodic fluency and control, the power to project a line with logic as well as some element of special invention or surprise', rather favourably with Johann Christian Bach's 'best *cantabile* movements'.⁴⁶

Stylistically, Collett's symphonies are very consistent. They all have similar annunciatory openings, usually followed by a long *crescendo* passage. Most of the secondary material contains repetition of canonic motifs around repeated quavers on the viola or second violin. The slow movements, all of which are in the subdominant, rely on galant mannerisms rather than on any strong melodic features. The finales are all in binary form. Op. 2 Nos. 2 and 4 have quick minuet rhythms; the *The hermit* overture ends with a 6/8 gigue. The latter has survived not only in its printed version, but also in an earlier autograph score, whose outer movements are slightly different; the middle movement was entirely re-written. The movement contains material similar to the *Andante* in Op. 2 No. 5, which may explain why Collett substituted a different one for the printed version.

The instrumentation follows the conventional pattern for published symphonic music of the period, with strings, oboes, horns and bassoons. In Op. 2 Nos. 1 and 3 the wind instruments are given a subordinate role, with the oboes either doubling or giving support

46 Jan LaRue, 'The English symphony: some additions and annotations to Charles Cudworth's published studies', in Christopher Hogwood/Richard Luckett (ed.), *Music in Eighteenth-Century England*, Cambridge etc. 1983, p. 215.

Op.
SIX
SYMPHONIES
or
OVERTURES
In 8 & 10 Parts

with a THOROUGH BASS for the

HARPSICHORD

As Perform'd at VAUX-HALL, MARYBONE GARDENS, & the THEATRES

Dedicated to

*The Right Honourable
Thomas Earl of Kelly.*

Composed by

JOHN COLLETT

Opera Secunda

Enter'd in Stationers Hall.

LONDON Printed by the AUTHOR, and Sold at R. Bremner in the Strand, D. Rutherford, St. Martins
Court, Leicester Fields. Thorowgood, Whitaker in the Royal Exchange. T. Smith piccadilly. and
M. Rauche in Chandos Street near Covent Garden

Illustration 6. John Collett: Six Symphonies or Overtures, Op. 2, title page.

to the violins, and the horns are silent only in the slow movement of Op. 2 No. 3. This symphony is also the only one of his with no printed bassoon part. Elsewhere Collett gives the bassoons a role independent from the bass, although the solo passages are usually in the horns and oboes. The parts give us a clear idea of the usual but unwritten relationship between bassoons and bass, with the wind instruments replacing the repeated string quavers with sustained notes. Solo sections for the oboes are used primarily in the opening movements as a means of contrast, moving from a tutti passage to the two oboes in thirds or sixths accompanied by sustained notes in the bass or viola. Op. 2 Nos. 5 and 6 give the oboes and horns extensive solo passages, and as the music is more dependent on sound than ideas, the more colourful the orchestration the better the result.⁴⁷

John Abraham Fisher (Dunstable, 1744–London, 1806) was mainly, and for a long period (1763–78), leader at the King’s Theatre, then at Covent Garden, in 1777 graduating B.Mus. and D.Mus. at Oxford. After his wife’s death in around 1780, he started to travel Europe and in 1783 arrived in Vienna, where he married Nancy Storace; the marriage lasted barely longer than a year, with Joseph II banishing him on account of marital cruelty. Very little is known of his later life, but he supposedly lived in Ireland, returning at some point to England. Fisher composed a small quantity of instrumental music; the Six Symphonies, published in c. 1775, and an Overture in E^b major were the only orchestral compositions to have survived. The Six Symphonies were fashioned, in Mannheim style, with more skill than for example demonstrated by Collett, and reveal a natural talent for pleasing melody. ‘Particular sensitive to orchestral effects, Fisher exploits pizzicato (Symphony no. 2), wind instruments (notably bassoon solos in the slow movements of nos. 2 and 4), distinction of cello from contrabass, and careful dynamic gradation, including what may be the earliest printed *ppp*, at the end of the slow movement of Symphony no. 2.’⁴⁸ Surprisingly, only three violin concertos for his continental tour were published in Berlin in c. 1782; most of his other compositions were vocal, including a considerable amount of stage music. Perhaps most importantly, in Symphony No. 5, the bassoon and the violoncello begin to assume individual roles – each has solo sections as well as greater independence in general. Examples of the bassoon’s importance can be found in the opening movement, bars 49ff; bars 3–5 of the same movement are an excellent example of the careful use of dynamics.⁴⁹

47 Cf. Richard Platt, ‘John Collett’, in: *The Symphony and Overture in Great Britain. Twenty Works*, ed. by Richard Platt, Susan Kirakowska, David Johnson and Thomas McIntosh, New York/London 1984 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EI), p. lii.

48 Egon Wellész/F. W. Sternfeld, ‘The Early Symphony’, in E. Wellész/F. W. Sternfeld (eds.), *The Age of Enlightenment, 1745–1790. New Oxford History of Music*, vol. VII, London etc. 1973, p. 430.

49 Cf. Thomas McIntosh, ‘John Abraham Fisher’, in: *The Symphony and Overture in Great Britain. Twenty Works*, ed. by Richard Platt, Susan Kirakowska, David Johnson and Thomas McIntosh, New York/London 1984 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EI), p. lx.

Ex. 14

49 Fl. solo
p
Fg.
Vln. I e II
p
Cor
p
Vla., Vlc., Cb.
f
p
cresc.

Detailed description: This musical score for Example 14 is in G major and 3/4 time. It begins at measure 49. The Flute (Fl.) has a solo part with a melody of eighth notes and rests, marked *p*. The Flute also plays a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure. The Violin I and II (Vln. I e II) play a continuous triplet of eighth notes, marked *p*. The Corno (Cor) plays a sustained chord, marked *p*. The Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabasso (Vla., Vlc., Cb.) play a triplet of eighth notes, marked *f*. The Flute solo concludes with a triplet of eighth notes, marked *p*. The score includes dynamic markings *p* and *f*, and a *cresc.* marking in the final measure.

Ex. 15

3 Archi, Fg.
p
cresc.

Detailed description: This musical score for Example 15 is in G major and 3/4 time. It begins at measure 3. The strings (Archi) and Flute (Fg.) play a steady eighth-note accompaniment, marked *p*. The Flute has a melodic line with eighth notes and rests. The score includes a *cresc.* marking in the final measure.

Of **William Smethergell's** life we know even less than of Fisher's; his compositions were published between c. 1770 and 1805. He was organist at St. Margaret's on the Hill, Southwark, and Allhallows, Barking, and was apparently also a busy teacher. He seems to have been hardly involved in operatic events, but some of his songs were published. It may even be that he composed nearly exclusively for domestic purposes, apart from his songs and some chamber music, only seven harpsichord concertos (published in c. 1775 and 1784, respectively) and two sets of Overtures in 8 Parts were published (Opp. 2 and 5, published in c. 1778 and c. 1790, respectively, with the second set even being republished shortly thereafter), some of which may have been performed when he was steward of the subscription concerts at the King's Arms Tavern, Cornhill, but some of which were considered good enough to be performed at Vauxhall (where he was principal viola). In any case, they were successful enough to justify a second edition of Op. 5. Woodwind were very subordinate to the ruling strings in nearly all movements of all Overtures, some of which are described as 'delightful movements in a light and assertive *galant* style'.⁵⁰

Ex. 16

50 Owain Edwards, 'Smethergell, William', in: *Grove6* vol. 17, London etc. 1980, p. 409.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, who followed the Mannheim influence, Smethergell did not always begin his overtures with the usual annunciatory chords. In his first set Op. 2, Nos. 4, 5 and 6 all begin *piano*, as do Nos. 4 and 6 in Op. 5. Nos. 2 and 3 in the latter set begin with a kind of question-and-answer form. Generally, the second set uses more complex units of contrasting themes, possibly influenced by J. C. Bach, and the use of counterpoint is more remarkable, particularly in the first movements of Nos. 3 and 4.

Smethergell displays a particular gift ‘in the melodic and emotional tenderness of his slow movements’;⁵¹ for this he is considered to be part of an ‘an English tradition’ linking him with composers such as Arne and Boyce. As was common in his time, he favoured the subdominant key for the slow movements, using it in eight of his twelve overtures; two of the remaining overtures have middle movements in the relative minor. The majority of the finales follow the traditional pattern, either in lively 3/8 or 6/8 or minuet rhythm. ‘The thematic links between the finale of Smethergell’s Opus 2, no. 1, and that of no. 1 of Arne’s *Four new overtures or symphonies* (1767) seem too close to be mere coincidence.’⁵²

Smethergell is rather conventional in his instrumentation, using the standard orchestra of that time, strings, oboes and horns. Still, some development in his concept of the wind group between Op. 2 and Op. 5 is clearly evident. In the first set, except for No. 6, the horns are mainly used to carry the harmony and the oboes to colour the dynamics, either doubling the violins or giving support to the strings. When the bassoons and oboes are given solo passages in the second set, they have more value in the musical structure than before. ‘However, more colorful orchestration does not necessarily coincide with the best music (...). Flutes are mentioned in two movements of Opus 5. In no. 3 they were probably played by the oboeists, but in both cases their appearance is very brief, and even then they only double the violins an octave higher.’⁵³

Samuel Arnold (London, 10 August 1740–London, 22 October 1802) studied music at the Chapel Royal with Bernard Gates and James Nares. At the age of 24 he became harpsichordist and musical assistant at Covent Garden, compiling three pasticcis, of which the most successful was *The Maid of the Mill* (1765), whose original music was composed by J. C. Bach, Arnold himself and Erskine (the overture; see p. 62), but most of its music derived from pre-existing works. Having married an heiress, Arnold became the new owner of the Marylebone Gardens in 1769 – with Barthélémon as his bandleader – but had to sell the Gardens in 1776, three years after he had graduated D.Mus. at Oxford (he had declined an offer of an Hon. D.Mus. shortly before). First returning to Covent Garden and there substituting for Dibdin, who had fled abroad in debt, in 1777 he became regular composer

51 Richard Platt, ‘William Smethergell’, in: *William Herschel · William Smethergell · Samuel Wesley · Samuel Sebastian Wesley*, ed. by Sterling E. Murray, Richard Platt, Richard Divall and John I. Schwarz, New York/London 1983 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EIII), p. xl.

52 *Ibid.*, p. xl.

53 *Ibid.*, p. xl.

to the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, and in 1783 also succeeded Nares as organist and composer to the Chapel Royal. In 1787 he established a glee club with John Wall Callcott (see p. 51), who later helped him edit a volume of psalm settings. He went on to become official conductor of the Academy of Antient Music in 1789 and in 1790 founded the Graduates Meeting, a society of academic musicians of which Haydn was a member. Later he wrote important books (among them a continuation of Boyce's series of *Cathedral Music*) and edited a considerable amount of music by Handel; in 1793 he succeeded Benjamin Cooke as organist of Westminster Abbey. In accordance with his interests and possibilities, Arnold's main output was vocal and stage music. Six overtures of his (Op. 8) were published in 1771, probably in connection with his engagement in the Marylebone Gardens concerts; his scoring here as well as in his operatic overtures shows variety and originality, though in the operatic field his invention was even better. The Six overtures (for 2 horns, 2 oboes and strings) remained his sole orchestral set, but soon decreased in popularity, as did many of his contemporaries' symphonies, including those written by James Hook. They are, in fact, finely crafted – even sophisticated – works, albeit not highly original.⁵⁴

In connection with J. C. Bach and Abel, **James Hook** (Norwich, ?3 June 1746–Boulogne, 1827) is also worthy of mention. Physically handicapped, he in early years took lessons with Thomas Garland, the organist of Norwich Cathedral, and Burney. About 1763–64 he moved to London and became organist at White Conduit House, a tea-house in Clerkenwell; he began writing music either for entertainment or for domestic purposes. In 1765 he wrote a prize-winning catch, and around the same time enjoyed great success with a symphony-overture written in Mannheim style for a Richmond Theatre pantomime, *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia* (1766), which he also performed while visiting Norwich the same year. A 'Full Symphony' for Vauxhall, where it was first performed on 11 August 1787, has been lost; only his symphony-overtures have survived. In 1769 Hook was offered and accepted the post of the organist of Marylebone Gardens, taking a similar post in Vauxhall Gardens in 1774 (for which he wrote his organ concertos). Apart from this activity, he was a prolific piano teacher, being one generation earlier than Clementi. Hook indeed was so much influenced by the revival of Baroque music (in 1784 the first Handel Commemoration Festival took place, and as a consequence, Geminiani, Veracini, Vivaldi, Roseingrave and Corelli remained well-loved in London for quite a long period thereafter as well) that he composed two or three overtures 'in the ancient style' in about 1810,⁵⁵ ten years before his retirement from the Vauxhall post. However, this kind of style was now used rather for ceremonial occasions, such as the Installation of Chancellors at Oxford and Cambridge,⁵⁶ and in the Academy and Concerts of Antient Music. This dichotomy of ancient and more

54 Only recently have the Overtures been revived by Kevin Mallon and the Toronto Chamber Orchestra (Naxos 2006), based on editions supplied by Robert Hoskins, published by Artaria Editions.

55 The organ mentioned for No. II is written colla parte to the cello part.

56 Nicholas Temperley, 'Handel's Influence on English Music', in: *MMR* XC (1960), p. 169.

modern style was already clearly realized by Hook's contemporary John Marsh in 1796.⁵⁷ William Jackson wrote in 1791:

‘The old Concerto is now lost, and modern Full-Pieces are either in the form of Overtures or Symphonies. The Overture of the Italian Opera never pretends to much; that of the English Opera always endeavours to have an Air somewhere, and the endeavour alone makes it acceptable. As the first movement of the Overture is most commonly like that of a Symphony, what I have said of the latter will do for both. (...) [This kind of music had been introduced by Franz Xaver Richter at Mannheim and was successfully taken up by Abel.] But later Composers, to be grand and original, have poured out in such floods of nonsense, under the sublime idea of *being inspired*, that the present Symphony bears the same relation to good Music, as the ravings of a Bedlamite do to sober sense. Sometimes the Key is perfectly lost, by wandering so far from it, that there is no road to return – but extremes meet at last of themselves. The Measure is so perplexed by arbitrary divisions of Notes, that it seems as if the Composer intended to exhibit a Table of twos, threes, and fours. And, when Discords get entangled, that it is past the art of man to untie the knot, something in the place of Alexander's sword does the business at once. All these paltry shifts to conceal the want of Air, can never be admitted to supply it's [sic] place.’⁵⁸

In 1784 the first of two sinfonias by **John Wall Callcott** (Kensington, London, 20 November 1766–Bristol, 15 May 1821) was composed.⁵⁹ Son of a builder, Callcott was mainly self-taught, becoming acquainted with Samuel Arnold and Benjamin Cooke in 1782. A year later, through Attwood's good offices, he became assistant organist at St. George the Martyr, Bloomsbury. A short time later he started composing glees, and was highly successful in this field. He then began to write other kinds of music, including oratorios, secular choral cantatas and a small quantity of instrumental music. Taking over other organists' posts later, he took a few lessons with Haydn in 1791 to improve his abilities in instrumentation (apparently without lasting effect, because no change in direction of his chosen genres of composition is known), and became a highly respected teacher. He became well known as a music theorist, publishing two books on music⁶⁰ – his voluminous dictionary of music, however, remained unfinished at his death. In 1806 Callcott was appointed in succession to Crotch (see p. 97) to lecture on German music, but suffered a mental collapse soon afterwards and was in an asylum until 1812. By then he had partly recovered, but a second stroke followed in 1816, and he never regained his health.

Callcott's two sinfonias again were for the modest forces of 2 oboes, 2 horns and strings

57 Charles Cudworth (ed.), ‘An Essay by John Marsh’, in: *M&L* XXXVI (1955), pp. 155–164.

58 William Jackson, *Observations on the present state of Music in London*, London 1791, pp. 15–17. It may be recalled that Haydn's first visit to England was just about to happen when this book was published.

59 Sinfonia No. 1 was apparently originally intended for an operatic composition, as the last page of the MS score demonstrates, an opening of an Act I.

60 *An Explanation of the Notes, Marks, Words &c. Used in Music* (1793) and *A Musical Grammar* (1806).

(in the listing of parts, even bassoons are not mentioned specifically, but probably simply implied under ‘Baſſo’). Neither was premièred at any of the better-known subscription concerts. Callcott himself noted that No. 1 was performed at Mrs. Adams’ Glass House in Piccadilly on 10 February 1784, and No. 2 at the General Post Office, Lombard Street on 5 October 1785. The works were certainly not up to date, but rather of the fashion of the 1760s, with some features of the Mannheim style, for example pedal-notes:

Ex. 17: Sinfonia No. 2 in F major, first movement, beginning

The musical score for the beginning of Sinfonia No. 2 in F major, first movement, is presented in three systems. The top staff is for Cor I e II and Fl. I e II. The middle staff is for Vln. (Violins). The bottom staff is for Vla., Vc., Cb., (Fg.) (Viola, Violoncello, Contrabasso, and Fagotto). The music is in F major and 3/4 time. The first system shows the initial rhythmic pattern with dynamics *p* and *f*. The second system continues the pattern with dynamics *p* and *f*. The third system shows the music developing with dynamics *p* and *f*.

A kind of new influence, though less powerful than that of Bach-Abel or Haydn, was **Muzio Clementi** (Rome, 23 January 1752–Evesham, Worcester, 10 March 1832), who had settled in England possibly by the age of 15, having been ‘bought’ from his father by Peter Beckford, a cousin of the novelist, in 1766 or 1767. After seven years of service he moved to London, probably in 1774. He soon became a prominent figure in London musical life, playing for Marie Antoinette in 1780 while on continental travels and in 1781 contesting with Mozart, who was only four years his junior. He returned in 1783 to London, where he accepted young J. B. Cramer as his pupil and soon became regular harpsichordist at the Hanover Square concerts. Clementi appeared in these concerts until 1790, his symphonies dating, like Haydn’s famous “Paris Symphonies”, from c. 1786 (very probably written for this purpose), and performing in London until 1796. The concert seasons that Haydn spent in England (1791-92 and 1794-95) unequivocally established the Londoners’ preference for

his music, and Clementi was one of many who lost in competition with Haydn. In the 1781 piano competition, Clementi was forced to face the fact that Mozart was superior to him, and eventually things turned out as described by the *Journal de Paris* of 1817: ‘The second half of the concert began with a grand symphony in four long movements by Clementi; the audience would have preferred a symphony of Haydn, of Mozart or of Beethoven.’⁶¹ This does not mean that Clementi was entirely unsuccessful in absolute terms, however. Especially in the 1790s, he celebrated huge successes with new symphonic compositions, as for example reported by *The Morning Chronicle* in 1795:

‘Clementi furnished a new Overture; and afforded ample proof that, well as his fame was established, he rises in his own compositions. The Allegro was truly *joyous*, the Andante was an animated conversation, in which the cheerful, the serious and occasional touches of the grand, were charmingly intermingled, yet the subject preserved. – The Minuets were alive and the last movement equal if not superior to the rest.’⁶²

Clementi became increasingly in demand as a piano teacher, his most famous pupil being John Field, and after the bankruptcy of Longman & Broderip in the 1790s he established his own publishing and musical-instrument-making firm. Travelling for marketing purposes on the continent from 1802 to 1810, he then appeared from 1813 to 1824 at the Philharmonic Society concerts (directing 24 concerts), and proceeded to put on five of the concerts at the Concerts of Ancient and Modern Music. In 1816-17 a trip to Paris led to his performing some of his symphonies at the Concerts Spirituels in Paris, and in 1822 he conducted three concerts at the Leipzig Gewandhaus. However, his efforts to promote his music at a time when it was nearly totally out of date ended in failure; after 1824 his symphonies disappeared entirely, even from the London stage. In 1830 Clementi retired from his firm, dying two years later at the age of 80 and being buried in the Westminster Abbey cloisters.

Most of Clementi’s symphonies remained unpublished, though several are supposed to have been re-worked in piano sonatas (for example in sonata Op. 34 No. 2). We can ascribe the symphonies’ non-publication to prevailing commercial considerations rather than to any intrinsic musical doubts Clementi might have harboured;⁶³ during the 1790s he showed scant regard for maintaining high quality in some of his keyboard publications. The major reason that scores were so difficult to sell was that after 1796, London’s concert life essentially became moribund. A few concert series continued, notably the King’s Concert or the Concert of Antient Music, with a policy that excluded compositions less than twenty years old or by living composers; but the Napoleonic wars took their toll on interest and resources. It was not until the Philharmonic Society was founded in 1813 that London again acquired a

61 *Journal de Paris*, 8 April 1817, quoted in Leon Plantinga, *Clementi: his life and music*, London etc. 1977, p. 236.

62 Review of March 1795 of the Fifth Opera Concert the previous night; Plantinga (*ibid.*, p. 149) appears to have overlooked this review in stating that only one Clementi symphony was played that season.

63 A report in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* VII (1805), p. 473, asserts: ‘No-one can print large scale music, scores and the like here, for they would only remain on the shelves.’



Illustration 7. Muzio Clementi, engraving by Daniel Orme.

regular forum for new instrumental music.⁶⁴ In other concert venues, vocal music was in fact obviously placed above instrumental and especially symphonic music. Solo concertos were much more favoured than symphonic music, as Temperley's listings show (79 symphonies as opposed to 119 concertos and Sinfonie concertante from 1801 to 1850⁶⁵).

Two early Clementi symphonies published in 1787 and republished in 1800⁶⁶ are admittedly Haydn derivatives (though their harmonic audacity and quirky phrasing lift them well above his other imitators' efforts). At the same time, however, they also reflect both Clementi's Italian heritage and his transplantation to Northern Europe. On the one hand, the influence of the Italian opera buffa overtures, such as those by Nicola Piccini and Giovanni Paisiello, is felt, while on the other, the Northern European conception of the concert symphony by composers such as Haydn, Vaňhal, Mozart, Pleyel, and others can be sensed.

Characteristic of the Italian influence, Clementi's two first movements have no extensive development sections, a multiplicity of themes, and little break-down of regular phrase periodicity. His second movements and finales are constructed in the usual Italian A–B–A–B–A form, again avoiding development and emphasizing themes. Like the buffa composers, Clementi favours static rather than directed and moving harmonies, in particular pedal points, and the avoidance of sequences. In his early orchestration, Clementi reveals the Italian propensity to double one, two or three basic lines, although tutti passages in octaves are decidedly less common than in buffa symphonies. The woodwind parts are occasionally independent but for the most part are relegated to the role of harmonic support.

On the other hand, the early symphonies have four movements, thus incorporating the new German developments. The parts are also composed more independently than in the Italian tradition, and the first movement of Op. 18 No. 2 is much closer to sonata form than most Italian first movements. Clementi's developments of themes, which are much more frequent and extensive than those in the Italian sinfonie, although not nearly as extensive as Haydn's by this time, are concentrated in the transition sections. 'Some unusual traits of these early symphonies include the thematic connections between movements (compare the third and fourth movements of both), the eccentric form of both first movements, the use of diminished-seventh chords for modulation, and the use of third-relations between key areas.'⁶⁷

The number of Clementi's later symphonies (whose numbering ignores the Op. 18 symphonies) may have exceeded thirteen, though only four of them, as well as some separate movements and fragments, have survived. The *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1817 noted

64 Cf. Clive Bennett, 'Clementi as Symphonist', in: *MT CXX* (1979), pp. 207–209.

65 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, pp. 174, 343, 345 and 384–389.

66 As Op. 18, entered at Stationers' Hall, 23 April 1787; republished as Op. 44 by Johann André, Offenbach; modern editions, ed. Renato Fasano, Milan 1961 and 1959.

67 John Walter Hill, 'Muzio Clementi', in: *William Crotch · Muzio Clementi*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley and John Walter Hill, New York/London 1984 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EIV/V), p. xxviii.

NEW ARGYLL ROOMS.
MR. SPOHR'S CONCERT.
 Thursday, June 18th, 1820.

PART I.

Grand Sinfonia (M. S.)	Spohr.
Air, Mr. T. Welch „Revenge, revenge, Thimotheus cries“	Haendel.
Grand Duetto (M. S.), Harp and Violin, Mad. Spohr and Mr. Spohr	Spohr.
Aria, Miss Goodall „una voce al cor mi parla.“ Clarinet obligato Mr. Willman	Pær.
Sestetto for Pianoforte, two Violins, Viola, Violoncello and Contrabasso, Messrs.: Ries, Watts, Wagstaff, R. Ashley, Lindley and Dragonetti	Ries.
Irish Melodies (M. S.) with Variations for the Violin, Mr. Spohr (composed expressly for this occasion)	Spohr.

PART II.

Nonetto for Violin, Viola, Violoncello, Contrabasso, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon, Messrs. Spohr, Lindley, Dragonetti, Ireland, Griesbach, Willman, Arnall and Holmes	Spohr.
Scena, Mrs. Salmon „Follon, la pena avrai“	Rossini.
Rondo for the Violin, Mr. Spohr	Spohr.
Aria, Mr. Vaughan „Rendi'l sereno“	Haendel.
Overture	Spohr.
* *	
Leader of the Band	Mr. Spohr.
At the Pianoforte	Sir George Smart.

Illustration 8. Programme of a Spohr concert in the New Argyll Rooms in 1820.

that Clementi had been working on a set of six ‘Grand Symphonies’ since about 1805 and was still polishing and improving them.⁶⁸ Five years later Clementi wrote to the publisher Härtel that he had just finished another symphony which he felt better than his previous ones. ‘When I shall feel satisfied with them I shall be glad to see them published.’⁶⁹ For whatever reason, commercial or personal dissatisfaction, publication never followed. Of these later symphonies, three of which were played in Leipzig in 1822, none has survived in its entirety, including the so-called ‘Great National’, which was premièred at a Philharmonic Society concert on 19 March 1824 (performing versions have been prepared by Pietro Spada). The Philharmonic Society had already commissioned a symphony from Clementi for their second season; other commissions went to Spohr (his Second Symphony of 1820), Beethoven’s pupil Ferdinand Ries (several symphonies) and of course to Beethoven himself, including the Choral Symphony. In terms of popularity, the programmes suggest ‘highly commended’ ratings to Viotti, Pleyel and Paer, and to the Rombergs, Kalkbrenner and Sor. Native composers were poorly served. ‘Discounting Clementi’s, just three British symphonies were heard in these years, by Crotch (1814), Potter (1826) and Lord Burghersh (1818), together with concertos by Lindley, Charles Nicholson and J. B. Cramer, a handful of chamber works, including a sextet by Potter and three quartets by Griffin, and a few vocal items by Mozart’s pupil Attwood.’⁷⁰

Clementi’s later symphonies – the most famous of which may be No. 3 in G ‘The Great National’ which includes an imitative treatment of the first two phrases of *God save the King* in retrograde – exhibit a mixed style; their reviews in London were uniformly laudatory. The exploitation of extreme and frequent dynamic contrast, the forceful accents, especially on weak beats or parts of beats, the dramatic pauses and the intensive motivic development show the extent to which Clementi adhered to the style of symphonic composition associated with Haydn and Beethoven. On the other hand, they also display much greater regularity of form than either Haydn or Beethoven. John Walter Hill summarises:

‘Clementi’s themes are more tuneful and discursive, less an elaboration of small motivic kernels than either of these two composers. This melodiousness of thematic style associates Clementi with some of the less severe symphonists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as Anton Teyber, Franz Neubauer, Carl Maria von Weber, and the Romberg cousins. Schubert’s early symphonies belong to this group as well.

Clementi’s style of chromaticism is not like Beethoven’s or Haydn’s either. His tends to be concentrated either in the foreground as coloration of an otherwise simple outline, as in the symphonies of Étienne Méhul, or in broad areas of internally stable harmonic digression, often to keys related to the flat sixth degree. (...) More than any

68 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* XIX (1817), p. 461.

69 Muzio Clementi to Gottfried Christoph Härtel, 2 April 1821, quoted in Leon Plantinga, *Clementi: his life and music*, London etc. 1977, p. 239.

70 Clive Bennett, ‘Clementi as Symphonist’, in: *MT CXX* (1979), p. 209.

composer of the early nineteenth century, Clementi employs imitative counterpoint as a resource for thematic development, expansion of form, and, oddly, creation of expressive atmospheres, as in the first movement of Symphony no. 2 where the use of the principal theme in rhythmic augmentation and at a soft dynamic level helps create a relaxed, pastoral, and somewhat dreamy atmosphere. Of Clementi's contemporaries whose symphonies are known to me, those who used imitative counterpoint most nearly as much as he are Anton Fesca and Friedrich Witt.⁷¹

Ex. 18: Symphony No. 2 in D major, first movement, bars 170-178

Symphony No. 4 in D major begins with an expressive minor-key introduction ‘that could almost be Schumann’;⁷² the ‘sunny’, Schubertian *Allegro* uses several of the same chromatic progressions in its unexpectedly severe development. The remaining movements, particularly the expressive slow movement, the Minuet (as with the others here, full of displaced accents) and the spirited finale are equally impressive.

71 John Walter Hill, ‘Muzio Clementi’, in: *William Crotch · Muzio Clementi*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley and John Walter Hill, New York/London 1984 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EIV/V), pp. xxviii–xxix.

72 Clive Bennett, ‘Clementi as Symphonist’, in: *MT CXX* (1979), pp. 209–210.

The differentiation between symphony and overture in the 1780s ‘raised’, as Donald Francis Tovey put it, ‘the dignity of the symphony’,⁷³ but simultaneously also that of the overture, thereby paving the way for a tradition of the concert overture, and later, deriving from this, the *Symphonische Dichtung* and its derivatives.

Britain’s growing interest in concert-going is clearly reflected in the publishing policies of the time: three publishers rivalled in publishing overtures, mainly to operas and thus well known to the audience: the series of *The Periodical Overture* (published by Bremner, Preston and Kerpen from 1762 onwards⁷⁴) contained composers as diverse as Ditters, Gossec, Stamitz, Haydn, Pleyel, Richter, Pugnani, Piccini, Ricci, Holzbauer, Boccherini, Schwindl, Vaňhal, Jommelli, Cannabich and Filtz as well as several British ones, and was by far the most successful of all series. *The Favourite Sinfonie* [sic] or *Overture* of J. Bland and Forster featured mainly Haydn (but also for example John Christopher Smith, who apparently wrote operatic symphonies only), and *A Select Overture* had to be content with Maldere, Dibdin and others (Dibdin wrote exclusively operatic overtures and is therefore not included here.) The famous publishing firm of John Walsh put out comparably few symphonies or overtures (by Bononcini, Alberti, Galli, Jommelli, Stanley, A. Scarlatti, Arne, J. C. Bach, Abel, Boyce, Greene, Richter, Bononcini, Johann and Carl Stamitz and a few miscellaneous others⁷⁵).

It is important to recall the behaviour of the audience of the times, which persisted until well into the nineteenth century. Instead of listening to the music, the audience was, especially in the aristocratic concerts, chattering, even walking around as though they were in a pleasure garden. Hardly anybody noted the music itself (in any case, only those close to the instrument(s) would have had the possibility to do so) – accordingly, it was hardly possible for difficult music to be performed. It must be said that the audience’s conduct was not at all unusual – it was common across Europe. Moreover, it seems that very few people attended the whole of a concert; accordingly, it was possible to plan concerts lasting up to five hours, with the changing number and kind of performers providing the musicians with sufficient time for relaxation. ‘Many concerts at that period [around 1804] advertised ‘half-prices after nine o’clock’. The last item in a concert, usually an overture or symphony, was regarded merely as the signal for departure, and was described as ‘playing the audience out’.⁷⁶ Certainly there were private concerts in which the music was taken much more seriously, especially when aristocratic dilettantes performed themselves. This tradition was lost in the early nineteenth century, when Italian opera and Handel

73 Donald Francis Tovey, *The Forms of Music*, New York 1956, p. 238.

74 Bremner came from Edinburgh to London only in 1762.

75 Cf. William Charles Smith (ed.), *A Catalogue of Vocal & Instrumental Musick. Published by John Walsh and his successors 1706–90*, London 1953. William Charles Smith, *A bibliography of the musical works published by John Walsh during the years 1695–1720*, 1948, Oxford 1968. William Charles Smith/Charles Humphries, *A bibliography of the musical works published by the firm of John Walsh during the years 1721–1766*, London 1968.

76 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, p. 9.

vocal works became (or remained) much more fashionable; amateur performances began to wane (chamber music only managed to rise again to real standards in the 1830s). Only aristocratic daughters retained this education, but failed to achieve the artistry of the dilettantes in former times. There were attempts to establish a largely instrumental series of subscription concerts in the City of London, far away from the fashionable aristocratic West End. One such attempt, taking shape in about 1800 and dying out some time before 1813, was called the City Amateur Concert (although most of the principal parts were played by professionals) and nicknamed ‘The Harmonic’. The concerts, given at a tavern and founded and probably run by merchants, were followed by a ball, in accord with eighteenth century tradition, and grew shorter and shorter to allow more time for dancing, ‘until at length the concert merged entirely in the ball’⁷⁷ (in Salisbury in 1779, the dance was reportedly consciously treated very cautiously, to prevent such a development⁷⁸). Another City Amateur Concerts series ran from 1818 to 1822, with six concerts each season, held at the London Tavern, but these were no longer entirely instrumental. Both institutions, however, were more enterprising than the aristocratic concerts held at the West End.

Thomas Haigh (Wakefield, Yorkshire, January 1769–London, c. 1820) published his first compositions in 1790 and studied with Haydn on his first London visit in 1791–92, dedicating six violin sonatas (Opp. 8 and 10) to his teacher. From 1793 to 1801 he lived in Manchester, then returning to London. His year of death is a matter of debate, since posthumous publication of works by lesser-known composers was then very rare, and some of his works were published as late as 1815–19. Haigh, who mainly wrote domestic music, was with his (only known) Symphony in D major (c. 1794; a piano adaptation was published in 1795) comparable with John Marsh (see below, p. 72), who, like Haigh, featured in the series of *A Favourite Symphony*. This series promoted rather more ‘advanced’ composers, who belonged to the Arne–Abel tradition (and not Haydn’s). These artists may have been of some influence only in terms of rhythmic refinement. Haigh was a fluent and prolific composer and a good deal of his work is fresh and imaginative. Surprising though it may be Haigh also returned to the three-movement form; this structure remained, as will become clear, popular until well into the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The work is on a small scale, lively but lightweight. D major was a popular key for eighteenth-century symphonies. The first movement is in sonata form with a short development section and a strongly defined return to the opening material near the end of the movement.

77 William Ayrton, ‘Memoirs of the Metropolitan Concerts’, in: *The Harmonicon* X (1832), p. 247.

78 Cf. Brian Robins (ed.), *The John Marsh Journals*, Stuyvesant (New York) 1998 (Sociology of Music, 9), p. 194.

Ex. 19: First movement, bars 82-87

The musical score for Ex. 19 shows three staves: Oboe (Ob., Fg.), Violin (Archi), and Bass. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 3/4. The Oboe part begins with a forte (f) dynamic and has several rests. The Violin part begins with a forte (f) dynamic and has several rests. The Bass part begins with a forte (f) dynamic and has several rests. The score shows a dynamic shift to piano (p) in the second measure of each part.

The brief oboe solos in this movement are cued into the violin parts, and as the horns only have a subsidiary harmonic function, the work could also have been performed without the wind parts. The slow movement, in the subdominant, is scored for strings only, and in the last movement the wind instruments are used mainly for dynamic emphasis in the *forte* sections. ‘Something of Haydn’s influence may be heard in this rondo finale, with the thematic integration of the two-episode structure, the second episode being in the tonic minor. The final coda is almost identical to that of the first movement, which gives a sense of unity to what Charles Cudworth describes as a “rather oddly-shaped little work.”^{79,80}

b) Provincial musical life

Provincial concert life was already extremely busy at this time; subscription concerts, indeed, took place in many areas, although considerable amounts of especially composed music have rarely survived. Very probably the repertory of these concert societies was to a large extent internationally orientated, since it was comparably easy to buy music from London – by Corelli, Geminiani, Handel, Bach and Abel – once again exemplifying the ‘ancient’ and ‘modern’ styles, as mentioned in John Marsh’s diaries. Even more widespread were catch-clubs, which concentrated even more on vocal music (but not exclusively). In 1761 the Noblemen’s and Gentlemen’s Catch Club was founded in London, which immediately led to a boom in composition in the genre of glees and catches (short, often three-part pieces for small chorus). By roughly the end of the century, this genre had fallen into decay as a consequence of over-production and having become regarded as superficial, whereupon

79 Charles L. Cudworth, ‘The English Symphonists of the Eighteenth Century’, in: *PRMA* 78 (1951-52), p. 44.

80 Richard Platt, ‘Thomas Haigh’, in: *The Symphony and Overture in Great Britain. Twenty Works*, ed. by Richard Platt, Susan Kirakowska, David Johnson and Thomas McIntosh, New York/London 1984 (The Symphony 1720-1840, EI), p. civ.

other fields of music moved into the foreground. Norwich, York, Lincoln, Lichfield and Bristol each had two music clubs as early as the 1730s.

Oxford erected the first – and still surviving – concert-hall, the Holywell Music Room, in 1742–48. The Edinburgh Musical Society built its St. Cecilia’s Hall in 1762; in 1777, the Gentlemen’s Concerts Manchester established a concert room in Fountain Street. A Musical Society in Aberdeen (already mentioned in connection with John Collett) was formed in 1747, in Dundee in 1757, and in Glasgow in 1799.

Thomas Alexander Erskine (Kellie Castle, Fife, 1 September 1732–Brussels, 9 October 1781) joined the Edinburgh Musical Society (which although established in 1728 had in fact existed in an earlier form from 1693 on) when he was 17 and at the age of 18 was sent to Mannheim to improve his abilities on the violin. He played in Stamitz’s orchestra, and some of his compositions were played on the European continent as late as 1764 in Cassel. In a collection of c. 1764, works by Erskine were supposedly published together with pieces by Stamitz, Filtz and Sammartini. Erskine’s authorship is disputed by LaRue; in any case, we find in Op. I No. 5 in G major, presumably by Erskine, strong dynamic ideas:

Ex. 20



By 1756 Erskine had to return to Fife in Scotland to become the Sixth Earl of Kelly. One year later he became a director of the Edinburgh Musical Society and was named Deputy Governor in 1767, thus remaining a highly influential figure in Edinburgh until his death. In 1761, his first symphonies derived from the Stamitzian model (Op. I, No. 4 was identical to Johann Stamitz’s Symphony Op. 4 No. 6, earlier also attributed to Filtz; it turned out that Erskine had in fact transcribed the work⁸¹) were published, first in Edinburgh, then in London. Four *Periodical Overtures*, published by Bremner, were to follow (Nos. 13, 17, 25 and 28), issued in 1766, 1767, 1769 and 1770, respectively; the first and third of these are similar in style and cast to Op. I. One of his best-known compositions (many of which are lost) was the overture to the pasticcio opera *The Maid of the Mill* (see p. 49), premièred at Covent Garden on 31 January 1765 (*Periodical Overture* No. 28), and laced with typical Mannheim *crescendi*.

81 Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge: MU MS 149/32 F14.



Illustration 9. Thomas Alexander Erskine, 6th Earl of Kellie, engraving by Robert Blyth after Robert Home, 1782. National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

Ex. 21: Overture *The Maid of the Mill*, first movement, bars 17-24

Thomas Robertson, a contemporary critic, wrote: ‘Loudness, rapidity, enthusiasm, announce the Earl of Kelly (...) while others please and amuse, it is his province to rouse, and almost overset his hearers’⁸² – a criticism of Mannheim rather than of Erskine. And Burney recalled:

‘The late Earl of Kelly, who was possessed of more musical science than any dilettante with whom I was ever acquainted, and who, according to Pinto, before he travelled into Germany, could scarcely tune his fiddle, shut himself up at Manheim with the elder Stamitz, and studied composition and practised the violin with such serious application, that, at his return to England, there was no part of theoretical or practical Music, in which he was not equally versed with the greatest professors in his time. Indeed, he had a strength of hand on the violin, and a genius for composition, with which few professors [professionals] are gifted.’⁸³

82 Quoted from David Johnson, ‘Kelly, Thomas Alexander Erskine’, in: *Grove6* vol. 9, London etc. 1980, p. 856.

83 Charles Burney, *A General History of Music from the earliest ages to 1789*, vol. IV, London 1789, Baden-Baden 1958, p. 1018.

David Johnson, who has dealt most extensively with the composer, observes that his first orchestral compositions (Op. 1)

‘are barely revivable today: most have overlong slow movements, and several of the principal movements have irredeemable formal weaknesses. Nevertheless, they secured him a reputation in Britain and elsewhere which lasted the rest of his life; his overtures were dropped from British concert programmes only in the 1780s, in favour of Haydn’s. By the overture *The Maid of the Mill*, however, Kelly’s technical range had considerably expanded. The first movement is in fully developed sonata form, and the slow movement contains individual themes with a popular English flavour, an art which Kelly probably learnt from Arne. The Periodical Overture No. 17 (1767) is Kelly’s most advanced known orchestral work: it is in *sinfonia concertante* style with clarinets, horns and bassoon forming a wind ensemble in contrast to the main orchestra. The work also shows an awakening interest in contrapuntal textures.’⁸⁴

Ex. 22

The musical score for Ex. 22 is a two-staff excerpt in 2/4 time, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The piece is marked with dynamics *p* (piano) and *f* (forte). The first staff contains a melody with a trill (tr) in the second measure and another trill in the sixth measure. The second staff provides a bass line with a sixteenth-note pattern in the second and sixth measures, marked with a '6' below the staff. The first measure of the first staff is marked *p*, and the second measure is marked *f*. The third measure is marked *p*, and the fourth measure is marked *f*. The fifth measure is marked *p*, and the sixth measure is marked *f*.

Johnson describes Erskine also, as ‘arguably the most important native [Scottish] composer between the end of the 16th century and the last quarter of the 19th.’⁸⁵ Jenny Burchell reports only five composers to have been performed regularly in Edinburgh until 1786 (this not being restricted to symphonies/overtures only) – Abel, Bach, Erskine, Handel and Johann Stamitz. However, for the series of the Musical Society concerts, Richter, Jommelli, Filtz, Schwindl, Ricci and Piccini, who were performed nearly regularly, and Gossec, Maldere, Guglielmi, Vaňhal, Gluck, Haydn, C. Stamitz and Giordani, who were performed regularly from c. 1778, were all played; Cannabich and Galuppi ceased to be performed by c. 1771.

84 David Johnson, ‘Kelly, Thomas Alexander Erskine’, in: *Grove6* vol. 9, London etc. 1980, p. 856.

85 *Ibid.*, p. 856. – Another (though not native) composer, supposed to be the second-best composer in Scotland in Erskine’s time was Johann Georg Christoph Schetky (Darmstadt, 19 August 1737–Edinburgh, 30 November 1824). Schetky was the son of a secretary and musician at the court of Hessen-Darmstadt, and became principal cellist of the court orchestra himself at the age of fifteen. However, a successful concert tour to Hamburg in 1763 resulted in his leaving the Darmstadt court orchestra in 1768. He travelled in 1772 to London, where he was persuaded by Robert Bremner to accept the post of the principal cello to the Edinburgh Musical Society. Schetky started composing at an early age – as far back as the Hamburg tour –, but most of his surviving works date from his time in Scotland, where he remained until the end of his life. He married there in 1774 and fathered eleven children, two of whom attained fame themselves (J. George as a musician and composer in America, John Christian as Marine Painter-in-Order to George IV, William IV and Queen Victoria). Schetky established himself firmly in Edinburgh musical and social life, befriending Robert Burns and Walter Scott or entertaining Louis XVIII. Schetky’s symphonies, undated but possibly composed at Darmstadt, are largely dependent on the then fashionable Mannheim style.

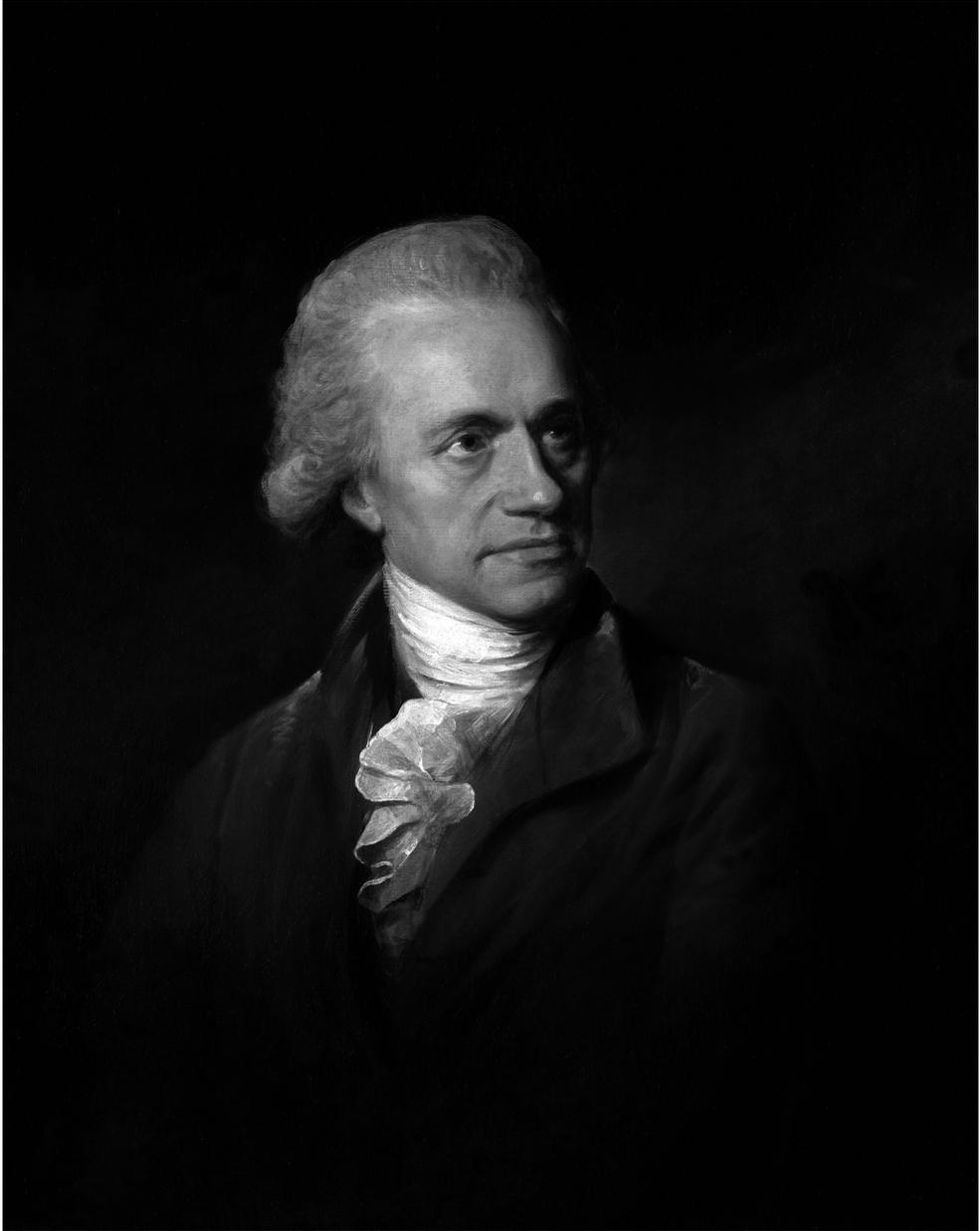


Illustration 10. William Herschel, oil painting by Lemuel Francis Abbott, 1785. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

The works of Johann Georg Christoph Schetky also formed part of the repertoire of the benefit concerts in Edinburgh as of 1772 (when he moved from Germany to Britain), Haydn's music from c. 1782, and Pleyel's from 1788. But we must indeed heed the fact that as 'British' composers (if one may call all of them so) only Abel, Bach and Erskine were performed regularly in Edinburgh – though occasional performances of the works of Smethergell, Jacob Herschel, John Hebden (cello concerto) and John Mahon (clarinet concerto) are also reported to have been given.⁸⁶

An important figure, especially with regard to the musical life of the cities of Newcastle, Leeds and Bath, is **Johann Friedrich Wilhelm [William] Herschel** (Hanover, 15 November 1738–Slough, 25 August 1822), who was a professional musician before becoming famous as an astronomer. Studying the oboe at a very early age with his father, a musician in the infantry band at Hannover, he eventually joined the band himself as an oboist and violinist. With Hufschläger he learnt French and studied the great philosophers and scientists. When his regiment in the Seven Years' War was stationed in England, he learnt English, and not much later, after having left the army, settled there, first as a music copyist (most of his manuscripts are indeed exceptionally finely penned); in 1760, he was entrusted with the improvement of the Durham Militia Band. He lived in Sunderland then, also serving as a music teacher to the wealthy families. In Newcastle he led weekly concerts, "in a garden after the style of Vauxhall"; here Charles Avison was organist, and as far back as 1736 had started fortnightly subscription concerts.⁸⁷ An attempt to leave for Edinburgh to become director of the Edinburgh concerts failed. He therefore remained in Newcastle, on 12 August 1761 performing with Avison and John Garth for the Duke of York, thus initiating an association with the Royal Family that was to play a major role in his life for the rest of his days. In 1762 he came to lead the concerts in Leeds, visiting Hannover in 1764. In 1766 he went to Halifax, and later in the same year to Bath, but had difficulties in the orchestra there due to quarrels with Thomas Linley sen. (He ended up withdrawing from the New Assembly Rooms orchestra in 1771; his brother Alexander remained there until 1775, the year that Linley also retired from his post). He became organist at the Octagon Chapel in 1767, succeeded Thomas Linley sen. in 1776 as director of the Bath orchestra (the concerts taking place, at his instigation, at the Spring Gardens, 'to take place in the Room if wet'⁸⁸) and in 1780 was accepted as a member of the newly established Bath Literary and Philosophical Society, where he delivered 31 lectures on scientific and philosophical matters over the

86 Jenny Burchell, *Polite or Commercial Concerts? Concert Management and Orchestral Repertoire in Edinburgh, Bath, Oxford, Manchester, and Newcastle, 1730–1799*, Ph.D. dissertation Oxford, n.d., New York/London 1996, pp. 64–67 and 80–82. Information on performances in any of these places is incomplete, and information related to several seasons has not survived.

87 Stanley Sadie, 'Concert Life in Eighteenth Century England', in: *PRMA* 85 (1959), pp. 20–21.

88 *Bath Chronicle*, 13 June 1768. The gardens collapsed in 1796 (Jenny Burchell, *Polite or Commercial Concerts? Concert Management and Orchestral Repertoire in Edinburgh, Bath, Oxford, Manchester, and Newcastle, 1730–1799*, Ph.D. dissertation Oxford, n.d., New York/London 1996, p. 117).

next two years. In 1781 he discovered the planet now known as Uranus, and his interests now gravitated more and more towards philosophical and scientific matters; his composing increasingly ebbed. He thus started his new career as an astronomer, which brought him knighthood in 1817 as well as a pension starting in 1782, enabling him to devote himself entirely to his studies. (After Herschel's retirement, mainly music by Haydn, Handel, Bach, Pleyel and a few others was performed in the subscription concerts. In the benefit concerts, Handel was predominant, replaced by Bach from 1777 to 1791, with Haydn taking over the lead in 1782; of the 43 composers featured in the benefit concerts from 1751 to 1779, thirteen were performed only when they themselves were present. At pleasure garden benefit concerts, Boyce symphonies also featured prominently.⁸⁹) Herschel symphonies were performed very rarely in Bath; Burchell reports that performances were given only in 1769, 1773 and 1779. (There is no record of performances of Linley sen.'s symphonies.) Still, in 1778 a Herschel symphony was performed in Newcastle.

Herschel's 24 symphonies, composed from 1760 to 1764, are without exception called *Sinfonie da Camera*,⁹⁰ which tells us that these works were not operatic overtures – the only important predecessor was Giovanni Battista Sammartini, who composed symphonies from c. 1745 to c. 1765 and is supposed to have emancipated the viola in the symphonic orchestra. Already in his First Symphony, dated Richmond in Yorkshire June 1760, a sonata-like movement is detectable in the finale. The Second Symphony (dated September 1760) displays the usual technique of presenting the 'exposition' first in the tonic and then in the dominant, and, after a short contrasting section, repeats the 'recapitulation' (so that both the 'exposition' and 'recapitulation' are repeated). In some of the works, considerable differences exist between the score and the surviving parts; in the Fourth Symphony for example in the viola part, in Nos. 17 and 23 in several parts, and in Nos. 18–20 and 22, clarinet parts have been added.

Cudworth and Jeans describe Herschel's abilities as a composer thus: '(...) he seems to have had a strong concern for formal structures but limited inspiration',⁹¹ while as a musician, especially as a violinist, he had a tremendous reputation. The symphonies, although based on the style of the Prussian masters, such as Hasse and the Graun brothers, display more

89 Jenny Burchell, *Polite or Commercial Concerts? Concert Management and Orchestral Repertoire in Edinburgh, Bath, Oxford, Manchester, and Newcastle, 1730–1799*, Ph.D. dissertation Oxford, n.d., New York/London 1996, pp. 132, 143–147 and 155.

90 A different position is taken by Murray, who states that only Symphonies Nos. 1–11 and 15–16 are *Sinfonie da Camera*, intended for 'small chamber gatherings, such as those held at the estate of the Milbanke family' in Hainaby. (Sterling E. Murray, 'William Herschel', in: *William Herschel · William Smethergell · Samuel Wesley · Samuel Sebastian Wesley*, ed. by Sterling E. Murray, Richard Platt, Richard Divall and John I. Schwarz, New York/London 1983 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EIII), p. xxii.) 'The change from string chamber symphonies to works with a fuller instrumentation coincides with Herschel's assumption of the directorship of the Leeds subscription concerts. It is likely, therefore, that the symphonies with larger instrumentations composed after 1761 originally were intended to be used at the Leeds concerts.' (*Ibid.*) The *Sinfonie da Camera* are compared by Murray to Boyce's Overtures of 1760.

91 Charles Cudworth/Susi Jeans, 'Herschel, Sir William', in *Grove6* vol. 8, London etc. 1980, p. 522.

individuality than the some 13 concertos, which were apparently first influenced by the north German *empfindsamer Stil*,⁹² later the Italian *galant* style, spread by Johann Christian Bach and his successors, especially in their instrumentation, ranging from the early modest forces of strings with bassoons only

Ex. 23: Symphony in D major (1760), finale, bars 48-63

up to the later symphonies in which, apart from oboes, horns, flutes and even clarinets were added, often in *concertante* technique (ex. 24). Oboes and horns are used frequently; flutes, according to the custom of the time, often alternate with oboes and are only rarely used independently. Three symphonies by Herschel (Nos. 14, 20 and 23) have been preserved with timpani parts. In fact, Symphony 23 has two different timpani parts: one to be used if trumpets are available and the other if they are not. This work is the only symphony by Herschel specifically to require trumpets, 'but certainly the use of these instruments in symphonies 14 and 20 would be well within the character of those compositions.'⁹³ The especially marked organ as continuo instrument in Symphonies Nos. 19, 21 and 22 may be explained by the fact that they all may have been (No. 22 indeed was) composed for

92 Sterling E. Murray, 'William Herschel', in: *William Herschel · William Smetbergell · Samuel Wesley · Samuel Sebastian Wesley*, ed. by Sterling E. Murray, Richard Platt, Richard Divall and John I. Schwarz, New York/London 1983 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EIII), p. xxiii: 'One third of Herschel's symphonies are cast in a minor mode. Although several of these works project an intense, serious mood suggesting the pre-Romantic gestures often associated with stylistic anomalies in mid-eighteenth-century music, others within the same chronological span conform to a lighter *galant* character. Thus rather than being special expressions of a distinct aesthetic (such as *empfindsamer Stil* or *Sturm und Drang*), the minor-mode symphonies might be more accurately assessed as incorporating harmonically dramatic elements common to Herschel's entire oeuvre.'

93 *Ibid.*, p. xxiii.

Ex. 24: Symphony in D major (1762), first movement, bars 30-39

The musical score for Ex. 24 consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Cor Anglais (Cor), and Arches (Archi). The Flute part begins with a 'solo' marking and plays a melodic line. The Cor part has a trill in the first measure. The Arches part starts with a 'pp' dynamic and 'senza ripieni' marking. The second system continues the Arches part with a 'Tutti' marking and a 'f' dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, trills, and dynamic markings.

Harrogate, 'a provincial pleasure garden, where organs were standard instruments used for solo as well as accompaniment.'⁹⁴

Herschel's acceptance of the 'modern' style was gradual but determined. His *Sinfonie da camera* demonstrate most clearly mixed elements of the ancient and modern styles, but in his later works he accepted the newer idiom more willingly, for example in his use of harmony. Although some conservative features persist in these compositions, on the whole they conform rather well to the pre-classic or *galant* mould, with which Herschel had grown up. Herschel's acceptance of the modern style can be observed in his treatment of various musical materials, but most obviously in the degree of control he devoted to structural aspects. In the earlier *Sinfonie da camera*, tonality is rarely used as a structural feature. Sterling E. Murray summarises that

'In general, these works often appear to be guided more by dramatic gesture than architectural logic. Beginning with the symphonies of the summer of 1761,

however, Herschel's attitude toward structure seems to have changed. In these works structural patterns in which tonality and thematic economy are co-ordinated to a greater degree prevail, resulting in the emergence of more cohesive and convincing designs.⁹⁵

The consequent three-movement conception is usually in the order of fast-slower-fast. The slow movement usually gives the lyric melodic ideas to the leader, with the other instruments supplying 'harmonic support and rhythmic activation';⁹⁶ the movements are, with few exceptions, in two-part reprise form. Typically, the two halves of the structure both end with the same melodic material, although in different tonalities. No symphony exceeds keys of four flats or sharps, and the minor symphonies are sometimes in a deeply serious (No. 5 in F minor), sometimes in a lighter vein. Canonic or imitative sections are rare, though some contrapuntal sections do occur; 'Passages of rhythmic imitation (...) are spread throughout the symphonies, but they are less frequently encountered in the later works.'⁹⁷ Also rather retrospective is the abundance of sequential repetition, which is often employed as the primary device in the growth of a musical phrase. Sometimes, Murray writes, '(...) The sequence is divided between two levels of the texture in a manner reminiscent of Medieval hocket to produce a distinct type of textural dialogue.'⁹⁸

Compared to the mainstream of the eighteenth-century symphony on the continent, Herschel's symphonies seem conservative, but still they embrace many of the clichés also encountered in the works of German, French, Belgian, Bohemian, Austrian and Italian symphonists of the 1760s.

Herschel's elder brother Jacob (20 November 1734–1792⁹⁹) remained on the continent for most of his life, joining the Hannover court band in 1759, and from 1774 for a couple of years active in Amsterdam – only one symphony or overture of his was apparently published in England (in the series of *The Periodical Overture* by Bremner in 1766).

Thomas Linley sen. (Badminton, Gloucestershire, 17 January 1733–London, 19 November 1795) also wrote at least one symphony (which the author was unable to locate). He had come with his family to Bath at an early age and soon received lessons from Thomas Chilcot, organist of Bath Abbey; he later studied with Boyce. Linley directed the Bath concerts from the mid-1750s to 1775, when he moved with his family (many of his children were well-known musicians at the time) to London, and from as early as November 1775 he regularly contributed to the operatic seasons there. He was well known as a singing teacher, and apparently the best-loved of his works were his melodious compositions:

95 *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.

96 *Ibid.*, p. xxv.

97 *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.

98 *Ibid.*

99 On the little-known amount of information re. Herschel's death cf. Arndt Latusseck & Michael Hoskin, 'The murder of Jacob Herschel', in: *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 34/115 (2003), pp. 233–234.

‘His works are not distinguished by any striking marks of original genius, but the uniformly manifest taste, feeling, and a full knowledge of his art (...) and, if it was not in his power to astonish by sublime effects, his compositions always soothe and charm by delicacy, simplicity and tenderness.’¹⁰⁰

John Valentine (Leicester, 7 June 1730–Leicester, 10 September 1791) produced only a handful of compositions, all published in London ‘for the Author’ (at his own expense) and sold at his own music shop in Leicester. The instrumental compositions (all orchestral) are for the limited forces of amateur bands; in the *Eight Easy Symphonies* Op. 6 (1782), the wind parts are cued into the string parts to facilitate performance even further. Apart from the (altogether very short) symphonies (among which only the last one starts with a sonata movement), mainly marches and minuets have survived as instrumental music; as for vocal music, two choral odes and a cycle of Psalm Tunes are known. The huge list of subscribers, nearly all of them living in the Midlands, testifies to the long-felt provincial need for rather simple symphonies, although the horn writing is sometimes surprisingly adventurous (No. 6 ends with a rondo, and of the three trios, the first is for two horns and bassoon, the second for two oboes and bassoon, and the third for two violins and cello).

A rather underestimated symphonist, and compared to Herschel an even more important one (although he, like Herschel, hardly composed any music in the last fifteen years of his life) is **John Marsh** (Dorking, 31 May 1752–Pallant, Chichester, 31 October 1828). During a clerkship as a solicitor at Romney, he started giving subscription concerts, and when he moved to Salisbury in 1776 to take up a partnership, he soon became involved in the busy musical life of the city, with most concerts taking place in the *Spread Eagle*. After inheriting a large family estate at Nethersole in East Kent in 1783, he directed all his interests to music and was soon offered the management of the subscription concerts in Canterbury, where he strongly re-organised the entire concert-life of the city. Realizing that he was unable to keep up a manor house and uninterested in the social life expected from him, he moved with his family in 1787 to North Pallant, Chichester, where he remained for the rest of his life, but retiring from public concerts in 1813.

Marsh is a symphonist with a prolific output; his own list counts 39 symphonies, although only the nine printed ones, written between 1778 and 1796, have survived (he published six of these in 1796, after the completion of Haydn’s last symphonic cycle).¹⁰¹ The following symphonies have been listed (the numberings in brackets at the end are the opus numbers in Marsh’s complete work-list):

¹⁰⁰ [William Jackson (?)], ‘Obituary’, in: *Gentleman’s Magazine* 65 (1795), part II, no. 5, p. 973.

¹⁰¹ The *Three Finales* (1799–1801), which Ian Graham-Jones calls rather symphonic, are in form and content much different from the concept of symphony which Marsh had achieved by this date, so they have not been included in this study.

- Symphony No. 1 in D (No. 1) 1770 (new Andante 1780)
 Symphony No. 2 in D (No. 3) 1772
 Symphony No. 3 in G (No. 4) 1772 (Fugue added 1779)
 Symphony No. 4 in D (No. 5) 1772 (March replacing fugue added 1778)
 Symphony No. 5 in F (No. 9) 1775
 Symphony No. 6 in F (No. 11) 1775 (adapted from early quartettos)
 Symphony No. 7 in C (No. 17) 1777 (?for 2 Orchestras)
 Symphony No. 8 in C (No. 20) 1777 (also for 2 Orchestras, 1780)
 Symphony No. 9 in G (No. 22) 1778 (published by Goulding in 1800 as No. 3 of
Overtures for Country Concerts (Op. 26; No. VII))
 Symphony No. 10 in E^b (for 2 Orchestras) (No. 23) 1778 (published by Preston in
 1784 under the name of Sharm, an anagram of Marsh's name (Op. 2))
 Symphony No. 11 in D (No. 29) 1780 (Musette & Minuet added 1789)
 Symphony No. 12 in B^b (No. 30) 1780 (published by Smart in 1784 (Op. 4; No. II))
 Symphony No. 13 in B^b (No. 32) 1781 (published Chasse finale substituted 1782)
 (published by Preston in 1784 (Op. 3; No. I))
 Symphony No. 14 in D (No. 33) 1782
 Symphony No. 15 in B^b (No. 35) 1783 (new March finale 1791)
 Symphony No. 16 in E^b (No. 37) 1783 (published by Lavenu in 1797 (Op. 19; No. V))
 Symphony No. 17 in D (No. 41) 1784 (published by Smart in 1787 (Op. 9; No. III))
 Symphony No. 18 in C (No. 42) 1784
 Symphony No. 19 in F (No. 45) 1788 (published by Longman in 1789 (Op. 12; No.
 IV))
 Symphony No. 20 in B^b (No. 46) 1789 (new March finale 1791)
 Symphony No. 21 in C (No. 47) 1789
 Symphony No. 22 in C (No. 50) 1789
 Symphony No. 23 in D (No. 51) 1790
 Symphony No. 24 in E^b 'La Chasse' (No. 52) 1790 (published by Preston in 1800
 (Op. 25; No. VII¹⁰²))
 Symphony No. 25 in D (No. 53) 1794
 Symphony No. 26 in E^b (No. 54) (*Military* Symphony) 1795
 Symphony No. 27 in D (No. 56) 1796 (published by Culliford in 1797 (Op. 20; No.
 VI))
 Symphony No. 28 in C (No. 57) 1797
 Symphony No. 29 in D (No. 58) 1797
 Symphony No. 30 in E minor (No. 64) 1801
 Symphony No. 31 in B^b (No. 66) 1802
 Symphony No. 32 in D (No. 67) 1802

102 No. VII is found twice, for Symphonies Nos. 9 and 24.

- Symphony No. 33 in D (No. 68) 1802
 Symphony No. 34 in G (No. 69) 1802
 Three Overtures in D, G and ? 1802 (published by Goulding in 1803 (Op. 35) – now unlocatable)
 Symphony No. 35 in F (No. 72) 1805
 Symphony No. 36 in E \flat (No. 76) 1810
 Symphony No. 37 in F (No. 79) 1816
 Symphony No. 38 in G (No. 80) 1816
 Symphony No. 39 in D (No. 81) 1816

Marsh's journals (or diaries) yield ample insight regarding his own development as well as the musical situation of his times. Having come to know Abel's Op. VII symphonies in 1769,¹⁰³ Marsh in 1770 reports having written a symphony 'in the style of Stamitz & which being superior to my former productions I have retained to this time, it being No. 1 in my present catalogue of instrumental compositions ...'¹⁰⁴ In February 1772 another symphony followed, 'a short easy overture (...) with marches, airs, minuets, gigs etc. during which by way of contrast I introduced the 9th. of Corelli's solos'.¹⁰⁵ Fugues from Corelli's sonatas were also incorporated into two other symphonies, composed in July and September 1772, as second movements.¹⁰⁶ In June 1778 Marsh composed his *Conversation Sinfonie*, the tenth symphony in his own list, in one night only, his first symphony for two orchestras (an adaptation for two orchestras of an earlier symphony was to follow in 1780) and his first orchestral work to be published (in 1784 by Preston). The only symphony 'reckoned superior to any of mine excepte that for 2 orchestras'¹⁰⁷ until 1780 was the B \flat symphony (No. 12/30), which was published in 1784 as the *Favourite Symphony No. 2*; the *Chasse Symphony* in B \flat (No. 13/32), composed in September 1781, was amended by a new final *Chasse* movement in January 1782; No. 3, composed in June 1784, again received high estimation, its flute part being 'reckon'd one of the most pleasing of mine'.¹⁰⁸ Published as No. 5 was 'my 16th. Overture in E \flat . (No. 37) the 1st. movement of which was in the ancient & the rest of it in the modern style',¹⁰⁹ written in September 1783 and with two minuet movements. Marsh's reputation

103 Brian Robins (ed.), *The John Marsh Journals*, Stuyvesant (New York) 1998 (Sociology of Music, 9), p. 65.

104 *Ibid.*, p. 72. The mentioned work has not survived. In another place, Marsh reports that he started composing it in 1770, but 'just completed it to my liking' in July 1771 (*ibid.*, p. 90).

105 *Ibid.*, p. 93. Corelli's Violin Sonata Op. 5 No. 9 was one of the first works learnt by Marsh, and in 1806/8 Marsh published six volumes of voluntaries arranged from music by Corelli and Handel, a set of which can be found at the Cambridge University Library.

106 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 99 and 101. The works are later (April 1778) described as 'overtures upon the plan of Handel's'; the latter one was reworked, making it 'completely my own', i.e. deleting the Corelli fugue and adding a new movement (*ibid.*, p. 179).

107 *Ibid.*, p. 211.

108 *Ibid.*, p. 320.

109 *Ibid.*, p. 297.

now grew nationally as well; his 32nd symphony was performed at Ranelagh in 1784.¹¹⁰

Around 1787 Marsh came into closer contact with Haydn's music, first listening to and performing some of the works, and then transcribing some for harpsichord and violin (for example Nos. 43 in E \flat and 44 in E minor¹¹¹), and it is clear that Marsh, by working so intensely on the Haydn works, became well acquainted with them. His reception of Davaux's Second Concertante (not further identifiable) and of Pleyel's symphonies is also evident; Pleyel's music was not infrequently rejected by the audience as too complicated.¹¹² Marsh remained flexible in his treatment of style, however, in February 1788 writing a Symphony in F 'in imitation of the style of Haydn & Pleyel' (No. 19/45),¹¹³ Favourite Symphony No. 4 (one of Marsh's most successful works), and in November 1789 a Symphony in C 'in the ancient style, with a fugue & ending with a march' (No. 21/47).¹¹⁴ In April 1790 Marsh sketched his second *Chasse* Symphony (No. 24/54), Favourite Symphony No. 7, which was premièred on 30 December 1790. In August 1794 and June 1796, Marsh composed two symphonies in D 'upon the plan of Haydn's late MS. symphonies done at the Hanover Square'¹¹⁵ (Nos. 25/53 and 27/56, respectively), the latter one published as No. 6 of the Favourite Symphonies. In November 1801, Marsh again turned towards composing a Symphony in E minor 'in the ancient style, with a Fugue, & ending with a March in the maj'r key':¹¹⁶ until the end of his symphonism, Marsh remained somewhat torn between the concepts of 'ancient' and 'modern' style.

As previously mentioned, Marsh was, a few years after J. C. Bach's death, apparently the earliest composer to start writing four-movement symphonies, commencing with Nos. 4–6 of his 6 Favourite Symphonies. In the beginning, either the finale or the preceding movement was optional in a four-movement symphony (as also in Collet's Symphony Op. 2 No. 5 of c. 1755), as marked in Marsh's No. 4 (c. 1788), in particular because the audience at that time was simply used to the three-movement concept. Already in Symphony No. 6 (composed even before No. 4, probably by the end of 1784), the fourth movement is no longer marked as optional – and here we also find not only trumpets added to the usual forces (which are also enriched by flutes and separate bassoons), but also a slow introduction preceding the first movement

110 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 315.

111 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 409 and 412. Then Marsh also started adapting his own compositions in the same way.

112 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 461.

113 *Ibid.*, p. 427.

114 *Ibid.*, p. 462.

115 *Ibid.*, p. 559.

116 *Ibid.*, p. 743.

Ex. 25: No. 6: I

Largo maestoso

The musical score for Ex. 25: No. 6: I, **Largo maestoso**, is presented in two systems. The first system features the Violin I, Viola, and Flute parts (Vln., Vla., Fl.) and the Bassoon and Violoncello parts (Fg., Vc.). The second system features the Violin I and Flute parts (Vln. I, Fl.) and the Bassoon and Violoncello parts (Fg., Vlc.). The score includes dynamic markings such as *p* (piano) and *f* (forte), and a 'with woodwind' instruction. The tempo is marked 'Largo maestoso'.

and strongly Haydnesque traits in the last two movements, the finale containing a cheerful rondo theme:

Ex. 26

The musical score for Ex. 26 is a single melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, ending with a fermata.

In his *Conversation Sinfonie* (1778), published in 1784 under the pseudonym of J. Sharm (later reprints were published under Marsh's own name), Marsh, unlike Bach, whose symphony he had heard in 1774,¹¹⁷ divides his orchestra into upper and lower parts, thus making the antiphonal effect even stronger (ex. 27). In the second of his two *Chasse* symphonies (another special feature that is comparatively rare in British symphonism, and which Marsh treated at least twice symphonically, in the rather old-fashioned No. 1 of the 6 Favourite Symphonies, 1783, and in his 'celebrated overture' *La Chasse*, of 1790), the parts give obvious hints as to the programmes of the movements:

117 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 118.

Arrangement of the parts of this Sinfonie, in order to produce its intended effect.

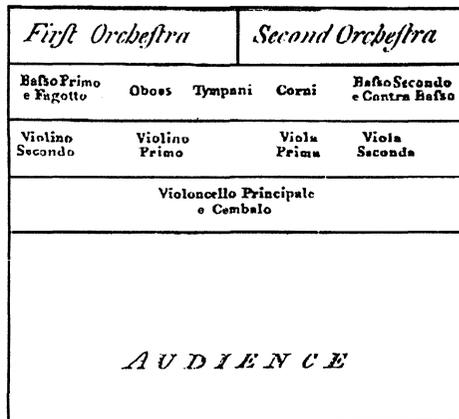


Illustration 11. John Marsh's own diagram illustrating the orchestral layout for the *Conversation Sinfonie*, published in 1784.

N. B. In large Concert Rooms, each Tenor part should always be doubled, as well as the Fiddle parts, each of which may very properly be trebled, that the latter (if either) may be predominant.

Ex. 27: First movement

Allegro maestoso

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system includes the top staff (Orchestra I: Ob. I e II, Vln. I e II, Basso I) and the bottom staff (Vlc. principale, Timp.). The second system includes the middle staff (Orchestra II: Cor I e II, Vla. I e II, Basso II) and the bottom staff. The third system includes the top staff and the middle staff. Dynamics include *p* and *tr* (trill) markings.

Ex. 28

Andante
The hunter's call in the morning and gradually assembling together

mf

In the first of his 6 Favourite Symphonies (the earlier *Chasse* symphony) Marsh adheres rather firmly to an already rather old-fashioned style. He very rarely echoes Handel (but does exactly that in the second *Chasse* symphony, No. 6 of the 6 Favourite Symphonies), but rather subscribes to the Prussian influence of the Berlin court of some forty years ago, and sometimes also to that of Italian opera – but he always strives to combine these influences. The Fourth Symphony in F (c. 1788), which is an admitted imitation of Haydn and Pleyel (and is even marked as such in the printed parts), was performed in London on 22 February 1792 by the Anacreontic Society at the Crown & Anchor Tavern in Arundel Street, off the Strand, led by Wilhelm Cramer with Samuel Arnold at the harpsichord:

‘(...) every strain of [it] was as much applauded as I co’d have expected by the audience in the room. In however the usual account of the performance in the next morning papers (...) my piece was most unmercifully criticis’d upon, not however that any specific fault in the composition was pointed out, but merely accusing the author of imitating Haydn, whose style (as might naturally have been expected) it *fell short of*. It was also said to want spirit but this I co’d not help attributing principally to the performers, who (except Cramer) finding it to be a dilettante composition by no means exerted themselves as they usually did in Haydn’s symphonies, but played it in a very languid manner. It was however by the *audience* ... much applauded, as it was at the Music Meeting at Sarum [Salisbury] in 1788, at w’ch time it was that Cramer, on my asking if he wo’d play it at the Anacreontic if I printed it, said he wo’d not only play it there, but at *any other concerts* he might be concern’d in. It has also at Chichester always been reckon’d one of my happiest & most pleasing productions particularly when Major Gardner played the obligato bassoon part, w’ch for want of such instrument at the Anacreontic was taken on the violoncello by Smith; w’ch was another disadvantage it underwent in the performance there’.¹¹⁸

This applies especially to the second variation in the second movement, a variation movement which features here the unusual scoring for solo bassoon, viola and cello, the theme given to the bassoon. In the first movement, solos for oboe and bassoon are interspersed into the string texture:

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 511.

Ex. 29: No. 4, first movement, bars 40-46

The finale is a rondo with some Haydnesque pauses and is based throughout on the lively rhythmic motif: 4/4 ♩ ♪♪♪♪ | ♪♪.¹¹⁹

With the pedal notes of the Classical style that are also present in Abel and Bach, we approach a more contemporary style in No. 3, which, however, still contains elements of the earlier style (it was, like No. 2, indeed updated by adding MS flute parts to the parts of oboes alternating with flutes).

Ex. 30: No. 3, first movement

In an article of 1796 republished elsewhere, Marsh carefully compared *Ancient and Modern Styles of Music*¹²⁰ – citing Handel's and the Italian concerto grosso influence, which had been absorbed by many a British composer. However, Handel's influence (maintained also by Sir John Hawkins, the great rival of the more progressive Charles Burney) had lost much of its weight by 1796, although the Concerts of Antient Music, suggested in 1776 by the Earl of Sandwich, were to continue until 1848 (the Academy of Ancient Music had been

119 Cf. Ian Graham-Jones, 'An Introduction to the Symphonies of John Marsh', in: *Southern Early Music Forum Journal* 3 (1984), p. 17.

120 Charles Cudworth (ed.), 'An Essay by John Marsh', in: *M&L* XXXVI (1955), pp. 155–164.

disbanded in 1792). In contrast, the more contemporary style of Bach and Abel and later of Haydn, which indeed Marsh tried to combine, for example in the third of his 6 Favourite Symphonies, remained popular. As late as 1803, Marsh published *Three Overtures in several Parts*, specially 'Composed after the manner of the Ancient Masters'; sadly, the work does not seem to be extant.

3. 'Post-Classical' symphonism, with special emphasis on the Royal Academy of Music. First inklings of a British Musical renaissance

Samuel Wesley p. 86 – Henry Bishop p. 93 – Lord Burghersh (Earl of Westmorland) p. 96 – William Crotch p. 97 – John Lord p. 98 – Charles Edward Horsley p. 99 – Samuel Sebastian Wesley p. 99 – Thomas Attwood Walmisley p. 102 – Charles Neate p. 106 – Michael Costa p. 107 – Henry Wylde p. 110 – Robert Lucas Pearsall p. 111 – John Lodge Ellerton p. 112 – Cipriani Potter p. 116 – Charles Lucas p. 124 – Thomas Molleson Mudie p. 127 – William Sterndale Bennett p. 127 – George Alexander Macfarren p. 146 – Joseph Street p. 157 – Alice Mary Smith p. 159 – John Francis Barnett p. 162

*'Academy: A place of illusion for young musical students who wish to earn their own livelihood when they come out of it.'*¹

*'In studying the history of English music during the last hundred years one comes to the conclusion that our composers have seldom interested themselves in style.'*²

Around 1866 the claim that Great Britain was a 'land without music' began to circulate,³ an assertion that has survived largely intact until the present day – in Germany but also among numerous Britons. It was the British-based German 'musicologist' Carl Engel who, in his introduction on national music, concluded: 'Although the rural population of England appear to sing less than those of most other European countries, it may nevertheless be supposed that they also, especially in districts somewhat remote from any large towns, must still preserve songs and dance tunes of their own inherited from their forefathers.'⁴

1 Frederic Hymen Cowen, *Music as she is wrote*, London 1915, p. 9.

2 George Linstead, 'We Immoderates', in: *MO* 60/720 (1937), p. 1036.

3 Oscar Adolf Hermann Schmitz, *Das Land ohne Musik*, 1914, München ©1915. Cf. also Jürgen Schaarwächter, 'Chasing a myth and a legend: "The British Musical renaissance" in a "Land without music"', in: *MT* 149/1904 (2008), pp. 53–60.

4 Carl Engel, *An Introduction to the Study of National Music*, London 1866, p. 173.

Following on from this, and as the result of a study of British culture (in a First World War publication which received its sixth edition within less than two years)⁵, Oscar Adolf Hermann Schmitz came to the conclusion:

I have long tried to find out what actually is the kind of shortcoming that again and again is perceptible behind so many English advantages and performs so ossifyingly. I wondered what is lacking this nation, for instance, kindness, love of mankind, piety, humour, feeling for art? No, all these qualities are available in England; many a one is even more visible than with us. And I finally found a little flaw that distinguishes the English of all other cultural nations at an almost amazing degree, a shortcoming that everyone admits – therefore no new discovery at all – the range of which is but still not yet stressed sufficiently: *The English are the only cultural nation without their own music* (popular songs excepted). That does not barely mean that they have less fine ears but that their whole life is poorer. To have music in oneself, and would it still be so little, means to have the ability to loosen the inflexible to feel the world as a river and life as a flow. To have music in oneself means to be able to lose oneself, to bear discords, yes, even to be able to dwell on them because they are soluble into harmony. Music gives wings and makes everything wonderful appear understandable.⁶

With regard to symphonism, this legend was at least somewhat comprehensible at first, although Nicholas Temperley mentions the fact that between 1800 and 1860 more than sixty symphonies were composed (as well as more than 90 concertos, more than 100 concert overtures and more than 150 oratorios).⁷ There were, however, hardly any British symphonists of, say, Mendelssohn's or Berlioz's standing; one was therefore hard put to find any composers who might be capable of continuing the symphonic tradition. Of course, several other countries were in a similar situation, and at least Britain managed to develop symphonism somewhat further.⁸

Up to 1855, there were scant opportunities to perform symphonies in England at all. Although there were a few concert halls, the really grand ones comparable to those in Paris, Vienna and Leipzig were built only in 1820 (the new Argyll Rooms, which burned down by 1830⁹), 1831 (the Exeter Hall, at first strictly reserved for religious music and used until 1907), 1851 (the Crystal Palace, which burned down in 1936), 1858 (the St. James's Hall, demolished in 1903), 1871 (the Royal Albert Hall), 1873 (Alexandra Palace) and 1893 (the

5 Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, 'Chasing a myth and a legend: "The British Musical renaissance" in a "Land without music"', in: *MT* 149/1904 (2008), pp. 53–60.

6 Oskar Adolf Hermann Schmitz, *Das Land ohne Musik*, München 1914, 1915, p. 30.

7 Nicholas Temperley, 'Domestic Music in England 1800–1860', in: *PRMA* 85 (1959), p. 31.

8 International comparisons still are not available since e.g. 19th century Italian orchestral music is yet awaiting thorough research and only a small portion of German 19th century symphonism has been explored.

9 The original Argyll Rooms at the corner of Oxford Street and Argyll Street were initially also used for meetings other than musical performances, and were pulled down to make way for the construction of Regent Street in 1818; the new Argyll Rooms had a capacity of 800 listeners.

Queen's Hall, destroyed in 1941). Additionally, there were multi-purpose halls and smaller rooms, like the Hanover Square Rooms, into which hardly more than the subscribers could fit. Vauxhall Gardens had become a place where symphonic music was not at home any more. It has to be borne in mind, however, that musical culture, now an entirely secular matter, was not supported by the Crown. The interest of the Royal Court in orchestral music was, for a very long time, of decidedly minor importance: In 1826 His Majesty's private band consisted of 42 musicians, but in 1837 had this number had been decreased to 17, exclusively brass and woodwind players with drums – a military band, in fact. Only upon its reconstitution in 1893, followed shortly afterwards by a merging of the private and the state bands, did it finally include strings, bringing the total to 33 musicians. In spite of Walter Parratt's involvement between around 1901–12, the band was hardly ever used, and slowly faded away in the following decades, i.e. during Edward Elgar's tenure as Master of the King's Musick.¹⁰

The influence of music – and musicians – from other countries on British musical life had been enormous in the years before Engel came to the conclusion quoted above. The Italians and French reigned over opera (for a long time Michael Costa, himself of Italian origin, had shaped London operatic life significantly), with the music of Wallace, Balfe, Loder, Macfarren, Benedict, Cellier and others¹¹ showing only minimal signs of qualitative improvement. The influence of the Italians became so strong after 1860 that Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* in 1870 and his *Lohengrin* in 1875 were given at Covent Garden in Italian translation, as was Stanford's *The Veiled Prophet of Khorasan* (first performed in Hannover in German) in 1881. Stanford's *Savonarola* finally received its first performance at Covent Garden in 1884 under Hans Richter – in German. The importance of foreign composers for the understanding of music in Britain is also reflected in the fact that between 1891 and 1900 alone, Cambridge honorary doctorates were given to Dvořák (1891), Boito, Saint-Saëns (whose Third Symphony was premièred at the Philharmonic Society, which had commissioned it, on 19 May 1886), Bruch, Tchaikovsky (1893 – the year of the centenary of the Cambridge University Musical Society), Grieg (1894) and Dohnányi (1899). Berlioz, Liszt, Gounod, Spohr, Wagner and Joseph Joachim came to England and celebrated great successes. Jack Allan Westrup

10 Walter Parratt was Master of the Queen's (and later the King's Musick) from 1893 until his death in 1924. Elgar's successor in 1934 was Henry Walford Davies, who at this time was already strongly involved with the B.B.C. After his death in 1941, the position was given to Arnold Bax, who had already passed the peak of his career. In the coronation year of 1953, Bax died, but not without at least having arranged from the soundtrack of *Malta G. C.* (1942) a Coronation March. His successor was Arthur Bliss, who set the new standards of seriousness in royal compositions (we find a similar tendency in the representational compositions of William Walton since 1937 and Michael Tippett since 1948). The influence of Benjamin Britten marked the appointment of Bliss's successor, the Australian Malcolm Williamson, whose successor in 2004 was Peter Maxwell Davies, a former *enfant terrible* of the British music establishment.

11 Cf. Percy Scholes, *The Mirror of Music, 1844–1944*, vol. I, London 1947, pp. 236–238. Gerald Abraham, *A Hundred Years of Music*, 1938, London 1964, p. 134.

writes, harshly but justly: 'There was in England no composer whom one would be able to match with Mendelssohn, Schumann, Wagner, Brahms, Berlioz or Verdi.'¹² And Harold Truscott is even more acerbic:

'To anyone who has spent a considerable amount of time in examining the record of English instrumental music from the death of Arne (1778) and Boyce (1779) to the end of the nineteenth century it is a familiar fact that this period, up to roughly the eighteen-eighties, is a desert. The amount of instrumental music written during the Victorian era alone would fill a fair-sized library, but there is scarcely a single two-page piece which could be called with reason a composition. I have found the Gadsbys, the Jacksons, the Farmers, the contrapuntal exercises they call symphonies, the imitations (at many removes) of Schumann's G minor Piano Sonata which pass for piano sonatas, the organ pieces which are so stiff with academicism that they appear to be in permanent plaster of Paris, a fruitful source of entertainment and instruction, but the entertainment was inadvertent and the instruction concerned the innumerable ways academicism holds up her sleeve for avoiding composition. It is a period littered with the Doctor's Exercise (which is always published), the prim personal examples by the great Teachers – the Prouts and Macfarrens. I doubt if there has ever been a period in the history of English music when more music was published and less composed, when almost every church organist added to the dusty piles of notes without volition. Whatever movement or semblance of life this mass of work may have is purely involuntary. Some good things in other directions came out of this time, but it was crowned by the English love of the academic institution, without whose *imprimatur* nothing had any worth; in spite of what is superficially a freer outlook, we are fundamentally still bound by the same cord. All that has happened is that a natural saturation point was reached and an inevitable movement against the current began, with difficulty, to make itself felt.

I would not want to pass by without due respect one or two curiosities on the way: Cipriani Potter, for instance, an early Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, in the days when there was still a clergyman Headmaster as well, who wrote nine symphonies (...). These symphonies do have some spark of an idea about them, but in each case the idea has been sparked off by Beethoven.'¹³

Truscott's account, exaggerated in places though it is, gives quite an accurate picture of the situation. It is not, however, Jackson, Farmer or Gadsby one would have to mention – hardly anything they called symphonies has survived;¹⁴ nor is Truscott's comparison of

12 Jack Allan Westrup, 'Die Musik von 1830 bis 1914 in England', in Georg Reichert/Martin Just (eds.): *Bericht über den Internationalen Musikwissenschaftlichen Kongreß Kassel 1962*, Kassel etc. 1963, p. 51.

13 Harold Truscott, 'Algernon Ashton: 1859–1937', in: *MMR LXXXIX* (1959), pp. 142–143.

14 Nowadays symphonies by Henry Robert Gadsby, Arthur Herbert Jackson or Henry or John Farmer are unknown, possibly lost – it may well be that Truscott wanted to augment his argument with some names that came to mind, without bothering to research whether they were in fact the right ones to drop. That Gadsby wrote a number of symphonies is confirmed, although these are unknown today. Concerning both Jackson and Farmer, the author has not a shred of proof that either of them wrote any.

Potter to Beethoven in any sense apposite. Also, many other post-Beethoven composers (especially Germans and Austrians) were at pretty much under his spell, probably more than most English ones.

‘Romantic music undoubtedly reflects the particular instability of the era between the French and Russian revolutions, and shares, however indirectly, the uncertainties of that era about the nature of the truly just society, and of the place of minorities, elites and other potential sources of disturbance within that society.’¹⁵ That Arnold Whittall’s definition hardly can elucidate the full meaning of the word ‘Romantic’ as it is understood, for example, in German literature and music theory will be obvious. For since he apparently knows next to nothing of E. T. A. Hoffmann or Tieck and seems ignorant of the theoretical reflections that can be found in Schiller, Goethe, Humboldt, etc., his representation of Romantic music concentrates on negative aspects. Even Alfred Einstein addressed the actual meaning of the word ‘Romantic’ as established in German literature and art history. He was one of the first to note that Liszt and Wagner should no longer be assigned to the romantic era but to ‘neo-Romanticism’ and, by the same token, Skryabin and his contemporaries to ‘hyper-Romanticism’¹⁶ or (although Einstein did not use the term) to that ‘post-Romanticism’ with which Martin and Drossin associate Sibelius, Strauss, Mahler, Wolf, d’Indy, Chausson, Fauré, Puccini and Janáček, as well as Delius and Elgar. In the light of this nuanced conceptualisation, Whittall’s considerations do indeed have to be re-considered. Commentators like Whittall (and Wolfgang Boetticher¹⁷) compress several stages in musical development within the nineteenth century, a levelling-out which has not been imposed upon any of the other arts.

Far more acceptable is Percy Young’s and, prior to that, Georges Jean-Aubry’s, highlighting of John Field (Dublin, 26 July 1782–Moscow, 11 January 1837) as being much more closely associated with the term ‘Romanticism’ than Wagner, Brahms and even late Schumann. For Young, the British Musical renaissance, usually only constituted by Mackenzie, Parry, Thomas, Cowen and Stanford,¹⁸ begins with John Field, the ‘inventor’ of the nocturne for piano. All the same, Young is hazy about what favoured or triggered its coming into being. Many authors link it with the rise of industrialisation; a far more likely mainspring, however, was the newly emerging nationalism also budding in many other countries, and also apparent in their music. Grieg, Dargomyzhsky, Glinka or Gade could be considered the trailblazers of the new musical nationalism.

15 Arnold Whittall, *Romantic music*, London 1987, p. 15.

16 Alfred Einstein, *Music In The Romantic Era*, New York 1947, p. 361.

17 Wolfgang Boetticher, *Einführung in die musikalische Romantik*, Wilhelmshaven 1983 (Taschenbücher zur Musikwissenschaft, 89).

18 These are according to John Alexander Fuller-Maitland, *English Music in the XIXth Century*, vol. II, London/New York 1902, pp. 184–236 the ‘Leaders of the Renaissance’. In accordance to the English terminology Martin du Pré Cooper introduced a similar wording for the French music: *The Nineteenth Century Musical Renaissance in France (1870–1895)*, in: *PRMA* 74 (1946–1947), pp. 11–23.

In this context it is important to note the direction of the development of symphonism in Germany, with which the acceptance of British symphonies was closely tied. Siegfried Oechsle has pointed out that the highest aesthetic views of the symphony in the 1830s were professed with regard to Beethoven. He was considered the paragon and starting-point, the gateway, in fact, to the diversity which in Great Britain found its full expression following a growing awareness of Schubert's Great C major Symphony,¹⁹ a work which had also made the German Romantics devote more of their energies to writing symphonies (Schumann, Mendelssohn).

It therefore took quite a while before one could apply the term 'Romantic' to any kind of British symphonism, given that one had to start from a 'post-Classical' point. Joseph Haydn's cycle of twelve 'London' symphonies (1791-95) unnerved British composers, many of whom felt incapable of creating symphonies of that calibre. A few composers tried not to be intimidated by the German-Austrian brilliance, including Samuel Wesley, who ceased writing symphonies around 1802, and William Crotch. And it is indeed conspicuous that a number of composers returned to writing symphonies in the old-fashioned sense, as preludes or interludes to vocal compositions. This may largely have been due to the cessation of most subscription concert series – only the Concerts of Antient Music continued up to the middle of the nineteenth century.

Samuel Wesley (Bristol, 24 February 1766–London, 11 October 1837) was, according to Nicholas Temperley, 'one of the most colourful and fascinating of English composers, and in some ways one of the first of the musical Romantics.'²⁰ Of wealthy descent and born into a highly musical family (his uncle John Wesley was the founder of the Methodist Church and famous theorist who wrote the treatise *The Power of Music* in 1779), he proved to be a child prodigy and was destined by his father to become a musician, which indeed led to a life of poverty, drudgery and even imprisonment for debt. Most of his music is neglected, and he is most often mentioned as having played an important role in the Bach revival in England, publishing in collaboration with the German-born Karl Friedrich Horn (1762–1830) the trio sonatas in 1810 and the *Wohltemperirtes Clavier* in 1813. As early as 1779 to 1785 Wesley and his brother Charles gave subscription concerts at the Wesleys' family home in London, where the family had moved in 1778. These concerts were criticised in Methodist circles: it also seems that Samuel rejected, as a concession to Methodist propriety, any royal appointment.²¹ In 1785 Wesley converted to the Roman Catholic Church; in 1788 he joined the Freemasons.²²

19 Siegfried Oechsle, *Symphonik nach Beethoven. Studien zu Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn und Gade*, Kassel 1992, pp. 373–376.

20 Nicholas Temperley, 'Samuel Wesley', in: *MT CVII* (1966), p. 108.

21 John I. Schwarz jun., *The Orchestral Music of Samuel Wesley*, Ph.D. diss. University of Maryland 1971, vol. 1, p. 8.

22 He married in an Anglican ceremony in 1793 (this marriage seems to have dissolved around the turn of the century, and Wesley started living with his housekeeper as his common-law wife – bringing rather strongly to mind Havergal Brian's similar situation some hundred years later).

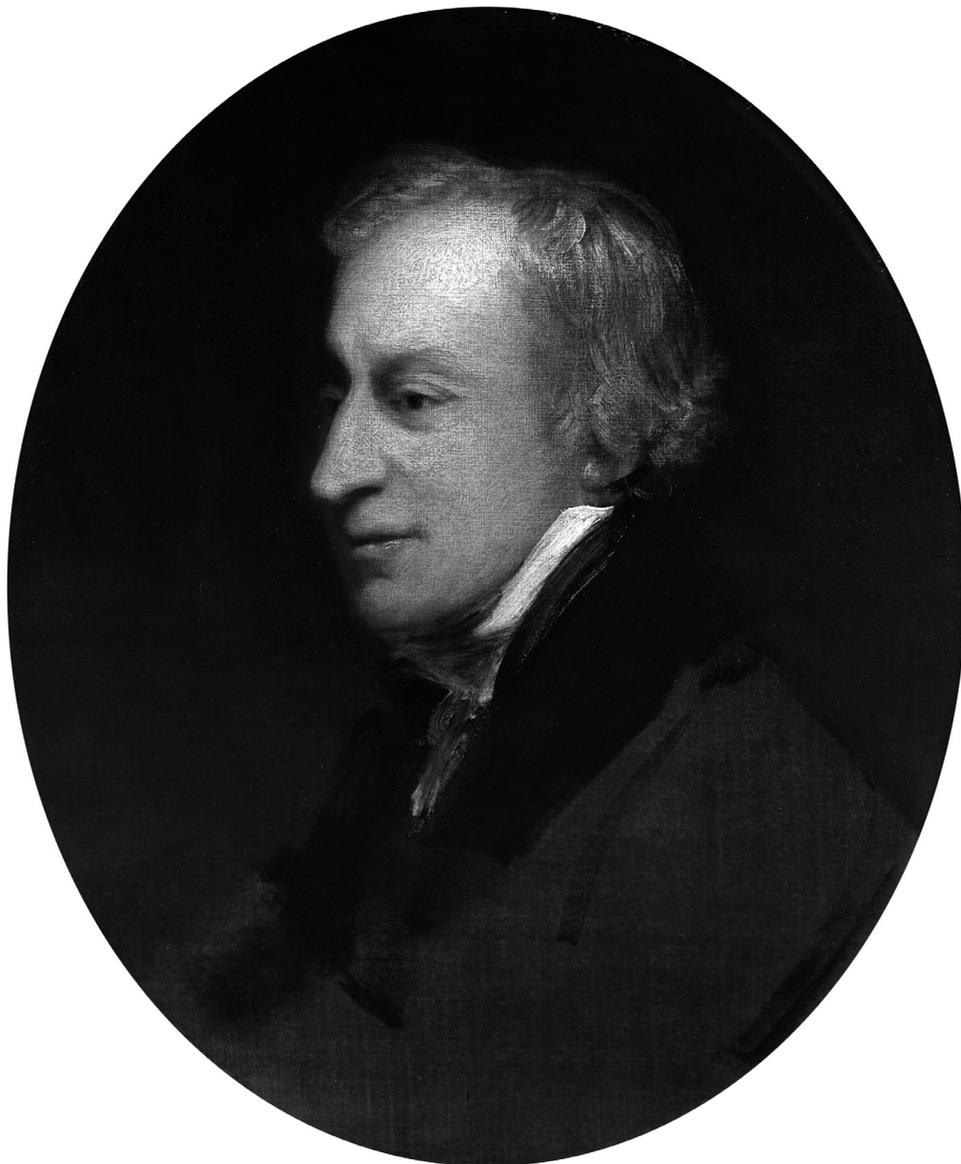


Illustration 12. Samuel Wesley, oil painting by John Jackson, c1815-20. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

Wesley wrote copious amounts of church music, but he also composed some five symphonies (which he called 'Sinfonia') and overtures in his youth, 'more or less in the idiom of J. C. Bach.'²³ By 1781 he was playing his own violin concertos at the family subscription concerts, which ran from 1779 to 1785. His first symphonic compositions dated from this period, and the very first – entitled *Sinfonia obligato* – was (though not so called) a sinfonia concertante for violin, cello and organ. This is dated 27 April 1781, when he was only fifteen, and the brothers Samuel and Charles were joined in the solo parts by Joseph Reinagle on the cello. The first movement, in ritornello form, begins with the same attention-grabbing formula that Johann Christian Bach had used in four of his Op. XVIII symphonies, and the slow movement is a rather obvious imitation of the one in Bach's Op. XVIII No. 1; still, the cheerful finale shows some individuality.

The two following symphonies, in D and A (of an earlier A major Sinfonia only the violin parts have survived²⁴), are considered by Roger Fiske 'much better despite their unevenness.'²⁵ They date from early 1784, when Samuel had just turned eighteen, and are as usual scored for strings and horns only (this practice was only to change with the 1802 Sinfonia). The first movement of the Sinfonia in D major begins not unlike J. C. Bach's Op. XVIII No. 4 – in each case the opening tune is played by all the strings *unisono*:

Ex. 1

The image shows two musical staves in G major (one sharp) and common time. The top staff, labeled 'Allegro spiritoso' and 'Wesley', begins with a half note G, followed by a quarter note A, a quarter note B, and a quarter note C. The next measure contains a quarter rest, a quarter note D, and a quarter note E. The final measure of the excerpt consists of three eighth notes: F (with *sf*), G (with *sf*), and A (with *sf*), followed by a quarter rest. The bottom staff, labeled 'Allegro con spirito' and 'Bach', begins with a half note G, followed by a quarter note A, a quarter note B, and a quarter note C. The next measure contains a quarter rest, a quarter note D, and a quarter note E. The final measure of the excerpt consists of three eighth notes: F, G, and A, followed by a quarter rest.

The second subject is much more graceful, though the chromatic modifications presumably derive again from Johann Christian Bach.

23 Nicholas Temperley, 'Samuel Wesley', in: *MT* CVII (1966), p. 109.

24 Most of Wesley's unpublished works have survived in autograph manuscript through the devotion of the composer's daughter Eliza, who collected the material and bequeathed it to the British Library.

25 Roger Fiske, 'Concert Music II', in H. Diack Johnstone/Roger Fiske (eds.), *The Eighteenth Century. The Blackwell History of Music in Britain*, vol. 4, Oxford/Cambridge (Mass.) 1990, p. 236.

Ex. 2

The image shows two systems of musical notation for strings. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The music begins at measure 51. The first staff is marked 'Archi p' and 'sf'. The second staff is marked 'sf'. The second system also consists of two staves, continuing the musical material. The first staff of the second system is marked 'sf'. The music features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Roger Fiske believes only the finale to be ‘consistently good’.²⁶

The A major Sinfonia is overall less remarkable, but the first movement has an interesting construction, ‘and the wit with which it ends would have been quite outside the range of other English composers of the time. Samuel is not to be blamed for imitating Bach. Had more of our composers done so they would have written better.’²⁷ All of the early symphonies are cast in three movements (in 1839, the essence of the symphony was still understood as being in three movements²⁸), all but two in the order fast-slow-fast. The tempi of the Sinfonia in A major (No. 4) are *Andante* (the tempo changing for an unnamed faster main section), *Andantino*, and *Brillante*, and the Sinfonia in E \flat (No. 5) includes a third movement with three different tempo markings.

Nearly all of the early symphonies have second movements that use two contrasting subjects. Only the *Andante. Con moto* of the *Sinfonia obligato* is monothematic; the second of the subject’s three appearances is in the dominant. Wesley uses the two subjects of the D major Sinfonia to build a two-part form. In the second movements of the last three symphonies, Wesley separates and expands the two subjects and then repeats the first subject to create a ternary structure. John I. Schwarz has found numerous ‘precedents for the character of Wesley’s opening subjects, particularly in the [last two] symphonies, (...) in slow movements by Johann Stamitz and Carl Friedrich Abel and in the early works of Haydn.’²⁹

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*, p. 237.

28 ‘On Symphonies, Concertos &c’, in: *The Musical World* XII (1839), p. 272.

29 John I. Schwarz, ‘Samuel Wesley’, in: *William Herschel · William Smethergell · Samuel Wesley · Samuel Sebastian Wesley*, ed. by Sterling E. Murray, Richard Platt, Richard Divall and John I. Schwarz, New York/London 1983 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EIII), p. liii.

For the third movement in his early symphonies, Wesley employs three different designs: the A–B–A'–A form in the first symphony, sonata movement form in the A major Sinfonia, and a ternary form (*Allegretto–Presto–Tempo di primo*) in the E \flat major Sinfonia. The latter design had precedents in two works by Haydn, whose well-loved Symphony Hob I:46 concludes with *Presto e scherzando–L'istesso tempo di menuet–Tempo I*, and his Symphony Hob I:67 with *Allegro di molto–Adagio cantabile–Primo tempo*. Wesley may very well have known both works, for the orchestral parts of the latter were available through Longman & Broderip of London around 1782, and the former also seems to have been known in England by that time.

Wesley's personal style is evident throughout these symphonies, though its resemblance to the symphonism of, say, Vorišek is a bit surprising.

His delight in writing melodies with phrases of unbalanced lengths and with elisions, his predilection for imitative devices especially in development, his preference for developing not principal subject matter but rather the engaging rhythmic motifs that first served transitional purposes, and his tendency to enliven the harmonic flow by the chain-suspension technique are found in the symphonies just as in his concertos and overtures.³⁰

With his Sinfonia in D, Wesley revisits J. C. Bach to a much greater degree than in the preceding or the following compositions, which display free melodic invention and development: to some extent, this more emancipated style resembles John Marsh's symphonism. While Marsh entirely ceased writing symphonies even before 1800, however, Wesley, after a break of 18 years, wrote his last one – a four-movement symphony – in 1802,³¹ with its third movement taking the form of a Scherzo for the first time. 'Then there is a magnificent Symphony in B \flat , dated 1802', Nicholas Temperley writes, 'in which the manner of Haydn's London symphonies is fully absorbed and vigorously developed, without plagiarism and without formality. This work stands quite alone in English music',³² especially when one considers how few symphonies that were written in England from 1790 to 1810 have survived. Roger Fiske is much more critical, writing: 'With such skills how could an eighteen-year-old composer not reach the top? Unfortunately Samuel was unstable, alternating between elation and despair, and on his bad days he reacted against his parents, their religion, and no doubt against the London musical establishment as well. This was already worshipping Haydn and creating conditions that must have caused dejection even among those composers who were not themselves depressives.'³³

30 *Ibid.*, p. lii. This deviation from conventional recapitulation procedures was called the 'semi-sonata' form by Adam Carse (Adam Carse, *Eighteenth-century symphonies*, London 1951, p. 35).

31 An extensive analysis of the symphonies was published in John I. Schwarz jun., *The Orchestral Music of Samuel Wesley*. Ph.D. dissertation University of Maryland 1971, vol. 1, pp. 127–176.

32 Nicholas Temperley, 'Samuel Wesley', in: *MT CVII* (1966), p. 109.

33 Roger Fiske, 'Concert Music II', in H. Diack Johnstone/Roger Fiske (eds.), *The Eighteenth Century. The Blackwell History of Music in Britain*, vol. 4, Oxford/Cambridge (Mass.) 1990, pp. 237–238.

The opening theme of this symphony's first movement

Ex. 3

The musical score for Ex. 3 is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It is marked 'Allegro'. The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the string section (Archi) starting with a piano (p) dynamic, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The woodwinds (Ob., Fg.) enter later in the system. The second system continues the string part, with a 'tutti' section marked 'f' (forte) later in the excerpt.

already suggests a work of some scale and importance and provides several motifs capable of development. These possibilities are presented, as it were, in the modulatory section leading to the second subject (ex. 4), and are explored in full in the development section. Orchestration helps to stress the entries of the themes, and effective counterpoint presents the composer's fully mature creativity. 'The movement ends with a very Mozartian touch – a long tonic pedal, beginning with subdominant harmony and ending with a dying 'feminine cadence'.'³⁴ The slow movement, in E \flat , has a melody of the most poignant beauty, though it has the unusual characteristic of being made up of phrases of three bars' length (Ernest Walker called it 'less square in rhythm than most'³⁵).

34 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, pp. 160–162a.

35 Ernest Walker, *A History of Music in England*. London etc. 1952, p. 287.

Ex. 4

The image displays a musical score for an orchestral excerpt, labeled 'Ex. 4'. The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). It is divided into two systems of staves.

The first system includes the following parts:

- Fl. I e II** (Flute I and II): Two staves at the top, both showing rests.
- Ob. I e II** (Oboe I and II): Two staves below the flutes, also showing rests.
- Fg. I e II** (Fagott I and II): A single staff below the oboes, showing a melodic line starting in the third measure.
- Archi** (Archi - Strings): A grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below the woodwinds, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth and thirty-second notes.

The second system includes:

- Woodwinds (Flute/Oboe):** Two staves at the top, showing chords and rests.
- Woodwinds (Fagott):** A single staff below, showing a melodic line.
- Archi:** A grand staff below, continuing the string texture with various rhythmic patterns and dynamics, including a piano (*p*) marking.

Ex. 5

Andante
Vln. I e II

Vla., Vlc., Cb., Fg.

However, this device is not used with the skill that Mozart or Haydn might have applied. The finale is particularly original, both melodically and formally – in Walker’s words, ‘nicely freakish in a Haydnesque style – at a very considerable distance.’³⁶ John I. Schwarz sees the matter in a somewhat different light, writing that Wesley had here ‘stepped backward in time; in his design there is a sonata-rondo form – one such as Haydn employed in the early 1770s.’³⁷ Still, it can easily be repeated that it is probably the most convincing British symphony of its time.

After this work, Samuel Wesley stopped composing symphonies, and only one other outstanding orchestral composition of his will be mentioned here, a concert Overture in E major, possibly composed later than 1830 and probably the first British orchestral composition with trombone parts.³⁸

One of the most promising composers of the early nineteenth century was **Henry Rowley Bishop** (London, 18 November 1786–London, 30 April 1855), to the very day a contemporary of Carl Maria von Weber. Later in his career he was mainly known as an opera composer and one of the foremost exponents of nineteenth-century British song, and particularly for the ballad *Home, sweet Home* from the opera *Clari, or the Maid of Milan* (1832) (which was, in fact, a Sicilian air adopted by Bishop). At the age of thirteen Bishop

36 *Ibid.*, p. 287.

37 John I. Schwarz, ‘Samuel Wesley’, in: *William Herschel · William Smethergell · Samuel Wesley · Samuel Sebastian Wesley*, ed. by Sterling E. Murray, Richard Platt, Richard Divall and John I. Schwarz, New York/London 1983 (*The Symphony 1720–1840*, EIII), p. liii.

38 Nicholas Temperley, ‘Samuel Wesley’, in: *MT CVII* (1966), p. 109. Wesley’s son Samuel Sebastian’s *Symphony in C minor* of c. 1832 also contains trombone parts; see pp. 100–102.

started selling music with his cousin Charles Wigley. His first compositions (songs and piano pieces) were published in 1800. He was supported by the horse owner Thomas Panton in order to be made a jockey, but when it was discovered that Bishop had weak lungs, Panton allowed his protégé to concentrate on music instead. Bishop himself confessed:

‘The great masters whose compositions then most interested me were Handel, Haydn, and Mozart. In their surprising works it seemed to me that all had been achieved of which music is capable. With regard to our English composers, of Dr. Arne’s music or any that was of his particular school, I knew but little; of Purcell’s I then knew nothing. That knowledge, with the admiration which naturally accompanied it, was reserved for more mature years. Dibdin and Shield were my delight, for they had melody; that melody, too, was simple and artless, and being so it seemed to me like the voice of truth. These impressions, these feelings, may probably have influenced my earlier attempts in musical composition.’³⁹

Bishop started composing operas early on. His first opera, *Angelina*, was performed at the Theatre Royal in Margate in 1804, followed by his first large-scale opera *The Circassian Bride*, performed on 23 February 1809 at Drury Lane. In 1810 Bishop became musical director of Covent Garden; in 1824 he changed to Drury Lane, where he tried to rival the success of Weber’s *Oberon* in 1826 with his own *Aladdin*. From c. 1820 to 1895, Bishop was considered the most important British opera composer of this period. He was ‘director and composer’ to Vauxhall Gardens from 1826 to 1840, taking pains to fashion compositions that catered to the audience’s tastes. Bishop was knighted in 1842, but from 1840 he almost entirely ceased composing (an *Ode on the Installation of the Earl of Derby*, 1853, was one of the few exceptions). From 1840 to 1848 he was principal conductor of the Antient Concerts; 1841–43 saw him as Reid Professor of Music in Edinburgh.⁴⁰ In 1848 he succeeded William Crotch as the Chair of Music at Oxford, succeeded in 1855 by Ouseley.⁴¹ Apart from c. 170 compositions for the stage (largely arrangements and adaptations), he wrote numerous songs and glees, 8 cantatas and odes (1817–53), a String Quartet of comparatively high quality (1816), a *Concertante* for flute, oboe, bassoon, violin and double-bass (1807), and a few other compositions. The state of music around this time in London is very well described by George Alexander Macfarren:

‘Bishop in his first days wrote some overtures to his so-called operas, which have a classic ring about them and a sterling musical feeling, but these must have been little

³⁹ Quoted from Richard Northcott, *The Life of Sir Henry R. Bishop*, London 1920, p. 2.

⁴⁰ The Chair of Music had been established in 1839 according to the will of General John Reid (born Robertson); the first professor became John Thomson, followed by Bishop, Pearson (1844–1845), John Donaldson (1845–1865), Herbert Stanley Oakeley (1865–1891), Friedrich (Frederick) Niecks (1891–1914) and Donald Francis Tovey (1914–1940).

⁴¹ Frederick Arthur Gore Ouseley (1825–89) was followed by John Stainer (1804–1901, but professor only until 1900), Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848–1918, but professor only until 1908), Walter Parratt (1841–1918), Hugh Percy Allen (1869–1946) and Jack Allan Westrup (1904–1975, but professor only until 1971).

esteemed, because we find later, that when he was announced in the play bill to have “composed, and adapted for the English stage” the opera of *Figaro*, he made a new overture, in which was introduced, as a solo for the keyed bugle, the popular melody of *Lieber Augustin*.⁴²

Bishop’s Grand Sinfonia in C (apparently his only surviving composition written in 1805; in the summer of the same year he studied harmony with Francesco Bianchi, ‘a fashionable musician who had come to England from Cremona to direct his own operatic compositions at the King’s Theatre’⁴³) is in fact no real concert symphony, but was composed, at the comparatively early age of 19, just before his very first stage composition was performed in London (the adapted ‘ballet’ *Tamerlane and Bajazet*, 8 April 1806 at the King’s Theatre). It is, like the overture (also in C) to the ‘ballet’ *Armide et Renaud* (performed 15 May 1806 at King’s Theatre⁴⁴), quite a simple, though this time rather long, one-movement composition. Indeed, it would have needed a thorough overhaul to become worthy of performance. The thematic material

Ex. 6



is not strong enough to retain the listener’s interest through the rather uninteresting, but unusual for the times, already rather long development and the comparatively long recapitulation sections: the most interesting feature is the slow introduction in C minor. It well may be that this inability to fill the symphonic form adequately prompted Bishop to leave the symphonic field to others and never again to revisit it during the rest of his long and very fruitful creative life.

Bishop’s overtures are all potpourris of the stage music, sometimes with a ‘Haydnesque introduction, often of considerable merit’, an ‘Italian Allegro in the style of Spontini’, a ‘popular air for solo instrument’ or a ‘trivial Rondo intended to keep on until the stage is ready’.⁴⁵

A landmark for the development of British symphonism was the year 1822, when the Royal Academy of Music⁴⁶ was founded. It presented numerous concerts of newly-composed symphonies as early as the 1830s, regardless of the works’ actual merits (or lack thereof, as described by Truscott above). The Royal Academy of Music is one of the oldest

42 George Alexander Macfarren, ‘Cipriani Potter: his life and work’, in: *PRMA* 10 (1883-84), p. 42.

43 Richard Northcott, *The Life of Sir Henry R. Bishop*, London 1920, p. 3.

44 Royal College of Music, London: MS 59, fol. 21–35.

45 Frederick Corder, ‘The works of Sir Henry Bishop’, in: *MQ* IV (1918), p. 91.

46 It may be recalled that from 1719 to 1728 a Royal Academy of Music existed, but this entity was in fact an opera company, directed by Bononcini and Handel.

conservatories in Europe to have survived until this very day, exceeded in age only by the conservatories in Paris (1795), Milan (1807), Prague (1811), Graz (1815) and Vienna (1817). There had already been plans for an academy of music based on Burney's proposal of 1774, which envisaged an entity connected with the Foundling Hospital. After his experiences at the earlier academies at Vienna and Naples (the Italian conservatories were of immense importance in the second half of the eighteenth century), Burney knew what he was talking about. He would not live to see the academy built, however.⁴⁷ Its eventual inception was due to the labours of **John Fane Lord Burghersh** (London, 3 February 1784–Apthorpe House, Wansford, Northamptonshire, 16 October 1859), a diplomat and an amateur musician. In 1803 he entered the army and became British envoy at the Court of Florence from 1814 to 1830, and studied with Hague, Mayseder, Portogallo and Bianchi. In memory of his patronage, a scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music was founded in 1861.

Burghersh composed choral music, operas (all in Italian), string quartets, songs and three Sinfonias; the first sinfonia's piano score was arranged by Henry Litolf and published in Berlin. This piece had been commissioned by the Philharmonic Society (like Neate's symphonic output, see p. 106, Temperley describes Burghersh's Sinfonias as displaying 'a lack of the technique and musicianship necessary to command the resources of an orchestra'⁴⁸) and was premièred at one of its concerts in 1817 (the other Sinfonias are not datable, but obviously followed the First). It is, like the other two, faithful to the rules and still owes quite a bit to eighteenth-century models, the model being Mozart rather than Haydn, with more emphasis on melodic richness rather than formal inventiveness. The best movement seems to be the second, a rather well-composed slow movement in ternary form opened by clarinets, horns and bassoon; the finale, which is less academic in form than the first movement, is also fine. The development was obviously too long, but very carefully elaborated; the entire movement was heavily corrected and shortened. The very lively movement is not afraid of syncopations, as is already apparent in the movement's opening theme:

Ex. 7



Of the Second Sinfonia, only the first movement has survived in score; of all other movements, only the printed piano score is extant. Again, the development is rather long, and we find numerous corrections and cuts here as well.

Of the last three movements of the Third Sinfonia, two manuscript scores have survived (one copy bound together with the first movement of No. 2). The first movement of the manuscript score still differs considerably from the printed piano score, but the manuscript

47 William Wahab Cazalet, *The History of the Royal Academy of Music*, London 1854, pp. 2–12.

48 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, p. 164.

Society was formed in London in 1813, Crotch was an associate of the Society and was elected a member for the years 1814-19 and 1828 until 1832, the year he retired from the Royal Academy of Music principalship.

Crotch wrote three Sinfonias, in E \flat major (1808), F (1814) and C major (1819); the C major work has supposedly survived only in piano score; his earliest orchestral work is the Overture in A major of 1795, a four-movement work for 1 flute, 2 oboes, 1 bassoon, 1 trumpet, timpani and strings. The 1795 Overture shows no great formal inspiration; the slow movement in ternary form is probably the most inventive movement both melodically and harmonically. Its first and last movements are in uneventful sonata form; the third movement offers at least in part irregular accentuation.

The E \flat major Sinfonia is even less inspired, with a first movement plagued by a rather rambling slow introduction and exposition. A development was readily apparent in the 1795 Overture, but in this work it is hardly detectable, and there is no proper recapitulation. It very much seems as if Crotch had tried to experiment within the symphony, but felt himself to have been unsuccessful (this might be the only way to explain the crossing out of the original year '1808' in the score and replacement with 'May 1817'). The second movement might support this theory as well; it was supposed to become a set of variations, but Crotch ceased composing after 'Var. I', with only the violin part carrying on for some further 15 bars. Had he succeeded in his experiment, Crotch might have further developed the form of the one-movement symphony at an early stage in the nineteenth century.

With the Sinfonia in F major, which was performed by the Philharmonic Society in 1814,⁵¹ Crotch returned to the formally strict conception (or if 1817 was indeed the date of composition of the E \flat , he had not yet developed into another direction). Nicholas Temperley stresses Crotch's pedantry, the overall dullness of the work;⁵² one might add Crotch's highly conventional orchestration to these grievances. The energetic first movement, with its beautifully lyrical second subject reminiscent of Beethoven rather than Haydn, is succeeded by a rather uneventful theme and variations making considerable demands on the wind players. More Haydnesque than any other movement may be the strong and business-like minuet. The fugal writing and the counter-melodies in the short *Presto* finale allows the Oxford Professor to show not only his academic status, but also his sense of fun, and indeed the second half of the movement displays more inspiration than most of the rest of the work.

Of **John Lord jun.** very little is known, although he too was a professor at the Royal Academy of Music. The Cambridge University Library owns the parts of two of his

51 Temperley dates (in the Garland Series) the Philharmonic Society première performance 16 May 1815 and not 1814, as every other source states.

52 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, p. 164.

orchestral compositions, an Overture in E^b major of 1815 and the Symphony in D, dated around 1817. Both compositions are one-movement works and seem to have the same cast (double wind with only 1 flute; the flute part in the symphony is missing and for this reason apparently also the second theme – 1 trumpet, 1 trombone, timpani and strings), which places Lord close to Henry Bishop and Samuel Sebastian Wesley. Formally, Lord's composition is very well-balanced, with the exposition, development and recapitulation roughly equal in length.

Composition was not the main course at the Royal Academy of Music, and **Charles Edward Horsley** (London, 16 December 1822–New York, 2 May 1876), son of the organist, composer, writer and founder professor of the Royal Academy of Music William Horsley and grandson of John Wall Callcott, may have been one of the first students of the Royal Academy of Music to become a prolific composer.⁵³ Horsley jun. was a composer mainly of choral music (oratorios *David*, *Joseph* and *Gideon*) and chamber music.⁵⁴ He emigrated to Australia in 1861 and afterwards to the United States. He wrote his 'First' Symphony in D minor Op. 9 in 1842–44, a rather uninspired, academic composition, very probably while a student, either of his father, Moscheles, or, at Leipzig, Mendelssohn and Hauptmann. The only special features of the work are a rather interesting slow introduction to the first movement, the rather unquiet *Andante* in 3/8, and the dotted rhythms in the finale.

Samuel Sebastian Wesley (London, 14 August 1810–Gloucester, 19 April 1876), whom Samuel Wesley sen. fathered with Sarah Suter, was one of the most outstanding church musicians of the Victorian period, organist of Leeds Parish Church and from 1849 of Winchester Cathedral. But although he achieved national acclaim, as his father did, as an accompanist and recitalist on the organ, he saw himself primarily as a composer. He published both instrumental pieces, notably for organ and piano, and vocal works, including anthems, service settings, psalms, hymns, glees and solo songs. In his anthems and services Wesley distinguished himself and surpassed contemporaries like William Sterndale Bennett, John Goss, Frederick Gore Ouseley, Robert Lucas Pearsall and Thomas Attwood Walmisley. However, he wrote hardly anything in the fields of large-scale choral festival music (in spite of his long connection with the Three Choirs Festival), stage music or orchestral works: this he left to Bishop, Potter, Bennett and others. Instead he committed himself to the reform of church music practices.

53 *Royal Academy of Music. A List of Pupils received into the Academy since its foundation in 1822–23. Together with a list of the subscribers to the institution and amount of subscriptions to the close of 1847. With a general account of the state of the funds up to that period. To which are added the rules and regulations of the establishment*, London 1848, pp. 3–75. On the entire list only two harmony students are mentioned; the rest of the students are entered as studying various instruments or singing.

54 Hector Walker, 'Charles Edward Horsley – a restless spirit', in: *bms news* 118 (2008), pp. 286–287.

Although in his later years he expressed displeasure at the narrowness of his church-orientated career, he seems to have chosen this profession deliberately. He received his early formal music training, from the age of eight to fifteen, as a chorister and soloist in the Chapel Royal. Then, in 1826, even before reaching his sixteenth birthday, he solicited and was awarded the organ post at St. James's Chapel, Hampstead Road, London. From 1829 until 1832 Wesley was to accept three additional appointments as church organist in the city. Indeed, at one point he held three positions simultaneously. It should be noted that the Wesley family had no connection whatsoever to the Royal Academy of Music.

From 1827 to 1832 Wesley is known to have made some inroads into the more secular circles of London musical life. Appearances are recorded at the English Opera House (1829), at Drury Lane (1830–1832) and the Royal Olympic Theatre (1832), but mainly as a conductor, accompanist or organist in oratorio performances. In the latter part of 1832 Wesley left London to assume organist responsibilities at Hereford Cathedral. His tenure there ended in 1835, three months after his marriage to Mary Anne Merewether. While at this post he wrote his most popular anthem, *Blessed be the God and Father*, and it was here that Wesley made his first contact with the famous Three Choirs Festival, in 1834, where his Overture in E was performed. Until 1842 Wesley was organist at Exeter Cathedral, in this year moving to Leeds Parish Church, where he stayed for a period of seven years. His work schedule at Leeds allowed for supplementary professional involvements – he participated in the Music Society and Philharmonic meetings, lectured at the Liverpool Collegiate Institution and conducted the Leeds Choral Society – but, once more, he found musical circumstances at the church not to his liking. It was in Leeds, in fact, that his diatribe *A few words on cathedral music* was brought into print in 1849. Then he turned to Winchester Cathedral, where he served from 1849 to 1865, and then withdrawing to Gloucester, where he remained until his death in 1876. During the Gloucester years he renewed his affiliation with the Three Choirs Festival, participating in these annual affairs as a performer or conductor from 1865 to 1869 and then once more in 1871.

While Wesley wrote a few (though not many) works that combined choral and orchestral forces, an incidental music overture of 1832, the Overture in E and the Symphony in C minor represent his only efforts in the purely orchestral genres of composition.⁵⁵ The Symphony is a one-movement composition in sonata form. The title 'symphony' is somewhat surprising, but perhaps Wesley saw himself in the tradition of his real British predecessors rather than that of some Italians.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the use of the word 'symphony' in the theatre was common, and he had only just finished his theatrical career.

55 Peter Horton, 'The Unknown Wesley: The Early Instrumental and Secular Vocal Music of Samuel Sebastian Wesley', in Bennett Zon (ed.), *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies*, vol. 1, Aldershot etc. 1999, p. 144 stresses that the Overture in E was first performed on a 'trial night' of the Philharmonic Society in January 1833 and performed at the Three Choirs Festival at Hereford, conducted by Wesley, on 10 September 1834, on a programme with Mozart's Overture to *Don Giovanni* and an aria from Spohr's opera *Zemire und Azor* (1819).

56 His father described the instrumental introduction to his *Ode to St. Cecilia* as a 'symphony' as well.

The Symphony in C minor contains an expository section that presents two subject groups connected by a transitional figure and a prominent closing subject; a lengthy development treats the first subject, the second, then the first again; the recapitulation includes only the principal segments of the first subject group in reverse order, and the work ends with a codetta. An examination of the tonal design reveals still another curious feature of the composition: the work concludes in C minor, not C major, as was rather implied at the outset. More than that, the change in mode appears to be the only means employed to distinguish the exposition's second subject area from the first, and as a consequence, there is a rather static quality about the expository section. And, given the over-abundance of thematic ideas in the first subject group, the exposition must be described as laboured.

Aside from these shortcomings, the work is handled in a very capable manner. Transitional ideas grow naturally and sensibly out of the rhythmic framework or the tonal shapes of the principal thematic segments. Subsidiary and accompanimental motifs are also provided and used to good advantage. These first serve to provide the listener with a secondary level of subject matter and later play a role in the development. A few of these subsidiary motifs can be viewed as the original source of certain principal thematic segments to follow later.

The opening motif (bars 2–3) of the movement

Ex. 10

binds the piece together by signalling important junctures in the sonata movement plan. Not only does it open the movement, it also concludes the exposition, recurs at the beginning and the end of the development, and closes the recapitulation. The second subject is introduced (bars 65–69) by the wind. This sustained section – it really is more a harmonic progression than something of thematic interest – appears in the exposition, but is used

again (bars 129–133) with the direction 'Slower' in the development to provide a pleasing change of pace at the peak of the work.

Finally, the Symphony in C minor shows Wesley as a competent orchestrator. 'Pleasing combinations and exchanges of brass, string, and woodwind sonorities are used throughout to delineate theme segments and subject areas, to highlight cadential points, and to serve the composer's constant demand for dynamic nuances. The development is especially well managed. There the contrasts of solo woodwind and soli string color serve both to enhance the contrapuntal writing and to dignify and add maturity to the subjects treated.'⁵⁷

Like Wesley, **Thomas Attwood Walmisley** (London, 21 January 1814–Hastings, 17 January 1856) was mainly a composer of sacred music and played a highly important role in the music of parish churches. His first teacher was his godfather Thomas Attwood, whose teacher had been Mozart; Walmisley in fact absorbed the Mozartian influence rather directly. In 1830 he was appointed organist of Croydon Parish Church, where he found a supporter who recommended him as organist of Trinity College and St. John's College, Cambridge; in 1833 he took his Mus.B. there, followed in 1838 by the B.A., 1841 by the M.A. and 1848 the Mus.D.; as early as 1836 he was appointed Professor of Music, and he remained in this post until his death. Nicholas Temperley's very concentrated account in *The Musical Times* of 1956 stresses Walmisley's importance as an orchestral composer, while many of his secular cantatas are dismissed as being either dull, uninteresting or even absurd in long sections. Of the three odes written for the installation of successive Chancellors of Cambridge University, Temperley writes:

'The three odes (...) indeed do not merit (...) performance, since they are far too long and ambitious for Walmisley and contain large groups of movements totally lacking in interest. But there are many good things in them. All three opening movements are good, especially the orchestral introductions which present an interesting illustration of the progress of Walmisley's style: in the first Handel is the model, in the second Mozart, and in the third Mendelssohn. The choral writing of all three, however, is Handelian, as befitted an occasion of solemn and ancient ceremonial.'⁵⁸

The chamber music (three String Quartets, 1831–40; one movement of a Piano Sextet, 1833; a Piano Trio, 1831; and two undated Sonatinas for oboe and piano, plus a few solo compositions for piano, harp and organ) is valued in similar terms; the compositions 'have some attractive ideas, but they are without the beginnings of formal cohesion, showing a curious inability to get away from the tonic key.'⁵⁹

As orchestral compositions, Walmisley wrote a 'Second' Organ Concerto (1831 – there is

57 John I. Schwarz, 'Samuel Sebastian Wesley', in: *William Herschel · William Smethergell · Samuel Wesley · Samuel Sebastian Wesley*, ed. by Sterling E. Murray, Richard Platt, Richard Divall and John I. Schwarz, New York/London 1983 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EIII), p. lxiv.

58 Nicholas Temperley, 'T. A. Walmisley's Secular Music', in: *MT* XCVII (1956), p. 637.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 637.

Ex. 11: Thomas Attwood Walmisley, Symphony in D minor, fol. 4v and 5r of the MS score. Royal School of Church Music, Salisbury; reproduced by kind permission; Licence 0448.



no sign of any first), an Overture in C for Military Band (1832), an Overture in D (1832), an orchestral accompaniment to Kalkbrenner's *Variations on 'God Save the King'* for piano (1833) and two symphonies, one dating probably from the early 1830s as well. *The Musical World* of 1840 mentions the performance of a Symphony in E \flat with a slow introduction in C minor, the composition being 'a first attempt at compositions of the higher order for instruments', reflecting 'much credit on the composer.'⁶⁰ This may in fact be the work that gave rise to Mendelssohn's famous rebuff: 'No. 1? Let us see what No. 12 will be first!' Temperley muses that 'It may be that Walmisley was so discouraged by Mendelssohn's remark that he destroyed the work.'⁶¹ The Symphony in D minor is very short, originally containing only five double folios, with the inner three cut by half so that in fact 7 folios remained. Of these 14 pages, 8 are filled with full score, after which Walmisley obviously ceased composing; between the penultimate and the last folio (fol. 4^v–5^r) something is clearly missing. It seems likely that Walmisley very probably gave up when he realized that after the lengthy exposition he had already started the development of the first theme before a second subject had been presented. This shortcoming (which was much later to be successfully employed by Sibelius⁶²) apparently constituted reason enough to discard the project, since at least the last few pages would have had to be rewritten, in spite of the organically and carefully composed development (ex. 11).

The Philharmonic Society (only very much later Royal) was founded in 1813, with the aim of organizing regular concerts in London, initially of symphonies and instrumental music only, with vocal music added in 1816 and concertos joining the repertoire in 1819. The inaugural concert took place on 8 March (six days after George Alexander Macfarren's birth) at the Argyll Rooms, with Clementi at the piano. In the following decades, the Society was directed, among others, by Spohr (who introduced the use of the baton and whose Second Symphony was premièred at a Philharmonic Society concert on 10 April 1820), Moscheles, Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Sterndale Bennett, Costa, Sullivan, Cowen, Mackenzie, Nikisch, Beecham, Ronald, Coates and one season even by Richard Wagner. The Philharmonic Society⁶³ gave very many first performances, from Bennett and Potter via Spohr, Cherubini and Mendelssohn Bartholdy up to Stanford, Cowen, Parry, Saint-Saëns and Dvořák. However, the Society is particularly proud of the score of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (albeit 'only' a copyist's MS) which had been expressly written for it. That the Society's dealings with Beethoven did not begin very promisingly, however, is nowadays often forgotten. The Society bought three MS copies of Beethoven overtures in 1815. Two of these, probably *Die Ruinen von Athen* and *König*

60 'Philharmonic New Orchestra', in: *MW* XIII (1840), p. 83.

61 Nicholas Temperley, 'T. A. Walmisley's Secular Music', in: *MT* XCVII (1956), p. 638.

62 I am most grateful to Lionel Pike for having pointed out this to me.

63 The Smart Collection in the British Library includes the programmes of all the Philharmonic Society concerts for about the first fifty years of the Society's existence.

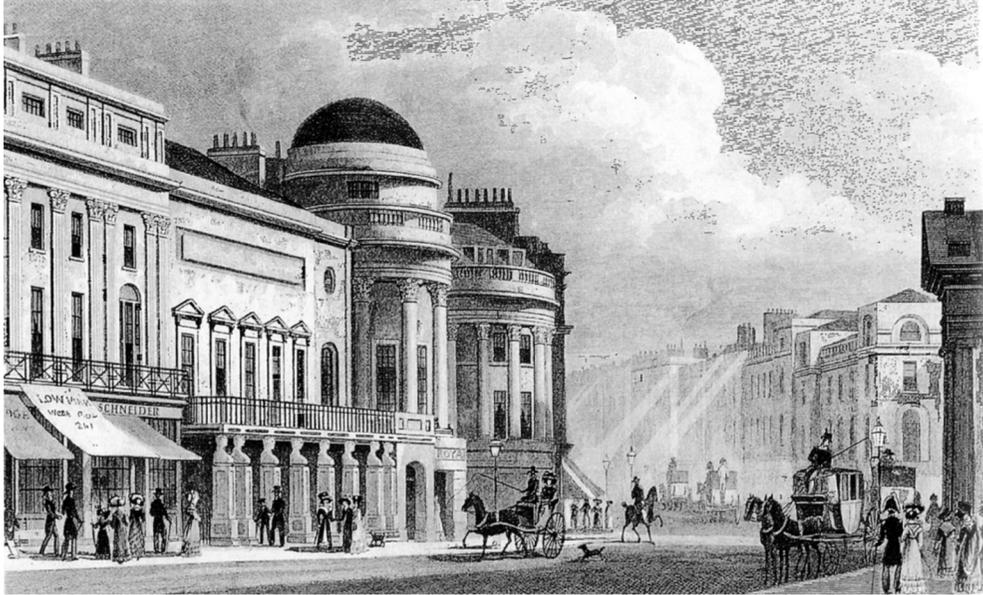


Illustration 13. The new Argyll Rooms (the Harmonic Institution), 1828, two years before they were destroyed by fire, engraving by Thomas Hosmer Shepherd.

Stephan, were not performed, indeed either rejected at sight or after a trial, in the next decade. A Beethoven visit to London, planned for 1818, never materialized, nor did a commission of a symphony in 1822. Instead Beethoven sold the score of the overture *Die Weibe des Hauses*, receiving £25 (for a symphony, he would have received no more than £50), and, in December 1824, seven months after the first performance in Vienna, a score of the Ninth Symphony (for £50) with a hand-written statement that it had been ‘written for the Philharmonic Society in London’⁶⁴ – literally meaning the manuscript and not the work; this distinction should be borne in mind with respect to other works composed ‘especially for the Philharmonic Society.’ It must be added that the Philharmonic Society (or, more precisely, Nathan Meyer von Rothschild himself) made a generous contribution to ease Beethoven’s life in the twilight years, when the composer found himself in ever-worsening financial straits and declining health.⁶⁵

Quite surprising is the Society’s promotion of symphonies by Ferdinand Ries, Muzio Clementi and Luigi Cherubini, all foreigners living in England and thus continuing the tradition of J. C. Bach and Abel (Cherubini’s Symphony in D – his only one – was premièred at the Philharmonic Society, for which it was specially composed, on 1 May 1815).

64 Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford etc. 1995, pp. 34–35.

65 *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.

The Philharmonic Society was one of the most important features of musical London. It was in fact the first musical society in London to be founded without the assistance of aristocratic directors and to specialize in instrumental rather than vocal music. The *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* of 1822 summed up the situation as follows:

'What the Antient Concert effectuates for the old masters, and principally for vocal music, the Philharmonic performs for modern writers and for instrumental effects. While however the one is supported almost entirely by the Patrician families, the other is maintained by professors [professionals] of music, their connections, and amateurs of less distinguished rank. This is a very curious fact, for it serves to shew with what scrupulous exactitude the distinctions of condition are kept up even against the attractions of the highest enjoyments art can offer.'⁶⁶

As early as 1822, demand for concert tickets exceeded supply,⁶⁷ the Philharmonic Society's failure (or unwillingness) to expand to the greatest extent possible is therefore mystifying. Its secretary in the 1810s-20s was **Charles Neate** (London, 28 March 1784–Brighton, 30 March 1877), who premièred Beethoven's last Piano Concerto in England; other people in charge were Smart and Moscheles. From Neate, a former piano student of John Field, Joseph Wölfl and Peter von Winter, one symphony has come down to us, numbered 'No. 1' and dated 'Dec. 1814. Munic.' Doubtlessly Neate, through his apparently frequent travels to the European continent, was influenced especially by the Viennese symphonic tradition, which probably accounts for the rather Haydnesque quality of his Scherzo. The developments in the outer movements are extremely short, but already perceptible. All of the movements are carefully worked out and conceived, certainly much better than any of William Crotch's symphonic attempts – though here again the thematic material suffers from a lack of originality:

Ex. 12



Ex. 13



Perhaps the best movement is the rather turbulent *Andante*, a kind of charming small rondo of the conception A–B–A–C–A.

66 'Sketch of the State of Music in London. May, 1822', in: *The Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* IV (1822), p. 252.

67 Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford etc. 1995, p. 19.

In May 1829 new impetus came to British musical life with Mendelssohn Bartholdy's arrival in London; he was at once successful, rich and charming, highly educated and with good connections. He soon conducted his C minor Symphony Op. 11 himself at the Philharmonic Society concerts on 25 May, with the especially orchestrated Scherzo from the Octet replacing the Minuet and Trio. This collaboration became extremely intense – the *Italian* Symphony was to follow, premièred at the Philharmonic Society on 13 May 1833 – and led finally, in 1846, to his most important contribution to the choral festivals, the Birmingham première of *Elijah*, placing him in importance next to Spohr, the composer of *Die letzten Dinge* or *Des Heilands letzte Stunden*, and to Handel, no less. However, it was not yet imaginable what a central position he would assume in the orchestral field.

The possibilities Mendelssohn Bartholdy had in Leipzig as director of the Gewandhaus concerts have only recently been described in any real detail.⁶⁸ His influence spread not only to the 'German province', but to England as well. This happened not in matters of the repertory itself, which only overlapped to a minor extent, but concerning the concept of concert structure and the general means of organization – although for quite a while jealousy between institutions and individuals played an apparently highly important role in England.

The repertoire of orchestral music in the middle of the nineteenth century proved to be highly orientated to the European continent. William Fielder Chappell provides a list of the Philharmonic Society programmes from 1843 to 1852, which are very probably representative of the entire situation: in the period mentioned, 9 orchestral works (symphonies, overtures and concertos) of British origin were performed in contrast to 33 from other countries. In terms of total compositions, it looked even worse: 22 British compositions (by 5 composers) as against 140 compositions (by 38 composers). The ratio changed somewhat in 1880, with 25 orchestral works of British origin standing against 35 foreign works, or a total of 66 British compositions by 14 composers as against 114 by 32 foreign composers. In 1900, the numbers shifted again: 13 British orchestral works vs. 30 foreign, but 75 British works in total (by 17 composers) against 62 foreign works by 27 foreign composers.⁶⁹ Amongst the best-loved composers in 1898 one finds (in this order) Beethoven, Schumann, Mozart, Bach, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Haydn, Brahms, Schubert, Spohr, Scarlatti, Handel, Rubinstein, Dvořák, Grieg and Weber.⁷⁰

Another figure who was to transform London musical life in the 1840s was **Michael Andrew Agnew Costa** (Naples, 4 February 1808–Hove, 29 April 1884). He began his musical career as a pupil of his father, Pasquale Costa. He also studied under Giovanni Furno, Giacomo Tritto and, chiefly, Niccolò Zingarelli, who sent him to Birmingham for

68 Rebecca Grotjahn, *Die Sinfonie im deutschen Kulturgebiet 1850 bis 1875*, Ph.D. dissertation Hannover 1997, Sinzig 1998 (Musik und Musikanschauung im 19. Jahrhundert, 9), p. 102ff.

69 William Fielder Chappell, *The late nineteenth century renaissance of music in England (with special reference to the work of Parry and Stanford)*, M.A. Diss. Melbourne 1963, pp. 41–43.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 50.

the 1829 Festival to conduct a Cantata sacra of Zingarelli's on Isaiah XI. Costa ended up having to perform as a singer in order to cover his travel expenses, an act that elicited a sarcastic comment from William Ayrton, the critic of the *Harmonicon*: 'Zingarelli (...) would have acted with more discretion had he kept his sacred song and profane singer [Costa] for the benefit of his Neapolitan friends.'⁷¹ Since 1832, Costa had been improving the situation of London opera, and after Mendelssohn⁷² and Spohr⁷³ had refused to conduct the Philharmonic Society concerts, he was contacted to take over for 1845. When he eventually declined, Henry Bishop (a founder-member) was finally engaged. Moscheles was highly annoyed by this choice, asking himself: 'How is it possible to prefer him to Bennett who stands indeed tower-high over him? Such experiences strengthen in me the thought to retire to musical Germany.'⁷⁴ Additionally, Costa was to have a bitter altercation with Bennett in 1848.⁷⁵ A comparison of the payment of conductors (the first one listed in 1845) showed that Bishop had received 10 guineas in comparison to Lucas's 5 and Moscheles's 25.⁷⁶

The Philharmonic Society orchestra had been reseeded in 1840, but when Costa took over in 1846, one of his first improvements was to reseed the orchestra again. Due to the introduction of discipline, Costa became highly praised for his conducting abilities, especially also for large-scale choral compositions. In 1869 he was knighted, and from 1853 until 1880 he was a well-loved festival conductor, above all of the Handel Festivals from 1857 to 1880 as conductor of the Sacred Harmonic Society from 1848 until its dissolution in 1882. One of the earliest works Costa first performed with the Philharmonic Society was Beethoven's *Missa solemnis*. Costa's own symphonies (he apparently wrote three) have disappeared, as have so many others from the nineteenth century.

Apart from the Philharmonic Society, there were numerous minor subscription concert series and occasional societies, and the growth of the cultivation of music in the provinces (manifest for example in Hallé's Manchester orchestra, which began to flourish by 1857) reflects slow but steady improvements in musical entertainment. But indeed, as suggested by this formulation, it was rather more entertainment than musical, meant to attract the *boi polloi* rather than an *élite* audience. Accordingly, the way of conceiving programmes for concerts remained fairly stagnant from 1813 to at least the middle of the 1880s: the first half of the programme normally consisted of an overture or symphony, a solo piece without orchestra, a concerto, another solo piece without orchestra and an overture; the

71 'Costa's debut at Birmingham – and after', in: *MT* XLVII (1906), p. 743.

72 Mendelssohn wanted to perform Schubert's large C major Symphony in 1844, but was rudely rejected by the orchestra; he therefore never returned to it, and died in 1847.

73 Spohr only once returned to the Society after 1843 but before that had composed Symphonies Nos. 2, 6 and 8 for the Society and had premièred even more, i.e. Nos. 4–6 and 8 there. No. 4 was premièred on 23 February 1835, No. 5 on 9 March 1840, No. 6 on 6 April 1840 and No. 8 on 1 May 1848.

74 Charlotte Moscheles, *Aus Moscheles' Leben. Nach Briefen und Tagebüchern herausgegeben*, vol. II, Leipzig 1873, p. 136.

75 Cf. Geoffrey Bush, 'Sterndale Bennett and the Orchestra', in: *MT* CXXVII (1986), p. 324 and Gervase Hughes, 'Sterndale Bennett', in Gervase Hughes, *Sidelights on a century of music (1825–1924)*, London 1969, pp. 166–167.

76 Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford etc. 1995, p. 69.

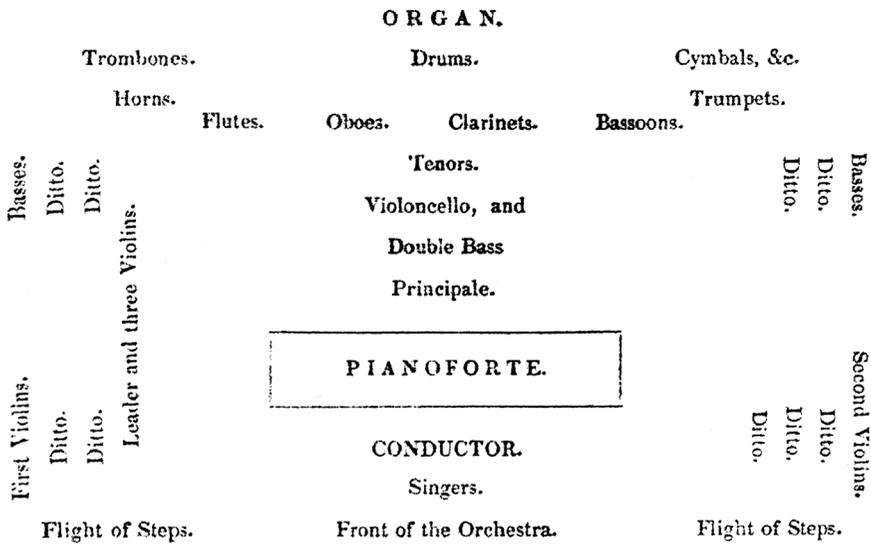


Illustration 14. The new seating of the Philharmonic Society orchestra in 1840.¹

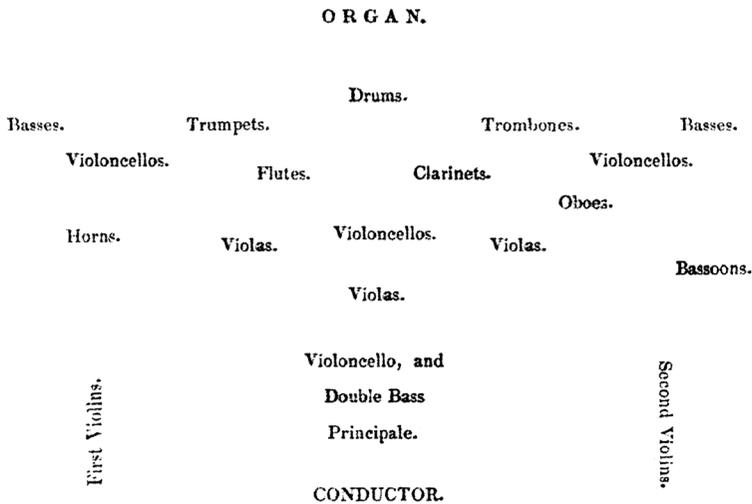


Illustration 15. Costa's reseating of the Philharmonic Society orchestra in 1846.²

1 'Philharmonic New Orchestra', in: *MW* XIII (1840), p. 83.

2 Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford etc. 1995, p. 74.

second half contained a symphony, a solo piece without orchestra, an ensemble and a finale or overture.⁷⁷ However, it was at the same time not unusual to perform single movements of larger works, a technique that was to be perpetuated up into the forties of the following century – although it was the expressed aim of the first edition of George Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* of 1879 to elucidate the musical forms and show the public what a composition meant.⁷⁸ A typical Philharmonic Society programme (led by J. D. Loder, with pianist and conductor Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy) is the following, of 24 June 1844:⁷⁹

Part I

Mozart, Symphony in C

Rossini, Air 'La gita in gondola' [from the *Soirées musicales*] [soloist Mr. De Reval]

Beethoven, Piano Concerto in G

Méhul, Air 'Ere infancy's bud' from *Joseph* [soloist Maria B. Hawes]

Kummer, Cello Concerto [soloist Alfredo Piatti]

J. S. Bach, Overture and Suite (first performance in Britain)

Part II

Haydn, Symphony in B^bAdam, Air 'C'est un caprice' [from *Cagliostro*] [soloist Mme. Anna Thillon]

Molique, Violin Concerto in A (Adagio and Rondo) [soloist Henry G. Blagrove]

Schubert, Scene *La Religieuse* [*Die junge Nonne*] [soloist Mr. De Reval]Beethoven, Overture *Egmont*

Still, in 1838 the complaint was made that 'no English symphony of any importance has been produced'⁸⁰ at the Philharmonic Society concerts.

The first real rival to the Philharmonic Society surfaced in 1852: the New Philharmonic Society, launched by **Henry Wylde** (Bushey, Hertfordshire, 22 May 1822–London, 13 March 1890), the teacher of John Francis Barnett, at the Exeter Hall. With room for 3,000 listeners, it was nearly 20 years ahead of its time in terms of effective use of the space (cf. the move from the Hanover Square Rooms to St. James's Hall, p. 175). The new venue and its programme appealed to the general public far more than the 'old' Philharmonic Society concerts, especially with Hector Berlioz, who had conducted his first concert in London on 7 February 1848, at the conductor's podium. Initially, he was not permitted to conduct the old Philharmonic Society concerts, and when he did so in 1853, he was no longer welcome at the New Philharmonic Society. The early enthusiasm, in part due to guest conductors such as Spohr and Lindpaintner, passed quite soon, and by the time it was disbanded in 1879, the New Philharmonic Society had deteriorated to an operating mode comparable to that of its more established 'predecessor'.⁸¹ From

77 Cf. 'Alfredo Piatti' in: *MT* XLII (1901), p. 534.

78 Percy Young, *George Grove, 1820–1900*, London etc. 1980, pp. 127–128.

79 Myles B. Foster, *The History of the Philharmonic Society of London 1813–1912*, London etc. 1912, p. 187.

80 ['Twenty-Five years Philharmonic Society',] in: *The Musical World* IX (1838), p. 62.

81 In reaction to the failure of the New Philharmonic Society, the Musical Society of London was founded in 1858,

the scant information available on the New Philharmonic Society, it very much seems as though Wylde tried to take control of the Society. Berlioz returned for two concerts on 13 June and 4 July 1855, never to set foot in England again.⁸²

Wylde, the son of a Gentleman-in-Ordinary to George IV, was organist of St. Ann's, Aldersgate Street in 1844, and obtained a Mus.D. at Cambridge University in 1851. In 1863 he became Gresham Professor of Music in London and founded the London Academy of Music in 1871. He is described by many of his contemporaries as 'without any particular musical qualifications, [but] ambitious.'⁸³ He was indeed busy in many fields, as pianist, organist, composer and professor at the Royal Academy of Music. Wylde wrote at least three symphonies, but none of them seems to have survived, in contrast to the material that was performed by the 'old', more established Philharmonic Society.⁸⁴

Robert Lucas Pearsall (Clifton nr. Bristol, 14 March 1795–Wartensee, Switzerland, 5 August 1856) was a descendant of an old Worcestershire family. Educated for law and called to the Bar in 1821, he practised only until 1825, when he left England for health reasons. In Mainz he studied music under Joseph Panny and settled in Karlsruhe in 1830. From 1832 he lived in Wartensee on the Bodensee, where he composed much of his best music. In 1842 he bought the local castle, and lived there for the rest of his life. He was mainly known as a church and choral composer, although he was also interested in stage music. He left most of his music to the monastery of St. Gallen, whose Abbot received him into the Roman Catholic Church three days prior to his death. Pearsall's only symphony seems to be lost.

Of **John Lodge Ellerton's**⁸⁵ (Cheshire, 11 January 1801–London, 3 January 1873) six symphonies, only one seems to be known today. The brother-in-law of Lord Brougham, he was educated at Rugby and Brasnose College, Oxford, earning his B.A. in 1821 and his M.A. in 1828. Eventually he changed to a career as a composer, studying counterpoint with Terziani in Rome for two years and frequently visiting Germany, where much of his music was published, though most of his compositions were printed at his own expense. He wrote in nearly every existing genre (11 operas, 50 string quartets, 6 masses, an oratorio *Paradise Lost*, 61 glees and many more compositions); in matters of output of chamber music, he was probably only surpassed by another 'amateur' composer, Georges Onslow. It must be stressed that all composers of this era wrote symphonies only occasionally – it was very much more important to compose church music, choral music – from odes and choral ballads to glees, catches and canons – songs, piano music and chamber music, and finally concert overtures and concertos. Still, the virtuoso movement was only beginning to grow.

but was disbanded by 1867.

82 Charles Maclean, 'Berlioz and England', in: *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 5 (1904), p. 323.

83 *Ibid.*, p. 321.

84 The (now Royal) Philharmonic Society Archive was added to the British Library's collections in 2002.

85 He was born as John Lodge, but adopted the name Ellerton in 1838 or 1839.

Lodge Ellerton was one of the very few British composers of his time who hoped that Wagner's visit to England would diminish the influence of Mendelssohn; this apparently boosted Wagner's opinion of him (Wagner may also have been flattered by the fact that his portrait had hung in Lodge's rooms for two years). Also, Lodge Ellerton was the only Englishman, according to Wagner himself, to offer Wagner private hospitality; he took him to his club (the University Club), where they feasted on a sumptuous dinner. Afterwards, Wagner recalls, 'my host allowed himself, as if it were the most natural thing in the world, to be grasped under the arms by two men and taken home since, otherwise, he would have had some difficulty in getting across the street.'⁸⁶

Of Lodge Ellerton's six symphonies, the first that can be dated with any certainty is the Second in D major, of 1845, which was performed in 1847. The next to follow, the Third, in D minor Op. 120, was the only symphony of his to be published, by Breitkopf & Härtel, in 1858, shortly after its première performance at Aachen; it was revived in Leipzig on 23 December 1861. It carries the title *Wald-Symphonie* and is dedicated to the British Ambassador at the Saxon Court, Charles Augustus Murray, but is not, as Nicholas Temperley informs us, a six-movement work,⁸⁷ but rather headed with six epigraphs taken from Thomson's *Seasons*. The first and last sections are in fact the slow prologue and epilogue of the symphony, and are part of the first and fourth movements, respectively, and headed:

Andante maestoso

The forest

'Still let me pierce into the midnight depth
Of yonder grove of wildest largest growth;
That forming high in air a woodland quire
Nods o'er the mount beneath. At every step,
Solemn, and slow, the shadows blacker fall,
And all is awful listening gloom around!'

Andante maestoso

The forest at midnight

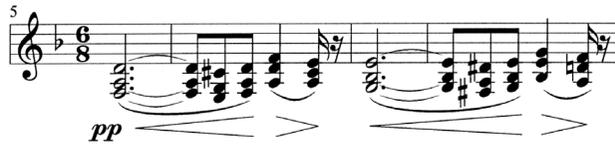
'Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep
Let me associate with the serious night,
And contemplation, her sedate compeer.
Oh! bear me then to vast embowering shades,
To weeping grottos and prophetic glooms,
Where angel forms athwart the solemn dusk
Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep along:
And voices more than human, through the void
Deep-sounding seize th' enthusiastic ear!'

86 Richard Wagner, *Mein Leben*, München 1983, p. 534.

87 Nicholas Temperley, 'Ellerton, John Lodge', in: *Graves* vol. 6, London etc. 1980, p. 135.

A theme at the very outset of the first movement, in the movement's slow introduction ('The forest'), the symphony's prologue,

Ex. 14



holds together the entire work, and is taken up again in the epilogue. Compared to that of his contemporaries, Lodge Ellerton's technique is formally rather advanced, although harmonically his style is largely based on the Classical masters, pleasant but entirely lacking in individuality.

The first movement, whose first theme is derived from the slow introduction, is in very strict sonata form, with a highly uninteresting development. In contrast to this movement, whose main part is headed 'The forest in winter' (in German 'Winter in dem Wald'), the next one is headed 'The forest in summer' (in German 'Summer in dem Wald'), thus not strictly following Thomson's conception, but rather deriving aspects concerning the forest from the poem.

The forest in winter

'But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams;
Till chok'd and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest walks at every rising gale,
Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bleak.'

The forest in summer

'The hawthorn whitens: and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole leafy forest stands display'd,
In full luxuriance to the sighing gales.
Full swell the woods: their every music wakes,
Mix'd in wild concert with the warbling brooks.'

This is the slow movement of the symphony, an *Andante grazioso* in 3/4, in A major, an idyllic movement which rises mainly out of one main theme:

Ex. 15



General pauses structure the movement, making clear that it is in binary form with a coda, the second half being a variation of the first half.

Comparison to Mendelssohn shows that Lodge Ellerton was looking for an entirely individual approach in the following movement: his is headed 'Dance of fairies in the forest', an *Allegretto scherzoso, con delicatezza, non troppo presto* in 2/4. Indeed it is a lively, rather individual movement with numerous syncopations:

Ex. 16

Allegretto scherzoso, con delicatezza, non troppo presto

Archi (con sord.) *pp*

Fl. I, Ob. I *pp*

Clar. *pp*

Fg. I *pp*

Ob. I, Vln. II

Musical score for Ex. 17, featuring Flute I (Fl. I), Oboe I (Ob. I), and Piano. The score is in 2/4 time and consists of three measures. The Flute I part begins with a rest, followed by a melodic line starting on G4. The Oboe I part has a rest in the first measure, then enters in the second measure with a melodic line starting on G4, marked *p*. The Piano part features a complex accompaniment with chords and moving lines, marked *cresc.* and *pp*.

In its overall conception, with exhaustive repetitions of sections, the movement could have turned out to be rather unimaginative, but it passes so quickly that an impression of freshness and spiritedness remains. This quality can only be found in one other near-contemporary British symphonist, Julius Benedict, who came a generation later and was also otherwise stylistically more advanced.

The finale, whose main section is headed 'Dance of peasants in the forest', is a quick *Alla breve* movement built on two themes,

Ex. 17

Musical score for Ex. 18, titled 'Finale Allegro molto'. The score is in 2/4 time and consists of five measures. The first measure is marked *ff*. The second measure is marked *sf*. The third measure is marked *p*. The fourth measure is marked *p* and includes the instruction 'with woodwind'. The fifth measure is marked *p*. The score is for Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), and Viola (Vla.).

Ex. 18

Musical score for Ex. 18, showing Clarinet I (Clar. I) and Violin I (Vln. I) parts. The score is in 2/4 time and consists of five measures. The first measure is marked *p dolce*. The second measure is marked *f*. The third measure is marked *f*. The fourth measure is marked *f*. The fifth measure is marked *f*. The score is for Clarinet I (Clar. I) and Violin I (Vln. I).

the second of which is obviously derived from the first. The development is very conventional, but not long enough to be called over-long, and in its undemanding approach is certainly pleasant. The recapitulation does not immediately lead into the epilogue, which opens with the pictorial effect of a bell ringing (an effect caused by the violins playing *pizzicato*, together

with flute I and clarinet I playing *staccato*, the high woodwind being exchanged in the following bars by horns and bassoon I). Also an interlude is interspersed (printed score pp. 142–150). Somehow the movement remains rather unconvincing, probably because its headings, especially in those times, would have suggested a more advanced musical language, such as that of Raff. Furthermore, the frequent abrupt changes of dynamics are in need of further explanation, since they are in no way explicable by the 'programme' of the symphony, but rather spoil it. Regardless of the composition date, however, the symphony works rather well, and for the generation of those composers born around 1800, it is probably more advanced than one might have expected.

Let us return to the Royal Academy of Music, which, due to some of its professors, became in fact the most important venue of development of British symphonism in the mid-nineteenth century. In the works of **Philip Cipriani**⁸⁸ **Hambley Potter** (London, 2 October 1792–London, 28 September 1871) we can find, in contrast to most of his contemporaries, genuine originality. Potter, nearly entirely forgotten until the 1980s (the only exception is P. H. Peter's very comprehensive Ph.D. dissertation for Northwestern University of 1972), came from a musical family. In 1816 he made his very first public appearance, at a concert of the Philharmonic Society, where he played in his Sextet for piano, flute and strings, Op. 11. He had studied with Leopold Mozart's pupil Joseph Wölfl and also with Beethoven in Vienna in 1818,⁸⁹ and subsequently in Italy. He also studied with John Wall Callcott, Thomas Attwood, William Crotch and others before becoming founder professor of the Royal Academy of Music (among his pupils were W. H. Holmes, Bennett, Macfarren, Richards, Thomas, R. Barnett and Stephens) and was from 1832 to 1859 Principal there as successor to Crotch. As professor of composition, Potter, a promoter of the music of Schumann, was very keen to clarify the compositional plan, and he very probably was the first to show the inner form of works as well as single movements. 'As a man Potter was genial, even-tempered, and ready-witted; on one occasion, when conductor at the Academy, the Earl of Westmoreland (then Lord Burghersh) appeared on the scene, and exclaimed, 'Potter, Potter, why do the boys play so loud?' to which Potter's instant retort was, 'Because they *are* boys, my lord.'⁹⁰

Potter probably wrote more than ten Sinfonias, but only nine have survived (and nine were mentioned in George Alexander Macfarren's 1884 article⁹¹); Potter's numbering (Potter apparently discarded some of his numbered Sinfonias) is highly misleading, since it in no way represents the order of composition, but sometimes that of revision. Nicholas

88 This name Potter derived from his grandmother, whose brother, the painter Giovanni Battista Cipriani (1727–1785), had belonged to the circle of the Bach-Abel concerts in London.

89 Interestingly, Beethoven refused to give composition lessons – he felt that it couldn't be taught – but he had a high opinion of Potter's compositional abilities and proof-read the young man's compositions. Potter published his recollections of Beethoven, with remarks on his style, in *The Musical World* of 1836.

90 Walter Cecil Macfarren, 'Past Principals of the Royal Academy of Music', in: *R.A.M. Club Magazine* 1 (1900), p. 6.

91 George Alexander Macfarren, 'Cipriani Potter: his life and work', in: *PRMA* 10 (1883–84), p. 49.

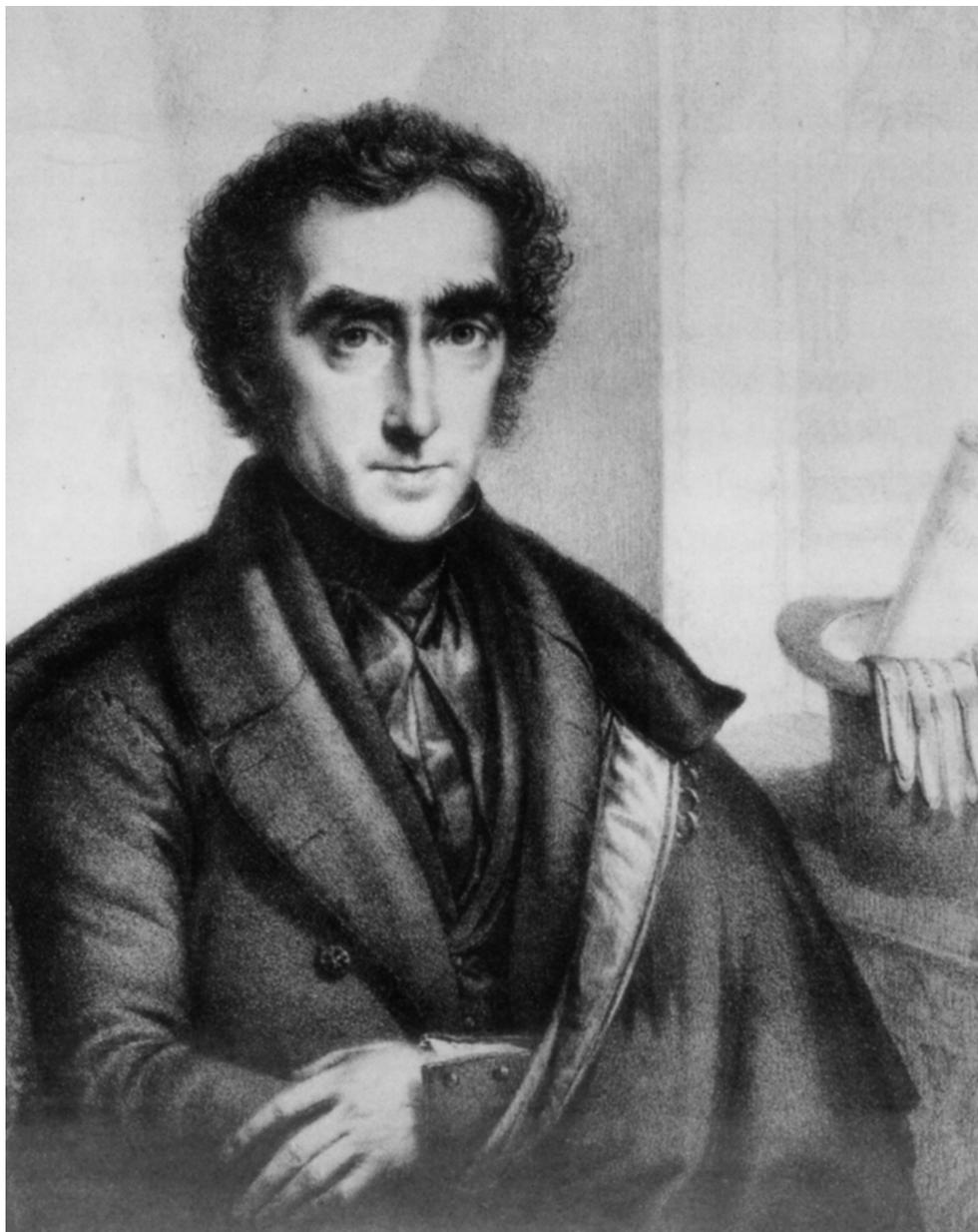


Illustration 16. Cipriani Potter, 1838, lithograph by Siegfried Detlev Bendixen.

Temperley was compelled to remark: "This tangle of evidence is full of contradictions, and although certain deductions can be drawn from it, it would not be possible to pronounce definitely on the order of composition of the symphonies, or even on the number Potter composed. It is clear, for one thing, that some of the dates given on the MSS must be dates of revision rather than composition."⁹² We give here the currently available information, in the order of the very first date on each known Sinfonia (often only the first movement of a Sinfonia was performed⁹³):

MS pressmark	key	No. given in MS	date given on MS	performance known
BL: MS Loan 4.377 (fol. 64–89, 1st movement only) and MS Loan 4.378	G minor	No. 1	1819; rev.: 1833	1824?; 29 May 1826; 19 May 1834?
BL: MS Loan 4.377 (fol. 1–63); RAM: MS 259 (beginning of 1st movement)	B major		January 1821; rev.: 1839	probably 6 June 1839
MS unknown				(three more works, one of them in D major, are unknown)
MS unknown				
MS unknown				
BL: Add. MS 31783 (fol. 1–89)	C minor	No. 6	3 January 1826	
BL: Add. MS 31783 (fol. 90–125)	F major	No. 7	27 November 1826	22 January 1827?
BL: Add. MS 31783 (fol. 126–200; score) and Add. MSS; 31788–9 (parts); RAM: MS 1154 (score)	E _♭ major	No. 8	21 November 1828; rev. score: March 1846	20 May 1829?; 8 June 1846
MS unknown	A (C?) minor*			27 May 1833?
BL: MS Loan 4.374 (score); RAM: MS 1153 (arr. for pf 4h.)	No. 2 G minor	No. 10	1832	13 January 1833; 27 May 1833?; 1835; 11 January 1837; 20 January 1838? †; 28 May 1855 [§]

92 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Diss. Cambridge 1959, p. 369. Temperley gives, pp. 368–369, a tentatively complete listing of all Potter symphonies performances. Another approach can be found in Philip Henry Peter, *The Life and Work of Cipriani Potter (1792–1871)*, Diss. Evanston (Ill.) 1972, vol. 1, pp. 262–263.

93 An unidentifiable sinfonia was performed on 14 May 1828.

* Apart from the mention of the A minor Symphony in the programmes of the Philharmonic Society, numerous minor errors of key, composition date, commission of composition, 'première performance' and opus number are given. Often the flat mark was missing – cf. Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Diss. Cambridge 1959, p. 381.

† *The Musical World* states that the symphony was performed for the '1st time at these [Society of British Musicians] concerts', although the same symphony had been performed there according to the same source one year previously. It may also be that this time another sinfonia is meant.

§ It is quite possible that this sinfonia, supposedly composed in 1833, is identical to No. 10.

BL: MS Loan 4.379	No. 2 D major	2 November 1833 (rev.?)	20 May 1829?, 4 July 1834?; 21 March 1836
MS unknown BL: MS Loan 4.375	E major C minor	8 November 1834 (rev.?)	8 June 1835‡
MS unknown	No. 3 D major	November 1834 (rev.?)	
BL: MS Loan 4.376	No. 4 D major	24 November 1834 (rev.?)	1844; 1869

On 29 May 1826, only six weeks after Weber's *Oberon*, Cipriani Potter's First Sinfonia in G minor (1819) received its first performance. The score shows numerous revisions made for a prospective performance in 1834(?). Potter's developing abilities are already to be felt,

Ex. 19



Ex. 20



Ex. 21



Ex. 22



‡ Temperley quotes, in his *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Diss. Cambridge 1959, p. 369, three different descriptions of the same work, the one in Foster giving A minor, the one in *The Musical Magazine* in C minor and the one in the *Monthly Supplement to the Musical Library* 'comp. for the Phil.' and 'first perfd. [there] 2 years ago', which could – according to Temperley – mean No. 10 again.

Ex. 25



is mainly based on the contrast of staccato-legato, with the recapitulation growing organically out of the development, which this time has become somewhat more extensive.

Sinfonia No. 8 in E^b major, composed in 1828 but revised in 1846, is one of Potter's more conservative Sinfonias in conception, although here again the slow movement develops organically. The first movement has a highly interesting slow introduction, 'at once pastoral, solemn and expectant, with an impatient violin figure apparently urging the music towards the main business of the movement'.⁹⁵ Composed in the year of Schubert's death, it indeed often takes on the spirit of many of Schubert's symphonies up to 1821, but is in fact formally a step back in comparison to Nos. 6 and 7. Harmonically, however, it is unequivocally at the height of its time – the Scherzo embodying part of Schubert's spirit as well as (in the Trio) recalling Mendelssohn's *Hebriden* overture. The finale is laced with humour and conversational wit, recalling composers as diverse as Haydn and Bizet, but is entirely his own, though other finales are even better.

In 1855, in his only season on the rostrum of the Philharmonic Society concerts, Richard Wagner conducted very little British music, the work of Potter's very probably being the Sinfonia No. 10 in G minor (1832), probably his most often performed symphonic composition. In his inimitable manner Wagner 'patched' Potter's tempo marks of an *Andante* with a solemn *Adagio, con molto rubato*, a behaviour of his which had already been criticized by Robert Schumann in Germany. Likewise, the London critics did not appreciate his choice of tempi, his regular use of rubato, and his 'coarse and overtrained enthusiasm'.⁹⁶ Wagner recalled the situation thus:

I made the acquaintance, too, of a curious man, an old-fashioned but rather friendly composer named Potter, of whom I had to play a symphony of his, which entertained me by its modest dimensions and its neat development of counterpoint, the more so as the composer, a friendly, elderly recluse, clung to me with almost fearful modesty. I had positively to force him into accepting the right *tempo* for the *Andante* of his symphony, and thus to prove to him that it was really pretty and interesting, while he had so little faith in his work that he considered the only way to avoid the danger of boring people with it was to rattle through it at a disgraceful speed.⁹⁷

95 Robert Dearing, booklet notes to a recording of Potter's Symphonies Nos. 8 and 10, London 1989, p. 4. Dearing mentions a repeat of the exposition that is not noted in the scores.

96 *The Athenaeum*, quoted in Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford etc. 1995, p. 90.

97 Richard Wagner, *Mein Leben*, München 1983, pp. 534–535. The existing English translation of this account is hardly appropriate.

Ex. 29



The finale hardly possesses a recapitulation; there is just sufficient space (15 bars) to recapitulate the main theme of the movement. George Alexander Macfarren considers the work to be ‘notable for contrapuntal ingenuity, (...) conciseness and perspicuity of plan, and (...) clearness and vigour of orchestration.’⁹⁹

Another C minor Sinfonia (the score is dated 1834) has been revised considerably, especially in the movements following the first, in which 3/4 and 6/8 again appear side by side. Formally, the recapitulation is not merely a simple reprise of the exposition, but it is cut and linked to the short coda. The melodies this time recall Haydn rather than Schubert (it is very probable that the sinfonia was composed earlier than we can actually prove); the counterpoint is of the highest quality. However, the most interesting movement is the finale, whose development has been nearly entirely deleted, probably because the piece is fed mainly by one short motif

Ex. 30



which would otherwise have been over-used.

The fourth D major Sinfonia is, similar to the second C minor Sinfonia, likely to have been composed before No. 10 and may¹⁰⁰ indeed have been composed in its original form around 1822-27; it is much more academic in conception than No. 10 (1832). The melodic invention in the first movement is rather typical for Potter’s style, and the main theme has so many diverse aspects that this one theme is sufficient for the development.

Ex. 31



Temperley sees some of Potter’s deficiencies here:

‘(...) there is a modulation to C major in the 8th bar of the slow introduction (in D major) which has a completely disruptive effect on the tonality. No doubt it was intended to be a striking and mysterious move, but it leaves the hearer with the

99 George Alexander Macfarren, (*Philharmonic Society*) *Analytical and Historical Programme. Symphony in D major (No. 2)*, M.S. Reprinted in Philip Henry Peter, *The Life and Work of Cipriani Potter (1792–1871)*, Diss. Evanston (Ill.) 1972, vol. 2, p. 244.

100 The closeness of 3/4 and 6/8 in the Scherzo and the syncopations are only two clues hinting at this.

impression that there has been some mistake.¹⁰¹

A very unquiet *Andante* reminds us that Potter hardly ever strictly recapitulates the exposition literally. The finale (in 6/8) presents numerous syncopations in the development, and the main theme

Ex. 32



is transformed to the point of unrecognizability; furthermore, the sustained *Presto* tempo generates tension which is resolved only in the Sinfonia's impressive coda.

Nicholas Temperley remains somewhat unconvinced of Potter's abilities:

'Potter's excellent orchestration provides plenty of attractive moments, and in his contrapuntal developments, especially, there is a kind of bustling energy that can hold the attention for a considerable period. (...) But there is not one symphony which can be said to succeed as a whole work of art. It would be pleasant to be able to speak more highly of the result of Potter's conscientious and determined labours. Contemporary criticisms of the occasional performances of the symphonies offered polite praise, not wishing to discourage so rare a bird as an English symphonist, but even the most favourably disposed listener would hardly be able to work himself up into anything like enthusiasm.'¹⁰²

Would one compare Schubert's early symphonies to Beethoven's mature works, would one have to say that Schubert was a mediocre composer? Modest Potter was (Wagner speaks of 'almost fearful modesty'), both in his intentions and in his achievements, so one should not measure him with the wrong measure.

After eight years as a chorister of Salisbury Cathedral, **Charles Lucas** (Salisbury, 28 July 1808–London, 23 March 1869) entered the Royal Academy of Music in 1823 to study cello with Robert Lindley and composition and harmony with John Lord and William Crotch until 1830. He played in several London orchestras, was organist at the Hanover Chapel, Regent Street (just round the corner of Tenterden Street, where the Royal Academy of Music had its premises), where he conducted the Choral Harmonists' Society. In 1830 he was appointed to Queen Adelaide's band; in 1839 he became organist of the St. George's Episcopal Chapel, and also edited Handel's *Esther*. In 1859 he succeeded Potter as Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, having been described as remarkably fit for the office and gifted with an almost boundless memory;¹⁰³ in 1866 he was forced by ill health to retire early. Among his pupils were Macfarren and Mackenzie.

101 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, pp. 169–170.

102 *Ibid.*, p. 170.

103 Quoted from Charles Willeby, *Masters of English Music*, London 1893, p. 117.

Three four-movement Sinfonias by Lucas have come down to us, composed between 1826 and 1830. All three were student works and written before he became conductor of the Royal Academy of Music orchestra in 1832; he probably revised his First Sinfonia in C with the major 3rd in 1834 for this orchestra. In this revised version, Lucas already tried to pare the work down carefully (but simultaneously added to the orchestration piccolo and ophicleide), omitting the repeat of the exposition of the carefully worked-out first movement and shortening it slightly; he also replaced all of the other movements, for example exchanging the rather old-fashioned Minuet for a March.

Ex. 33



Ex. 34



As so often is the case in British post-Beethoven symphonism, the thematic material is rather unadventurous; the material of the first movement is mainly derived from an arpeggiated C major chord (though far from any of Beethoven's inspiration)

Ex. 35



and thus rather limits the possibility for a very interesting development.

The second movement, formerly a 3/8 in F major and very periodically conceived with a looser middle section, is replaced by a rather free 2/4 movement in C minor. The finale – originally a rondo with three episodes – is finally replaced by a sonata movement, the thematic material again derived from a C major arpeggio;

Ex. 36



Ex. 37



the new finale therefore cannot necessarily be said to be better than the old one.

The Second Sinfonia in A major (1829) shows a strong step forward in comparison to the first version of the First Symphony. The Minuet is here full of charm, in the tradition of Haydn and Mozart. The A minor slow movement is very atmospheric with a prolific theme:

Ex. 38



The outer movements are both in sonata form and are highly predictable, and the thematic material of the first movement is much less inspired than that of the finale:

Ex. 39



The Third Sinfonia in B \flat major, completed in September 1830 (the Second Sinfonia had been completed exactly one year previously) and definitely performed by the Philharmonic Society, with which Lucas was connected for a number of decades, shows an even further advance: The first movement is a very well-constructed sonata-form piece. The thematic material is much more interesting than its predecessor's; the third movement is again a lively, charming Minuet.

Ex. 40



The thematic material of the second movement is harder to discern than that of the slow movement of the Second Sinfonia,

Ex. 41



Ex. 42



but the canonic treatment of the second theme in the middle section of the movement

strengthens the constructive aspects of the movement, while the atmospheric elements are scaled back a bit. The finale is a short, spirited conclusion to Lucas's symphonic output, which resembles some of Schubert's earlier symphonies (which were certainly not known to Lucas); the spirit of Lucas's œuvre can also be found in some of Cipriani Potter's symphonies.

Thomas Molleson Mudie (Chelsea, London, 30 November 1809–London, 24 July 1876) was one of the first students at the Royal Academy of Music, studying composition with Crotch, piano with Potter and clarinet with Willman, and won acclaim as one of the best students of the period. In 1832 he became a piano professor at the Royal Academy of Music, remaining there until 1844, whereupon he moved to Edinburgh to become a private teacher. In 1863 he returned to London, but apparently ceased composing. Most of Mudie's MSS had been given to the Royal Academy of Music library, but many of them have since disappeared, including the Symphony in B \flat of 1831, which is mentioned in the *New Grove* as 'notable', for it 'contains a minuet with two trios, all three finally played simultaneously as a coda.'¹⁰⁴

William Sterndale Bennett (Sheffield, 13 April 1816–London, 1 February 1875) is probably one of the best-researched of all British nineteenth-century composers (with regard to both his life and his music¹⁰⁵). Orphaned at the age of three (his father had been an organist in Sheffield), he was cared for by two of his father's friends, William Howard and William Sterndale, receiving his godfather Sterndale's second name as a second Christian name. At the age of 8, Bennett was sent to King's College, Cambridge as a chorister, adopted by his grandfather John Bennett, a lay clerk at King's, St. John's and Trinity Colleges and a close friend of Sterndale's (his second grandfather was James Donn, curator of the Botanical Gardens in Cambridge). On 7 March 1826 he entered the Royal Academy of Music and studied there with Antonio James Oury and Paolo Spagnoletti (violin), Charles Lucas, William Crotch and Cipriani Potter (harmony and composition) and William Henry Holmes (biographer of Mozart, piano); one of his fellow-students was none other than George Alexander Macfarren (his successor in Cambridge, where he became Professor of Music in 1837). Holmes, himself a student at the Royal Academy of Music on a King's Scholarship when the Academy opened, happily developed Bennett's natural affinity for the piano. Bennett indeed became well known and exceptionally

104 George Alexander Macfarren/Nicholas Temperley, 'Mudie, Thomas Molleson', in: *Grove6* vol. 12, London etc. 1980, p. 759.

105 Nicholas Temperley not only dealt extensively with Bennett in his Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation, but he also wrote extensive commentaries for his edition of the Bennett symphonies that were available to him (i.e. the first two are missing): *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley, New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII). Rosemary Williamson's *Descriptive Thematic Catalogue* (Oxford 1996) and both Bennett's *Student Diary* (*British Music* 8, 1986, pp. 54–65 and 9, 1987, pp. 55–62 and 10, 1987, pp. 57–61) and his *Lectures on Musical Life* (ed. by Nicholas Temperley, Woodbridge 2006) offer thorough information that adds very much to the classic study by James Robert Sterndale Bennett of 1907.



Illustration 17. William Sterndale Bennett, c1846, engraving.

esteemed by Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Schumann for his piano concertos. He also ascended to top form in the overtures *Parisina* (1835), *The Naiades* (1836) or *The Wood Nymph* (1836) (although clearly influenced by Mendelssohn¹⁰⁶) with their highly original instrumentation, or the fantasy-overture (more of a tone-poem) *Paradise and the Peri* (1862), which is characterized by its formal new nature and already foreshadows Liszt (it is striking that he dealt with the same topic on which Schumann and John Francis Barnett had written an oratorio each). A few of his chamber works also deserve mention, namely a Piano Sextet (1835) and a Piano Trio (1839), as well as the cantata *The May Queen* (1858).¹⁰⁷ Bennett's success at the Leipzig Gewandhaus both as a pianist and a composer from 1837 onwards moved Schumann to promote his British contemporary, at least for a time.¹⁰⁸ Bennett and Mendelssohn Bartholdy were meanwhile linked not only stylistically but also through a very close friendship, described by a contemporary thus

‘Their relations to each other were those of surpassing friendliness. Each loved and respected the other and Mendelssohn felt the highest pleasure not only in the eminent gifts but also in the characteristic and amiable nature of the young artist. One can say that Mendelssohn, like an elder brother, shared in his strivings and successes, and always supported him readily with his counsel in the most loving manner. Mendelssohn no doubt exercised at this time a marked influence on your celebrated countryman. Their intercourse was most cordial and intimate. They both were given to pleasantry, and Bennett in particular was, as a rule, in the mood for all manner of fun.’¹⁰⁹

A contemporary described Bennett's style as more delicate than Mendelssohn's, characterising the latter as more energetic¹¹⁰ – and Bennett's style as being rather contrary to symphonic composition of real inspiration (this only changed with his last symphony).

Like Samuel Wesley's, Sterndale Bennett's symphonies were written in two clearly separated periods of his life. There are a number of youthful works written between the age of fifteen and twenty (apparently five were composed, but only four were found after Bennett's death), in which he showed a precocious mastery of form and orchestration, a disciplined acceptance of Classical models, and promise of great things to come. And there is the only product of his middle age, the Symphony in G minor of 1864-7, a true

106 Cf. Nicholas Temperley, ‘Mendelssohn's Influence on English Music’, in: *MeL* XLIII (1962), pp. 229–230.

107 Gervase Hughes describes the worth of Bennett's oratorio, *The Woman of Samaria* (1867), that it ‘from today's standpoint can only be ranked alongside such contemporary works as Sullivan's *Prodigal Son* as yet another example of the stultification which affected so many talented Victorian composers when they tried to write the sort of music that they thought was expected of them rather than the sort of music that came naturally to them.’ (Gervase Hughes, ‘Sterndale Bennett’, in Gervase Hughes, *Sidelights on a century of music (1825–1924)*, London 1969, p. 169.)

108 Robert Schumann (as ‘Eusebius’), ‘Wm. Sterndale Bennett’, in: *NZJM* VI (1837), pp. 2–3. But in later times Schumann became disillusioned (cf. e.g. Gerald W. Spink, ‘Schumann and Sterndale Bennett’, in: *MT CV* (1964), pp. 419–421) – which becomes not entirely clear in Nicholas Temperley's detailed account of the Schumann-Bennett relationship: ‘Schumann and Sterndale Bennett’, in: *19th Century Music* XII/3 (1989), pp. 207–220.

109 An unnamed German lady to Arthur O'Leary. Quoted in Arthur O'Leary, ‘Sir William Sterndale Bennett: a brief review of his life and works’, in: *PRMA* 8 (1881–82), p. 127.

110 William Neumann, *William Balfe, W. Sterndale Bennett, J. Benedikt*, Kassel 1856, p. 78.

work of maturity and well worth reviving.¹¹¹ All in all, Bennett had been comparatively highly successful; his overtures were performed from 1842 until 1892 quite regularly by the Philharmonic Society (nearly comparable to Luigi Cherubini and Louis Spohr, and certainly outdoing Rossini). In 1897, Mendelssohn's symphonies ceased to be performed, and the performing of Schumann symphonies began only around 1863. The value of Bennett's music was almost entirely forgotten after 1900 (in spite of the 1907 biography) until two enterprising record companies, Unicorn-Kanchana and Lyrita, began recording his piano concertos – before this happened, even Peter Pirie had described his music as being 'limpid and inoffensive stuff, a little more efficient than that of his by now quite forgotten contemporaries, but shallow and without originality nevertheless.'¹¹²

Of the four surviving early symphonies, No. 1, in E \flat major, was composed under the tutelage of William Crotch, and completed on 6 April 1832. Crotch believed strongly in the imitation of Renaissance and Baroque styles as the soundest principle of composition – perhaps for this reason the work begins like no other of his symphonies, with thirty-two bars of quiet *stile antico* counterpoint for strings alone (without double basses),

Ex. 43



and only then launches into a conventional first movement (another slow introduction, though not in *stile antico*, can be found in the D minor Symphony). Bennett turned to this introduction again when in later life he began to write church music, and he adapted it to form the first section of his eight-part motet *In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust* (1856-57). The first main subject is pleasant, if rather angular;

111 The symphony was recently revived in two commercial recordings with Douglas Bostock conducting the Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra (ClassicO CLASSCD634) and Nicholas Braithwaite conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra (Lyrita SRCD.206).

112 Peter Pirie, *The English Musical Renaissance. Twentieth century British composers & their works*, London 1979, p. 20.

Ex. 44

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Ex. 45

may be 'an unconscious reminiscence of Weber's *Oberon*, which had had its première performance in London six years earlier and made a great impression.'¹¹³ The development of these ideas is in general somewhat aimless and lacking in clear design. Similarly, the movements to follow are obviously the composition of a student.

The symphony was performed for the first and probably only time at a concert of the Royal Academy of Music on 16 June 1832, and the committee reported to Bennett's grandfather that it 'had done him the greatest credit'.¹¹⁴ Despite Bennett's lack of experience,

113 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley. New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xix.

114 James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 26. Cf. also the appraisal of young George Alexander Macfarren below, p. 146.

the form and orchestration is confident and competent. Nicholas Temperley has criticized 'the most atrocious chromaticisms' of the main theme of the first movement, and the 'quite intolerable' second subject of the finale, which consists of a short rising and falling chromatic scale,¹¹⁵ while on the other hand praising the 'original chromatic twist'¹¹⁶ in the tune of the slow movement. "These quirks show that, contrary to being a slave to Mozartian models, Bennett was striving to find an individual style."¹¹⁷

Bennett began his Symphony No. 2, immediately following his First Piano Concerto Op. 1, by composing the slow movement, which he completed on 7 November 1832; the finale was finished on 9 December, and the first movement on 27 February 1833 (it is interesting to see that the slow introduction and the symphony's finale are in D minor, while the first movement itself is in major – Temperley describes it as 'the exact reverse of Beethoven's "Kreutzer" Sonata, which is invariably described as being in A major despite the fact that its principal movement is in A minor'¹¹⁸). There is no record of any performance. By this time Bennett was studying with Cipriani Potter, who had succeeded Crotch in the summer of 1832. According to Macfarren, Potter had revolutionized composition teaching at the Academy by paying attention to the Classical principles of musical form and to the technique of orchestration.¹¹⁹ And in fact, several Classical models (especially those of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven), both in form and detail, can now easily be recognised, as Nicholas Temperley has shown.¹²⁰ The slow introduction

Ex. 46



115 Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, p. 208.

116 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley, New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xix.

117 Rosemary Williamson, *William Sterndale Bennett. A Descriptive Thematic Catalogue*, Oxford etc. 1996, p. 330.

118 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley, New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xx.

119 George Alexander Macfarren, 'Cipriani Potter: his life and work', in: *PRMA* 10 (1883-84), pp. 48–49; reprinted in Henry C. Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren: his life, works and influence*, London 1891, pp. 22–23.

120 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley, New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xx.

may recall the overture to *Don Giovanni* and other Mozart passages in its descending scales over a tonic pedal; the opening of the *Allegro*

Ex. 47



is more Haydnesque, generally suggesting the corresponding theme of Symphony Hob. I:104 and, more specifically, the tune of Hob. I:95's last movement. 'There is still, however, a good deal of murky juggling with diminished-seventh chords, but this is followed by an unexpectedly forceful passage of sequential development.'¹²¹

Ex. 48

The slow movement, in A major, has an amiable tune

Ex. 49

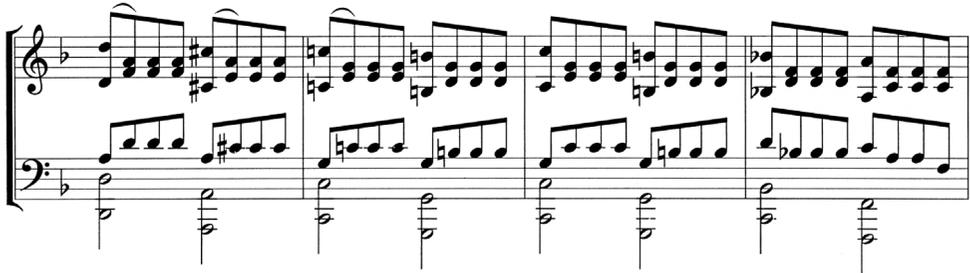


that Temperley considers derived from Beethoven's Second Symphony (slow movement) and the *Andante favori* in F major for piano. The movement eventually unfolds in a calm, rather pastoral way – a typical feature of Bennett's mature style. Perhaps in an overly eager hunt for similarities, Temperley considers the finale generally rather Mozartian, apart from containing

121 *Ibid.*, p. xx.

'one characteristically "Bennettish" passage, somewhat austere in its harmony',¹²² at bar 49:

Ex. 50



The first movement of the Fourth Symphony (a Third Symphony seems to be missing, although there is no proof of any symphonic composition between the D minor and the A major Symphony) in A major was begun (first movement) during Bennett's Christmas vacation at the family home in Cambridge in 1833 and continued (slow movement) during a break from his studies at the Royal Academy of Music in Cambridge on 2 February 1834. The first and only known performance was at the Society of British Musicians on 5 January 1835, conducted by Bennett himself. This concert provoked a rather sarcastic review in *The Monthly Supplement to the Musical Library*, probably by William Ayrton, the editor, who did not think much of 'this Great-Britain-against-all-the-musical-world Society', remarking that 'the composers in Germany and France (...) seem unintimidated by either its professional or numerical strength.' The most promising thing about the concert, in this writer's view, was 'the superiority of the most juvenile composer over the others':

'Young Sterndale Bennett's new symphony shows an active mind; the first movement is not only clever as to its contrivance, but evinces genius-original thought. The minuet and trio are, it must be allowed, too much of a colour; the minor is too prevailing; and the diminution of orchestral power in the last movement is not only ineffective, but a barren imitation of Mendelssohn, who makes his *diminuendo al fine* answer a distinctly perceptible and good purpose.'¹²³

It is recorded that James W. Davison (1813–1885), the well known critic and a friend of Bennett's, had a particularly high opinion of this symphony; having acquired the score from the composer, he could not be induced to part with it during his lifetime.¹²⁴

The shimmering opening *pianissimo* for the strings immediately signals 'Mozart' through

122 *Ibid.*, p. xx.

123 *The Monthly Supplement to the Musical Library* 11, London 1835, p. 6. The reference is probably to the end of the slow movement of Mendelssohn's *Italian* Symphony, which had been performed at the Philharmonic Society in 1833 and 1834.

124 James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 34.

its strong resemblance to the *Figaro* overture, and Mozart does indeed seem to be the chief model for this first movement, 'but his tendency to favour a closed, lyrical second subject is taken too far by Bennett, here as elsewhere.'¹²⁵ The boisterous energy of the first section (bars 1–70), which includes a strong *tutti* theme at bar 37,

Ex. 51: First movement, bars 37-40

Spiritoso
Fl., Ob., Clar.

f
Trb., Cor

f
Archi

is dissipated by a long-winded transition; the second subject

Ex. 52: First movement, bars 107-120

Archi

pp

is attractive enough, but too languid for its function here. Momentum is recovered with a boldly dissonant codetta theme, and the exposition ends quietly with the opening theme. In the development, Bennett rises to new heights. The first part neatly extends the codetta and works on the clarinet phrase, transforming it into a prophetically 'Brahmsian'¹²⁶ chain of thirds, modulating towards F major, but turning back to D by means of a half plagal cadence. The recapitulation is regular, with some expansion of the codetta theme.

125 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley, New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xx.

126 *Ibid.*, p. xx.

In the *Minuetto* (a scherzo, really), Bennett turns once again to Beethoven's Second Symphony for inspiration, but similar to the last movement of his own First Piano Concerto, also marked *Presto* and originally entitled *Minuetto*. Bennett nonetheless manages to retain some individuality and varies a conventional enharmonic recapitulation by using the *last* inversion of the German sixth chord (bars 73–177).¹²⁷ The trio delays establishment of its tonic (D) until the concluding cadence of the first part; the second part modulates as far as B^b, but instead of returning goes straight into the reprise of the *Minuetto*. This passage again suffers from a dangerous loss of energy, despite the fragments of the lively main theme heard from bar 231 onwards.

The slow movement is in sonata form. 'Bennett departs from his usual eight-measure organization in the first theme: there is a four-measure introduction, then a tune of (4+5)+(4+9) measures. This is in Bennett's pleasantly ambling mood; it is followed by a more purposeful theme for unison strings, used as a bass for wind phrases, but the second subject (measure 55) for two solo cellos again suffers from inadequate motion. The earlier material is well developed.'¹²⁸

The finale is also in sonata form. For his 'drone-bass' opening theme, Bennett probably had Haydn and Beethoven at least in the back of his mind; the humour of bars 9–20 seems predominantly Haydnesque. The second subject

Ex. 53: bars 41–48



again slows down considerably, but the theme is undeniably attractive, for all its resemblance to a passage from Mendelssohn's overture *Die Hebriden* (performed in London in 1832).¹²⁹ The development moves to A minor and C major; from bar 116 the 'Mendelssohn' theme and its successor are developed, 'declining into a fade-out (measures 145–153) that must be the "*diminuendo al fine*" objected to by the reviewer. The recapitulation is regular, and the coda maintains its momentum to the finish.¹³⁰

The last of the early symphonies to survive is in G minor; the score is dated 18 October 1835. This symphony received two performances at the Society of British Musicians, one on 8 February 1836, and a second on 9 February 1837. The second concert was reviewed at some length in *The Musical World*; the review covers almost every other item on the programme, however trivial, but strangely omits all mention of the symphony. A brief and not very favourable review appeared in *The Athenaeum*, and perhaps the bad reception by the

127 *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

128 *Ibid.*, pp. xxi–xxii.

129 *Ibid.*, p. xxii.

130 *Ibid.*, p. xxii.

British critics caused Bennett some disappointment (it may be remembered that something similar happened to Macfarren some eight years later). Bennett had probably taken this symphony with him on his visit to the Düsseldorf Niederrheinisches Musikfest in May 1836 and there shown it to Mendelssohn, who wrote to Thomas Attwood on 28 May:

I avail myself of Mr. Bennett's departure for London to send you these lines (...). I think him the most promising young musician I know, not only in your country but also here, and I am convinced if he does not become a very great musician, it is not God's will, but his own. His Concerto [No. 3 in C minor] and Symphony are so well written, the thoughts so well developed and so natural, that I was highly gratified when I looked over them yesterday, but when he played this morning his six studies [Op. 11] and the sketches [Op. 10], I was quite delighted, and so were all my musical friends who heard him.¹³¹

Later Mendelssohn wrote to Bennett to ask him to bring his symphony with him to Leipzig,¹³² but although he was in Leipzig from 29 October 1836 until 11 June 1837, no record of a performance of the symphony there has ever been found. From Leipzig, Bennett wrote on 10 November 1836 that he had begun a symphony on some 'rascally German music-paper'; his close friend Davison said that Bennett began a symphony in B minor in September 1836 and had written the first movement before the end of the year.¹³³ This project was mentioned until February 1837.

Here, too, Bennett was still evidently bent on mastering the Classical procedures. All four movements are in textbook sonata-allegro form, strict in every detail, and tend to be dominated by the four- or eight-bar phrase, even in their developmental sections. The composer's personal devotion to Mozart is especially evident in the choice of key; the atmosphere of the great G minor Symphony (K. 550) is often evoked, particularly in the forceful orchestral *tutti*. But in one matter Bennett still follows some of Mozart's contemporaries rather than Mozart himself: in his recapitulations, the second-subject material, originally heard in the relative major, recurs in the tonic major rather than the tonic minor.

Bennett has progressed farther than he did in No. 3 with respect to finding his own idiom, especially in melodic and contrapuntal detail. Structural originality was generally barred by the self-imposed straitjacket of the sonata form, though there are moments where the music strays adventurously beyond the expected keys (I, bars 32–40 and 209–212; III, bars 12–17). The strength of the symphony, in comparison to its predecessors, is its consistency: there are few places where energy flags noticeably or where a climax fails to meet the listener's expectation.

131 Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy to Thomas Attwood, 28 May 1836. Quoted in James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 41.

132 James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 48. This symphony is unaccountably missing from the list of works at the end of the *Life*, but it is referred to three times in the text, here and on pp. 39 and 41.

133 Henry Davison (ed.), *Music during the Victorian era: from Mendelssohn to Wagner*, London 1912, pp. 25 and 31.

The first theme is developed motivically already at many points during the exposition (bars 20, 40, 44 and 113); the tender second subject (bar 68), on the other hand, is transformed into an emphatic unison theme (bar 81), which, on repetition after the temporary establishment of D major, is made to sound modal. This effective novelty demonstrates that Bennett was by then a master of his means. The development, after a conventional start, continues with a 'Beethoven-ish'¹³⁴ passage, with melodic fragments tossed from one instrument to another (bars 146–157). A severe cut in the recapitulation eliminates the interesting modulations heard in the exposition at bars 24–56. Otherwise, regularity is disturbed only by a curious triplet motif in the trumpets and timpani, added to the second subject at bars 223–226.

Ex. 54: bars 213–227

Maggiore

FL. I., Ob. I

col 8va

pp

pp

Timp., Cor I

p

cresc. *f*

After a big climax using material from the development (bar 259ff.), the bustling coda winds up the affair. The movement curiously ends on a weak pulse, almost an upbeat.

The Scherzo, lacking a trio this time, is perhaps Bennett's best symphonic movement up to this time. The unison theme, on repetition,

134 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley, New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xxii.

Ex. 55: Scherzo, bars 9-19

The image shows a musical score for a string section, labeled 'Archi'. The music is in 3/4 time and begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score consists of several measures of music, primarily using chords and moving lines. There are accents (>) over several notes and a *p* marking at the end of the excerpt. The notation includes stems, beams, and various chord symbols.

has a *piano* extension introducing a skipping rhythm and a Neapolitan-6th harmony, both characteristic features of the movement; indeed, it is this extension that provides the main material, with the unison theme marking the structural points. 'This is a naturally strong plan (similar to ritornello form), which shows Bennett's skills to full advantage.'¹³⁵ A second subject in B^b (bar 65) is also based on this extension. The harmony at bars 141–152 is boldly astringent, representing the side of Bennett's style that most clearly distinguishes him from Mendelssohn.

The slow movement begins with an ending – a procedure that was not new, but used here convincingly. The movement's main subject, a duet for viola and cello, this time recalls Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony. The finale, an expanded version of a piano study that Bennett had written a few months earlier (Op. 11 No. 6), returns to the mood of 'G-minor Mozart.' Temperley and Geoffrey Bush disagree considerably on the quality of both this movement and the work in its entirety. Temperley lauds the second subject as 'a lyrical duet of great beauty, particularly in the recapitulation', but also dismisses the formal close to the exposition as 'one of the emptiest passages in this symphony'; in the end, however, he stresses that the coda of the movement as a whole 'elevates the movement to symphonic stature and provides a worthy conclusion to an excellent work.'¹³⁶ In contrast, Geoffrey Bush feels that only parts of it, especially the scherzo, can be called 'excellent'. 'For the finale Bennett expanded and scored the sixth of his piano Studies op. 11; so successful is the orchestral transcription that one could hardly have guessed the music's pianistic origin. But it was a fatal error of judgment to split in two a toccata which originally swept from start to finish in one unbroken span – an error compounded at the end by substituting loud, empty gestures for the piano's dying fall.'¹³⁷ Bush also contends that starting with his F minor Piano Concerto 'No. 5' (actually unnumbered, written before the F minor Concerto No. 4 Op. 19, 1836, and later withdrawn) Bennett had become a routinier who had nearly entirely lost invention – it was later said of other composers that teaching had destroyed their creativity. All of Bennett's compositions are without exception rejected by Gervase Hughes in terms of harmonic respects. Hughes's critique in fact echoes Schumann's in 1838: 'Generally speaking, however, initiative was not his *forte*. His harmonic progressions, for instance, though always pleasing to the ear, were for the most part unadventurous. When his early promise is taken into consideration, Bennett's

135 *Ibid.*, p. xxiii.

136 *Ibid.*

137 Geoffrey Bush, 'Sterndale Bennett and the Orchestra', in: *MT CXXVII* (1986), p. 323.

achievements as a composer were on the whole disappointing.¹³⁸ This routine is not, however, evident in all later works; there are exceptions of the highest quality, such as the *Capriccio* in E, sketches of the A minor Piano Concerto, *Paradise and the Peri* and the large G minor Symphony.

For a long time Bennett did not complete another symphony; another projected symphony, mentioned in letters of December 1838 until February 1840, was probably either abandoned or – not so assumed by Williamson – an early attempt at what was to become Op. 43 (which is, as indicated in the letters, indeed dedicated to the Philharmonic Society and was afterwards published by Kistner¹³⁹). Self-criticism prevented him from letting symphony scores be published until very much later.¹⁴⁰ Two letters that shed some light on the matter – to Schumann and Kistner¹⁴¹ – are nonetheless inconclusive, and it remains unclear as to what happened to the 1838–40 symphony. No reference to the symphony has yet been found in Bennett's student diaries up to 1842, but then again, hardly any of Bennett's compositions are mentioned in them. Sterndale Bennett had been closely connected to both institutions, Kistner and the Philharmonic Society, since the 1830s, so both Williamson's theory of a 'projected symphony' as well as a 'pre-version' to Op. 43 may be valid.

An application for the vacant post of the Music Professorship at Edinburgh University in 1843 came to nothing, in spite of Mendelssohn's recommendation:

'Perhaps the Council of the University might like to know what we German people think of you, how we consider you. And then, I may tell them, that if the prejudice which formerly prevailed in this country against the musical talent of your country has now subsided, it is chiefly owing to you, to your compositions, to your personal residence in Germany. Your overtures, your Concertos, your vocal as well as instrumental Compositions, are reckoned by our best and severest authorities amongst the first standard works of the present musical period. The public feel never tired in listening to, while the musicians feel never tired in performing your Compositions; and since they took root in the minds of the true amateurs, my countrymen became aware that music is the same in England as in Germany, as everywhere; and so by your successes here you destroyed that prejudice which nobody could ever have destroyed but a true Genius. This is a service you have done to English as well as German musicians, and I am sure that your countrymen will not acknowledge it less readily than mine have already done.'¹⁴²

138 Gervase Hughes, 'Sterndale Bennett', in Gervase Hughes, *Sidelights on a century of music (1825–1924)*, London 1969, p. 170. Cf. also Gerald W. Spink, 'Schumann and Sterndale Bennett', in: *MT CV* (1964), pp. 419–420.

139 Rosemary Williamson, *William Sterndale Bennett. A Descriptive Thematic Catalogue*, Oxford etc. 1996, pp. 452–453.

140 This may be a reason for withdrawing the two projected symphonies, which indeed may in part have been the source of the last G minor Symphony of 1864. Cf. Stanley Bayliss, 'William Sterndale Bennett', in: *MM XII/7* (1932), pp. 166–167.

141 These letters are in Barry Sterndale-Bennett's collection only in the form of Bennett's copies of his own letters, not as originals – the original letter to Schumann (dated 23 January 1839) was at J. R. Sterndale Bennett's time at the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz and is now to be found at the Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Krakow, Korespondencja Schumanna.

142 Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy to William Sterndale Bennett, 17 December 1842. Quoted in Basil Maine, *The Glory*

Years later Bennett was approached by the same university to become Professor of Music there, but had to refuse the offer at that point (Pearson¹⁴³ was elected instead, but was soon asked to resign, as Henry Bishop had been before). He had in the meantime founded (in 1849) the Bach Society, the predecessor to the London Bach Choir, and had become a well-loved and extremely busy teacher at the Royal Academy of Music. He consequently hardly had any spare time for composing. His duties in London¹⁴⁴ precluded him from taking over the conductorship of the Gewandhaus concerts for the 1853-54 season. In 1856 he succeeded Walmisley as Professor of Music (which he remained until the end of his life) at Cambridge, where he reformed the curriculum and was remembered as ‘a model professor’.¹⁴⁵ He also took over the conductorship of the Philharmonic Society concerts¹⁴⁶ for some ten years. His first concert as conductor of the Society (on 14 April 1856) featured Clara Schumann’s debut appearance in England.¹⁴⁷ Although not highly regarded as a conductor, did he largely improve the situation of orchestral playing, as a review in *The Times* clearly shows: ‘Professor Sterndale Bennett deserves infinite credit for the manner in which he has disciplined what, two years ago, was, for the major part, little better than an army of raw recruits.’¹⁴⁸ Among his pupils were William George Cusins, William Rea and William Smyth Rockstro (Rackstraw). In 1858 Bennett resigned from the Royal Academy of Music in protest against the high-handed behaviour of Lord Burghersh and in the same year was chosen to conduct the Leeds Festival.

He mostly devoted his spare time to editing a *Chorale Book adapted for England*, conjointly with Otto Goldschmidt, Jenny Lind’s accompanist and later husband, whom Bennett asked to become vice-principal of the Royal Academy of Music on the occasion of his own return to the Academy as Principal in 1866, in the same year resigning from the Philharmonic Society position. He eventually succeeded in restoring its financial situation and building it into a much more efficient institution; in 1871 he was knighted,¹⁴⁹ and a year later the Royal

of English Music, London 1937, p. 101.

143 Pearson was progressive concerning orchestral forms, but ‘only’ ‘progressive in everything but harmony’ (Robert Pascall, ‘Major instrumental forms: 1850–1890’, in Gerald Abraham (ed.), *Romanticism. The New Oxford History of Music*, vol. IX, Oxford etc. 1990, p. 512). ‘His orchestration is Berliozian, the course of his music almost entirely dictated by a succession of extra-musical ideas. (...) though thematically connected, the episodes are neither well balanced nor integrated. The ejaculatory nature of much of Pierson’s material, his over-detailed markings, and his disastrous over-reliance on the explicit expressiveness of his music expose it to every objection raised by the hostile critics of programme music. Nevertheless, in orchestral imagination he stands easily first among the British composers of his day.’ (*Ibid.*)

144 His highly-esteemed colleague Potter was absent in Germany during part of the time.

145 Frida Knight, *Cambridge Music from the Middle Ages to Modern Times*, Cambridge/New York 1980, p. 71.

146 After a dispute with Costa in 1848, he never again appeared as a pianist at any Philharmonic Society concert.

147 In June 1856 Bennett conducted the first English performance of Schumann’s oratorio *Das Paradies und die Peri*, with Clara Schumann present and giving the tempo to the singers (thus disturbing the performance). Cf. Gerald W. Spink, ‘Schumann and Sterndale Bennett’, in: *MT CV* (1964), p. 421.

148 *The Times*, London 1863, quoted in James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 332.

149 Charles Villiers Stanford described the circumstances surrounding the nobilitation in acid terms in Bennett’s

Academy of Music installed a biennial scholarship in his name to honour him.

Bennett's only mature symphony, the only one published and assigned an opus number (Op. 43), was composed for the Philharmonic Society. 'The tone of the movement reflects the seriousness of the days in which he first conceived it', James Robert Sterndale Bennett writes¹⁵⁰ (Bennett's wife had died in 1862). The chief period of the symphony's composition was between 9 and 24 June 1864; Bennett was evidently not much exaggerating when he wrote in his teaching book for the week of 20–25 June: 'This was a bad week, as I wrote the whole of my G minor Symphony in it.'¹⁵¹ Sketches for the first movement were probably begun during a holiday in the Rheinland in August 1863. Soon after his return he began to play the opening section, whose first phrase he likened to 'the waves of life'¹⁵², on the piano.

Ex. 56



By 19 June he had already sketched the movement. While returning from an engagement in Cambridge a few days later, he planned the last movement, a (though not very strict) rondo, on the train, with a rustic fair in his mind,

Ex. 57



some pathetic bars in which the oboe is prominent (bars 62–68) portraying 'a disconsolate maid who had lost her lover in the crowd.'¹⁵³

favour, finding it unjust that Bennett had had to wait so long, especially compared to Michael Costa. (Charles Villiers Stanford, 'William Sterndale Bennett (1816–1875)', in: *MQ* II, 1916, p. 657.)

150 James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 332.

151 Quoted *ibid.*, p. 333.

152 *Ibid.*, p. 332.

153 *Ibid.*, pp. 333–334. Temperley analyses the accompaniment to this melody as a transformed version of the movement's second subject.

Ex. 58: bars 62–68

62 Fl., Ob., Cor. *cresc.* *dim.* C

Clar., Fg. *cresc.* *dim.* *p* *p*

Archi *cresc.* *p*

The haunting phrase that ends this melody

Ex. 59: bars 77–84

77 Ob. *sempre calando* *sempre tranquillo* D

Clar. *sf* *p*

Cor *p*

Archi *pp*

foreshadows Elgar: playful tricks abound between statements of the tunes, i.e. the almost atonal passage for unison strings (bars 84–86) and an unaccompanied flute solo (bars 145–148).

As Nicholas Temperley notes, there are two structural innovations in the work.

‘Neither is startling nor in any way comparable to the avant-garde of Continental symphonic music; their quiet originality is typical of the composer. One is the use of short “Intermezzi” to connect the movements, as mentioned above; the other is the form of the Minuet.’¹⁵⁴

154 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley, New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xxiv.

Again, however, one has to remember that in the 1860s there were only very few – if any – ‘avant-garde’ symphonists on the European continent; a comparison to Schumann’s procedures, however, indeed shows ‘less advanced taste’.

Two of the ‘Intermezzi’ are short openings to the respective movements (each only a few bars long); they are modulatory in character, but otherwise hardly connected to the following movements – neither to the Minuet nor to the *Romanza*. The last *Intermezzo* is actually so called and is more substantial in nature. It restores the metre, tempo and thematic material of the Minuet (which it would have immediately followed in the 1864 state of the symphony), beginning on the dominant of G minor (which is equally apt following either the B \flat of the Minuetto or the D major of the *Romanza*) and largely staying there in order to provide an introduction to the G minor Rondo *Finale*. The last three measures are marked *grave*.

The Minuet was taken from the Ode for the installation of the Duke of Devonshire as chancellor of the University of Cambridge (Op. 41), performed on 10 June 1862; as Professor of Music, Bennett had been charged with composing music to words by Charles Kingsley. This movement was now revised, a trio for brass band added (a feature that the composer considered to be rather unusual for the times¹⁵⁵), and the movement placed between the opening *Allegro* and the finale. This movement turned out to be the most successful one, in Leipzig and London as well as with some later authors, and it was also published separately in several editions. Indeed, it ‘is one of his most charming and graceful pieces.’¹⁵⁶ The principal tune has a clear personality,

Ex. 60: bars 9-16



modestly neat and attractive in manner. It has three ways of returning to its tonic chord (bars 15–16, 23–24 and 42–43); in bars 40–43 one wonders whether the ambitious harmonic progression can get home in time, but there is no extension, and the tonic is reached on the last beat of bar 43 with no sense of hurry. There are many subtleties of harmony and orchestration. ‘The contrasting tune, which occurs first in B \flat minor (measures 23–35) and later in G minor (measures 194–214) moves in thirds and sixths, with no bass except an occasional tonic, a most refreshing effect (spoiled by Steggall in his organ arrangements, where added bass notes appear). (...) The *Minuetto* is altered in its reprise, as already

155 James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 334. Perhaps he was influenced here by the Trio in Mendelssohn’s *Italian* Symphony.

156 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley. New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xxv.

mentioned, and the gentle coda emphasizes the subdominant. The movement as a whole has quite an affinity with one of Brahms's symphonic allegrettos.¹⁵⁷

In its first form, the symphony had no slow movement, and Bennett, with his accustomed modesty, called it merely *Allegro, Minuetto and Rondo Finale*; he had written to Davison begging him not to describe it as such in any preliminary announcement in *The Musical World*, adding, 'It is little more than a long Overture on a Symphony plan.'¹⁵⁸ It was rehearsed on 25 June and performed on 27 June 1864, just after the scoring or preparing the orchestral parts had been finished, with Bennett conducting, at the eighth and last concert of the season, at the Hanover Square concert rooms. Among those present were the Prince and Princess of Wales, who offered their warm congratulations, and Bennett's old teacher, Cipriani Potter, who wrote to say that he was 'perfectly charmed with your new Symphony, for the beauty of composition, as well as the truly happy instrumentation.'¹⁵⁹ George Hogarth (1783–1870) felt that it deserved the title of Symphony, and Potter expressed the hope that Bennett, who considered it to be one of his best works,¹⁶⁰ would add another movement. Bennett nevertheless produced the work in the same three-movement form (though with minor revisions¹⁶¹) the following 12 January at the Gewandhaus concerts in Leipzig, where it was a great success.

When the symphony was to be revived at the Philharmonic Society for the 1867 season, the directors wrote to Bennett asking him to complete it by writing a slow movement. He did so, but as before, left the task until the last minute. He developed the movement from a song, *Tell me where, ye summer breezes*, which he had composed in 1861, lost, and rewritten in 1866, with words by his son-in-law, Thomas Case (1844–1925).¹⁶² The melody was assigned to the violas, and Bennett called the movement *Romanza*. The opening lines of the first verse are:

Tell me where, ye summer breezes,
Are the friends that passed away

and may be taken as a motto for the entire movement. Temperley has described the movement as a 'Song Without Words, complete with introduction, broken chord accompaniment, and codetta; it is even reminiscent of a particular Mendelssohn piece, the last section of the

157 *Ibid.*, p. xxv.

158 James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 334.

159 *Ibid.*, p. 334.

160 *Ibid.*, p. 337.

161 William Sterndale Bennett to Ferdinand David, 22 November 1864: 'I have been very anxious to know how I could get my symphony (Orchesterstimmen) ready for Leipzig (...) I could come (I hope and believe) the second week in January, and in the holidays will make the little corrections in the symphony which I wish to make, and send you the Partitur and Orchesterstimmen before then.' Quoted from James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 336.

162 See Nicholas Temperley, 'Sterndale Bennett and the Lied', in: *MT CXVI* (1975), p. 961, and James Robert Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, Cambridge 1907, p. 363, 443 and 459. The song is not extant.

Fantasia on *The Last Rose of Summer*,¹⁶³ most immediately suggesting Mendelssohn.¹⁶⁴ The melody is heard through twice (the second time with an intermediate modulation, bars 47–50). The 'development' of the first phrase (with the violas silent) leads to another viola entry in recitative style (bar 71) and eventually to a coda-like recapitulation of the song. The violas end on a low D, 'and the cadence is plagal. The movement casts an easy spell, but we may share the doubts of some contemporaries as to whether the symphony is improved by its presence.'¹⁶⁵ Inserting the movement was an advance mainly insofar as the surrounding movements in 3/4 were separated by a *Larghetto* movement in simulated 9/8 metre.

As Bennett had resigned from the conductorship of the Philharmonic Society the previous year, the symphony was conducted by his successor, William Cusins on 1 July 1867 (after the première performance of the new version Bennett was presented on 7 July 1867 with the Philharmonic Society's Beethoven Gold Medal). It was repeated from time to time during the next few years: for example, at the Philharmonic Society in 1869, 1872 (where it was still received with 'the warmest demonstration of applause'¹⁶⁶), and 1879,¹⁶⁷ at the Crystal Palace on 23 January 1875,¹⁶⁸ and at the Hallé Concerts, Manchester, on 18 February 1875,¹⁶⁹ but also in Leipzig in 1870.¹⁷⁰ It is mentioned with great respect as one of the composer's finest works in the first edition of Grove's *Dictionary* and other late Victorian histories and reference books.

George Alexander Macfarren (London, 2 March 1813–London, 31 October 1887) was perhaps the most important of Lucas's and Potter's pupils. In 1834 his first opera to be performed, *Genevieve, or The Maid of Switzerland*, was produced at the English Opera House. In the year of Queen Victoria's marriage, Macfarren's father pushed his son to compose, in two days' time, an 'emblematical tribute' to the Queen to be performed at Covent Garden. After the morning rehearsal before the performance, father said to son: 'Now you must go and sell the music.' He called a cab, into which he bundled his son, who sold the piece to Lavenu. 'An energetic father, with determined character; a hard-working and quick-working

163 Nicholas Temperley, in: *William Sterndale Bennett*, ed. by Nicholas Temperley. New York/London 1982 (The Symphony 1720–1840, EVII), p. xxvi.

164 *Ibid.*, pp. xxv–xxvi.

165 *Ibid.*, p. xxvi. Cf. the reviews, in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Musical World*, on the movement quoted in A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire. Vol. III Part B: The European Symphony from ca. 1800 to ca. 1930: Great Britain, Russia, France*, ed. Brian Hart, Bloomington/Indianapolis 2008, p. 80.

166 Quoted from Percy Young, *Elgar O. M.*, London/Glasgow 1955, p. 326.

167 Myles B. Foster, *The history of the Philharmonic Society of London 1813–1912*, London 1912, pp. 308, 333 and 370.

168 *MT XVI* (1875), p. 774.

169 Thomas Batley (ed.), *Sir Charles Hallé's concerts in Manchester (...) from January 30th, 1838, to March 7th, 1893*, Manchester 1896, p. 230. There was also a performance in Central Park, New York, on 7 August 1875: see H. Earle Johnson, *First performances in America to 1900: works with orchestra*, Detroit 1979, p. 38.

170 Rebecca Grotjahn, *Die Sinfonie im deutschen Kulturgebiet 1850 bis 1875*, Ph.D. dissertation Hannover 1997, Sinzig 1998 (Musik und Musikanschauung im 19. Jahrhundert, 7), p. 325.

son!¹⁷¹ – quite in contrast to William Sterndale Bennett’s indecisiveness. Macfarren also edited Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas* for the Musical Antiquarian Society (which existed from 1840 to 1847) and, for the Handel Society, *Belshazzar*, *Judas Maccabaeus* and *Jephtha*. He was a prolific writer on music, author of many books and contributing analytical essays to many concerts of the Sacred Harmonic and Philharmonic Societies, as well as for *The Musical World* and the *Musical Times*. (For the stringency of his views, he was ridiculed by George Bernard Shaw, particularly in connection with his denunciation of Goetz’s *Frühlings-Ouverture* Op. 15 (1864) as containing ‘unlawful consecutive sevenths’.) In the following decades Macfarren was best known for his tuneful songs and appreciable operas, and from the 1870s, also for his oratorios. He began to have eye problems starting in 1823, but became entirely blind only around 1860, and thus had to dictate all of his later music to an amanuensis. In 1875 he took over the posts of the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music and Professor of Music at Cambridge from Bennett; from this position he tried to halt the innovations of the younger generation of British composers (Corder, Mackenzie). He remained immensely energetic and busy until very late in his life, and gave lectures until the very end.

Macfarren wrote no fewer than nine symphonies, and by virtue of his prolific output, shows that Mendelssohn was by no means the only influence (though an easily recognizable one) on British composers of the era. While Haydn and Beethoven were the most prominent models at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Mozart and Mendelssohn (Schubert and Schumann were much less known in those days) were influences that came to be added later. This succession of appreciation is indeed also found in Macfarren – other sources of inspiration apart from those already mentioned include Bach and, later, the Clementi of the B minor sonata.¹⁷² While the works of Stainer and Barnby were clearly influenced by the ‘lyricists’ Gounod and Spohr, Nicholas Temperley describes Macfarren, Pearson and Pearsall as being ‘composers of some calibre whose music rarely shows any similarity to Mendelssohn’s.’¹⁷³ Temperley stresses that Macfarren ‘was the one English composer who was profoundly influenced by Beethoven, whose symphonies he plundered on a large scale’¹⁷⁴ – especially in matters of musical detail. In his admiration of Beethoven he was not unlike Wagner, who eventually came to dislike the ‘pompous melancholic scotsman’ whose overture ‘*Steeple-Chase*’¹⁷⁵ (in reality *Cherry Chase*, 1836) he performed at his 1855 season on the rostrum of the Philharmonic Society.

Macfarren’s First Symphony in C, which apparently has not survived,¹⁷⁶ was written in 1828 at the age of fifteen, and was first performed to high acclaim at an Academy concert

171 Henry C. Banister, ‘The life and work of Sir G. A. Macfarren’, in: *PRMA* 14 (1887-88), p. 73.

172 *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80.

173 Nicholas Temperley, ‘Mendelssohn’s Influence on English Music’, in: *Me&L* XLIII (1962), p. 225.

174 *Ibid.*, p. 232.

175 Richard Wagner, *Mein Leben*, München 1983, p. 535.

176 All of Macfarren’s surviving manuscripts were given to the Fitzwilliam Museum by Macfarren’s daughter, Clarissa Davenport.

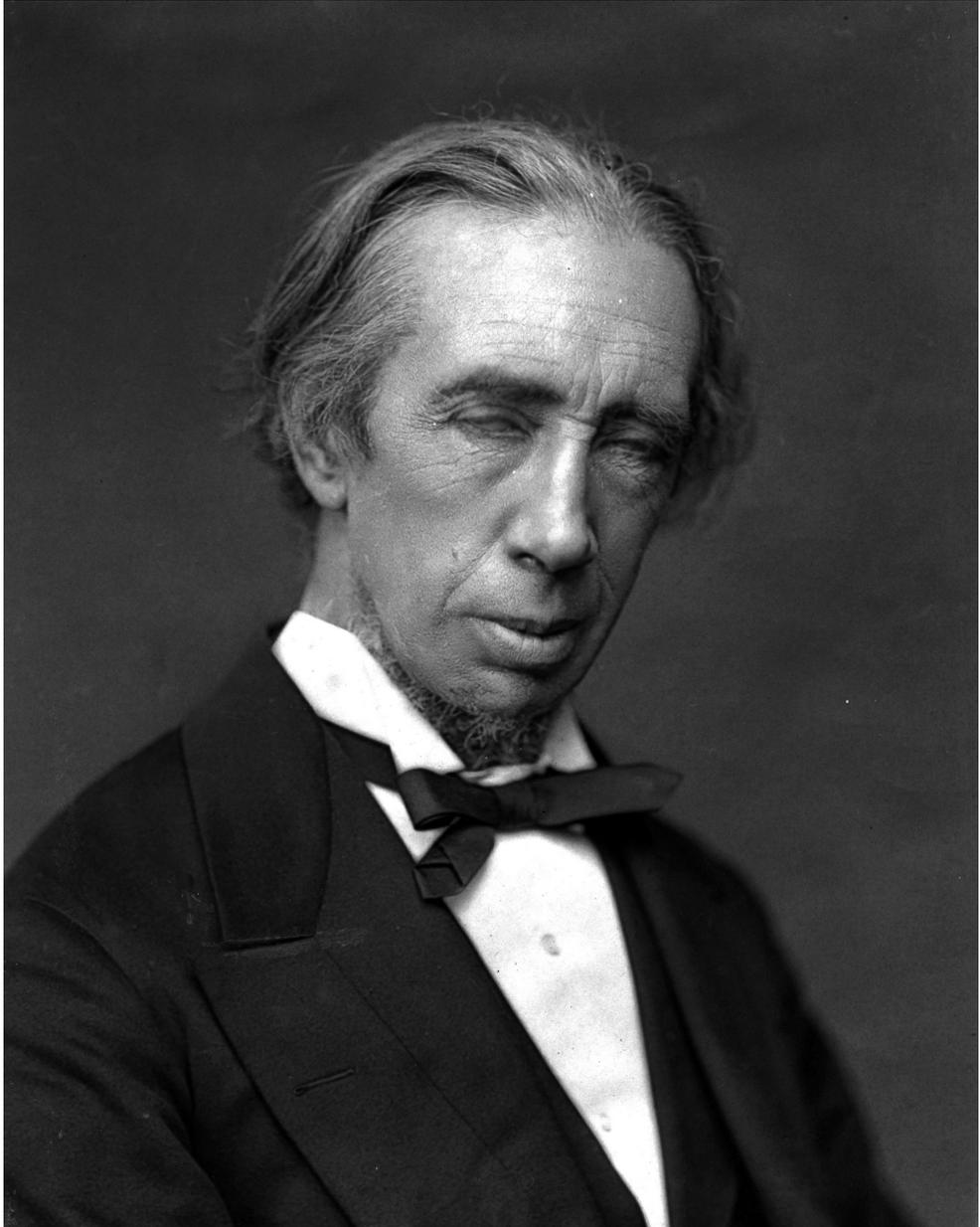


Illustration 18. George Alexander Macfarren, photograph. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

on 2 October 1830. Macfarren's father was present and wrote to his wife, who was then at Margate:

‘The Duke of Cambridge and many distinguished persons were present – the Symphony went off admirably, far exceeding my sanguine foreknowledge of it. At the conclusion the Duke inquired which was Macfarren, Lord Burghersh called him forward – the Duke took his hand, and in a loud tone of approbation said, “Macfarren, I congratulate you and your master on this performance; it does you infinite credit and I am greatly pleased.”’

The company, consisting of about 200, seemed to join in the praise most heartily by an additional round of applause; since then I have received so many congratulations from Mr. Attwood, Dr. Crotch, Lucas, Hamilton, Sir George Clerk, Potter, and others, that I begin to think a fond father's notions are not all illusive, that our boy is in head what we have fondly found him in heart, and that we ought to be proud of him.¹⁷⁷

The relatively undemanding Second Symphony in D minor of 1831 is dedicated to Mendelssohn Bartholdy. A downward movement

Ex. 61



opens the generally rather old-fashioned work, shaping the entire first movement. The *Andante cantabile* is slowed down by long note values,

Ex. 62



and the third movement is an old-fashioned Minuet.

Ex. 63



177 George Alexander Macfarren to Elizabeth Macfarren, 2 or 3 October 1830. Quoted in Henry C. Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren. His life, works, and influence*, London 1891, pp. 27–28.

The *scherzando* finale again displays an old-fashioned, simple concept, especially concerning orchestration; woodwind is used in the *tutti* only, giving the strings a dominating role. Only the first subject of the movement

Ex. 64



is dealt with in the development.

Macfarren's Symphony No. 3 in E minor, dated June 1832, is indeed much further developed than the earlier work, strongly resembling Potter and thus up to date with British symphonism, especially in the opening movement. Macfarren's harmonic invention, rather unusual in comparison to his British contemporaries, is now apparent as a central feature; melodically, however, the work is rather flimsy:

Ex. 65





However, this resemblance would scarcely have been noticed by the London audiences at its first performance in 1834, for they would not have heard the Choral Symphony more than once. The opening timpani rhythm is consequently used as an *ostinato* (a pencil mark in the MS score refers to Beethoven's Symphony in F Opus 93). Macfarren's strictness in his ideas is also reflected by the movement's development, which opens with a strict fugue, obeying all textbook rules.

The opening of the next symphony that Macfarren composed (1833) is decidedly tedious, very long and certainly of lower quality than the symphonies Nos. 3 or 5, very much in the tradition of Marschner and Weber. It is followed by an *Andante con Moto* in simple ternary form, Ex. 67



a minuet very similar to that in No. 5, and the undoubtedly best movement, a rather complex and voluminous finale with plenty of invention. In spite of its shortcomings, the symphony had already become one of the most important ones of the time – the *Athenaeum* critic wrote:

'We were pleased and interested with Mr. Macfarren's Symphony – both from the youth of the composer, and the enthusiasm and originality discernible throughout his work – it gives good promise of excellence; the trio of the minuet in particular struck us as full of fine bold fancy, and the conclusion to the finale was at once clever and animating. We are not, at this instant, able to remember any work of similar length from the pen of a native writer which has given us so much pleasure.'¹⁷⁸

178 *The Athenaeum*, 2 November 1834. Quoted in Henry C. Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren. His life, works, and influence*, London 1891, p. 28.

The finale again opens with a drum-roll; it is a tremendously fast movement,

Ex. 71



reaching the recapitulation as early as at [C] 29.

In consequence to the mixed reviews after the première performance at the Society of British Musicians, the first movement of Symphony No. 6 was heavily revised – even the movement’s exposition was cut down considerably. The rather long and also strongly revised second movement offers a highly interesting beginning, but it would require a performance to find out whether the tension can be sustained throughout the piece. A vivid Scherzo with syncopations follows, and the work is closed by the movement that was composed first: here again, we find syncopations that are nonetheless thematically unimportant. This time the development is rather short, and the recapitulation hardly touches on the rather uneventful second theme.

Even less successful than this symphony when it came out, however, was Macfarren’s C[♯] minor Symphony, finished in 1840 (not 1842, according to Banister) and first performed in 1845 at a Philharmonic Society concert under Moscheles (a capitulation to the ‘Young England Agitation’ in *The Musical World*), which was ‘roundly hissed’.¹⁸¹ Mendelssohn Bartholdy had tried to get the symphony, which in the last two movements several times recalls (or precalls?) Schumann, performed in Leipzig in 1843, but without success, ‘merely because there had been four new Symphonies in the course of the last two months’.¹⁸² The postponement never led to a later performance in Germany.¹⁸³ The piano duet arrangement of the symphony, published as early as in 1842, was reviewed in *The Musical World* thus:

‘A careful perusal of this work has brought with it the conviction that, despite its occasional inequalities of style, despite the few reminiscences of the works of the great masters which it contains, it is beyond comparison the most complete and finished composition that has proceeded from the pen of Mr. Macfarren. The first *Allegro* is of a perverse, gloomy, and desponding character. An abrupt and rugged phrase, or fraction of a phrase, somewhat after the manner of the C minor Symphony of Beethoven,

181 Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford etc. 1995, p. 69. Davison was a close friend of Macfarren’s, bound to him by their admiration for Shelley.

182 Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy to George Alexander Macfarren, 2 April 1843. Quoted in Henry C. Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren. His life, works, and influence*, London 1891, p. 87.

183 *Ibid.*, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 87–88: ‘Meanwhile I must repeat what I said in my first letter – if you *had* an Overture I am sure it would be a better beginning for this public and these Concerts, than a Symphony. Ask Bennett, who knows the place, and will certainly concur in this opinion. And if you could accordingly let us have an Overture *before* the Symphony, I am sure the last would be much better understood and received by the public, even if there had not been such a quantity of new native Symphonies beforehand, as there has been this year.’

commences and gives the prevailing feeling to the movement.¹⁸⁴ The progress of this portion of the Symphony is unimpeded by a single weakness. Anything, however, rather than an emotion of happiness is engendered by its performance; a thorough sentiment of despair pervades the whole, but since the aid of mawkishness is never once resorted to, the judgment is unoffended, although the heart is made to weep. It seems the prevailing custom among the best modern composers, to exert the wonders of their art in inciting the saddest possible current of ideas in the mind of the hearer; – as witness the symphonies and overtures of Spohr, Mendelssohn, and Sterndale Bennett, after hearing any one of which we feel infinitely more inclined to walk straight into a river and drown ourselves than to exclaim, with an ecstasy of delight, “How divine an art is music!” Mr. Macfarren, in most of his works, has fallen into the same notion, and usually regales us with a dose of the dreariest melancholy (...). There are many noble points in this first *Allegro* of Mr. Macfarren’s symphony that we find it impossible to enumerate them in detail, and must therefore content ourselves with referring our readers to the text; doubtless they will not less vividly appreciate than ourselves the striking points to which we have thus cursorily alluded. The *Andante Cantabile* in E major, though possessing a rich vein of melody, and abounding in fine points, is less to our taste than the preceding – being materially less original, and containing constant indications of the peculiar feeling of Mendelssohn and Beethoven. Of the minuet and trio we shall decline to give an opinion, until a hearing of the composer’s intentions, as delivered by an orchestra, shall make us enabled to judge of them with fairness. They depend evidently so much on instrumental aid for their proper effect, that such a hearing is absolutely requisite for their right comprehension – but when that is to be – Heaven or the Philharmonic can alone inform us; let us hope it may be ere long. Perhaps the triumph of the entire Symphony is achieved by the *finale*, which is indubitably a noble piece of impetuous daring. The subject, however, is not altogether original, since it recalls very vividly a passage in [the first] one of the *finales* of [Mozart’s] *Don Juan*; but the management of the materials is masterly in the extreme, and confirms us in an opinion which the first movement half engendered, – viz., that this is the best Symphony we have seen from the hands of a British composer. We have not leisure to individualize beauties, or we could fill columns of our journal. Suffice it to say, that as one concentrated and single effort it is fully entitled to a place amongst the happiest inspirations of the acknowledged great masters; and would do honour to any existing author.¹⁸⁵

The failure of the Philharmonic Society performance was probably due to its British rather than cosmopolitan nature (to get works by native composers performed by exerting pressure upon the Society can hardly have been very good for them), but also because Macfarren had attempted to depart even further from symphonies built rather academically on earlier models, for example by for the first time not repeating the first movement’s exposition.

184 Cf. Nicholas Temperley, *Instrumental Music in England 1800–1850*, Ph.D. dissertation Cambridge 1959, pp. 151–152.

185 *The Musical World*, 17 March 1842. Quoted in Henry C. Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren. His life, works, and influence*, London 1891, pp. 88–89.

The movement forges ahead (showing, like the Fourth Symphony, a fondness for canonic treatment, which can also be found in Mendelssohn) and constitutes an important step forward into the symphony as it developed in Germany. *The Musical Examiner* waxed enthusiastically: ‘This movement alone would prove Mr. Macfarren to be a composer of very high pretensions’.¹⁸⁶ A highly melodic *Andante Cantabile* is again followed by a Minuet, a rather uneventful movement in A^b major (not the expected G[♯] major). The finale proves this work to be superior to earlier works.

Macfarren’s Eighth, written after the failure of the Seventh (with which it has in common the use of a serpent instead of any trombones, which, due to the former’s rarity, may have limited the number of performances) as a kind of compensation for the Philharmonic Society and offered ‘for a trial in 1845-6. Ditto ditto 1849’¹⁸⁷ was in fact never played there. The symphony received its first performance as a trial at the Society of British Musicians in the 1846-47 season, but publicly premiered only at a concert of the Amateur Society in 1849; it returns to a simpler conception, turning to the main key of D major and taking up older models. The exposition repeat of the first movement is again omitted, but there are antiphonal effects between strings and woodwind nearly fifty years out of date. The entire movement, including the voluminous development, largely recurs to a motif from the very beginning, appearing rather uninspired:

Ex. 72



The slow movement commences *pizzicato* in the strings (see also Symphony No. 5); this time the theme is presented by the cello. The rhythmic material is largely repeated in the Ninth Symphony (especially the finale); one might say that Macfarren plundered this work, which he at the time of composition of his last symphony knew to be out of date and nearly worthless.

The only section exempt from this criticism could have been the Scherzo, which was indeed up to date, and the finale (as in the Ninth, the trombones are used only in this final movement), which is also comparatively highly inspired. Macfarren had obviously had a real flurry of creative activity, for the movement was apparently composed at a high speed. The thematic material is also more inspired than usual: the first and the second subjects are strongly marked by a dotted rhythm (♩|♩ ; ♩♩ ♩), although the second is much more melodically conceived:

186 *The Musical Examiner*, 19 August 1843. Quoted in Henry C. Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren. His life, works, and influence*, London 1891, pp. 92–93.

187 George Alexander Macfarren on the front page of the score of Symphony No. 8.

Ex. 73



The development blossoms organically, all sections leading logically and inspiredly from one into another.

Macfarren's Ninth Symphony, in E minor, which followed some thirty years after the Eighth and was dictated to an amanuensis, was first performed by the British Orchestral Society in 1874, reviewed as follows:

'Our distinguished musician earns his greatest triumphs at a period in life when mental activity might be considered to be on the wane (...). Mr. Macfarren's Symphony is ambitious and imposing; it possesses undoubted grandeur, both in the original conception and the method of its treatment; it is elaborated, as only a master hand could have worked it out, and it possesses those abstract principles which bespeak the nature of its ideas as not lying merely upon the surface, but penetrating to "stilly depths" unfathomable save by the expert (...). There is something in the conception of Mr. Macfarren's work which is almost terrible in its intensity; the opening phrase,

Ex. 74



like the curse in *Rigoletto*, interrupts the serenity of the lighter portions, and interposes a direful obstacle which nothing can surmount. Throughout the Symphony this haunting phrase occurs, like the ever-active sword of Damocles, "Swift to strike, if not to kill." Any such element as "prettiness" in such a work as this would be out of place: the first movement is restless, agitated, and mournful; the second (serenade, *andante*), though melodious in character, cannot escape the influence of destiny as embodied in the phrase to which we have alluded; the third, *Gavotte: musette: Gavotte da capo*, with coda place of the usual scherzo), is perhaps the lightest section of a serious work; but the final *allegro* is, despite the flowing nature of its themes, as sorrowful and as agitated as the opening movement. Taken all in all the Symphony in E minor represents the nature of a "man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief" more than anything else; its episodes are futile to contend against the overwhelming mournfulness of the subjects, and the Symphony runs its course in an atmosphere of sadness and regret. The quiet and meditative beauties of various isolated portions we cannot here deal with.²¹⁸⁸

188 Unidentified review, quoted in Henry C. Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren. His life, works, and influence*, London 1891, pp. 265–266.

The theme given above is not in fact recapitulated in the first movement; it is, however, present not only in the development (from [F]), but also in the coda ([P]).

The woodwind feature prominently in the beautiful *Andante*, which is in a ternary form hidden by elaboration as variations. For the first and only time in Macfarren's symphonies, we find the harp being used. As already mentioned, the third movement is a Gavotte-Musetta-Gavotte in place of the Scherzo,

Ex. 75



with the finale beginning from the *pianissimo*

Ex. 76



but relentlessly building in dynamics.

Ex. 77



While not as inspired as that of the Eighth Symphony, the movement's overall conception is excellent (development from [D] 10, recapitulation of the second theme from [J] 7). It is thus not astonishing that it was this work which was chosen for the Royal Academy of Music Commemoration Concert and for a concert of the Worcester Society on 30 March 1897. In the end, one would do Macfarren a grave injustice by calling him a second-rate composer compared to Mendelssohn; he was a unique and very inventive symphonist who compared 'favourably with (...) other sub-Mendelssohn symphonists, Gade for instance.'¹⁸⁹

A composer we have to squeeze in somewhere despite having precious little data on him is **Joseph Street**. All we know is that he wrote at least two piano concertos (in E \flat major

189 Philip Scowcroft, review of a recording of Macfarren's Symphonies Nos. 4 and 7, in: *bms news* 81 (1999), p. 288.

Op. 20, c. 1865 and in F minor Op. 24, c. 1870), an overture entitled *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, a String Quartet, a Piano Quintet, ten piano sonatas and two violin sonatas, and that nearly all of these works were published in Leipzig. Breitkopf & Härtel also published two of his symphonies, but Street does not appear in any dictionary, nor is he mentioned in any other source.

Street's First Symphony in E \flat major Op. 4 was published around 1857, the supposed date of composition. It is in fact not as concise and carefully built as the Second Symphony, although a regularly recurring theme structures the second movement.

Ex. 78



The finale comes close to breaking down due to the rather long development (from [D] to [N]), but the harmonic and instrumental mastery saves the movement. Street's melodic invention is also fairly impressive:

Ex. 79



Ex. 80



Street's Second Symphony in D major Op. 14 was published around 1865, thus being nearly contemporaneous with symphonies by Smith, Barnett and Sullivan. It is very concisely conceived, with rather monothematic outer movements, a stylistic decision that sets him apart from his contemporaries.

Ex. 81



Ex. 82



Subsidiary themes are mostly derived from the main theme, which is developed in the first movement (from [C] 18 to [I]) not in totality, but dismantled into motifs. The slow movement's

Ex. 83

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The first staff starts with a forte (f) dynamic, followed by a piano (p) dynamic. The second staff ends with a crescendo (cresc.) marking and 'etc.'.

middle section is, like the first movement's coda, rather long – nearly too long. The most interesting movement is the Scherzo, however, with its two carefully constructed trios, each one with a unique personality. It may be interesting to hear how the symphony works in performance, given its qualitative comparability to contemporary works by Raff or Reinecke.¹⁹⁰

The actual beginnings of more independent British symphonism can be nailed down to the 1860s with Sullivan's *Symphony in E* (1863; see p. 168); William Sterndale Bennett's great *G minor Symphony*, the climax of his symphonic oeuvre (see p. 142); the *C minor Symphony of Alice Mary Smith [Meadows White]* (1863) and the *A minor Symphony of John Francis Barnett* (1864). Barnett as well as Smith had considerable success with cantatas and odes. Smith (London, 19 May 1839–London, 4 December 1884) was connected with the Philharmonic Society (having been elected Female Professional Associate in 1867) and shortly before her death became an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Music, where she had studied with Bennett and Macfarren (the Royal Academy of Music had from its inception been open to boys *and* girls). An obituary (by Ebenezer Prout) in *The Athenaeum* stated: 'Her music is marked by elegance and grace rather than by any great individuality (...). Her forms were always clear and free from eccentricity; her sympathies were evidently with the classic rather than with the romantic school.'¹⁹¹ These words could describe nearly every British composer of that time.

Smith's *First Symphony in C minor*, given a trial by the Musical Society of London in November 1863 (together with John Francis Barnett's *A minor Symphony*), already shows considerable qualities both in construction, instrumentation and melodic treatment:

190 For the symphonies of Raff and Reinecke, see Matthias Wiegandt, *Vergessene Symphonik? Studien zu Joachim Raff, Carl Reinecke und zum Problem der Epigonalität in der Musik*, Ph.D. dissertation Freiburg 1996, Sinzig 1997 (Berliner Musik Studien, Vol. 13).

191 *The Athenaeum*, 13 December 1884. Quoted in: *Grove6* vol. 17, London etc. 1980, p. 411.

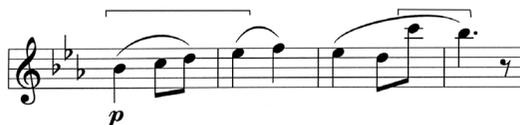
Ex. 84: First movement, theme of the slow introduction



Ex. 85: First movement, first theme



Ex. 86: First movement, second theme



The inner connection of the individual themes has been emphasized.

A three-tone motif opens the development and is built along the lines of the two main themes, although the second is of secondary importance. In the recapitulation (from [H]), the first theme is always presented canonically and accompanied by a pedal point in cello and double basses on C.

The 'slow' movement, *Allegretto amorevole*, turns, although not marked as such, into 6/8 time. It is in binary form A-A', with the second main theme deriving from the first:

Ex. 87: Second movement, first theme



Ex. 88: Second movement, second theme



The Scherzo is marked by the permanent rhythm ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩; the finale is opened by a fanfare, the second theme of the movement is, in contrast to Smith's usual technique, presented in the woodwind:

Ex. 89



Smith takes up material from the first movement, at [G] even the introductory theme of the symphony in its original form, then at [H] 16 arriving at the recapitulation, which brings this undoubtedly highly respectable composition to a close.

The A minor Symphony, which followed in 1876 for the Alexandra Palace Competition (see p. 194), starts full of energy and invention. The unquiet beginning of the first movement

Ex. 90



soon leads to the dominant of A, to be repeated a fifth higher. The second theme

Ex. 91



builds huge melodic arches. A carefully worked-out development leads to a recapitulation proper (from [F]). Here it is already apparent that Smith is not interested in formal extravagances, nor even experiments, but at times the movement (and other parts of the symphony) resembles Benedict's excellent G minor Symphony. This very favourable impression is rather tarnished by the last two movements, which seem to have been composed in something of a hurry in order to be completed in time for the competition – to the unfortunate detriment of Smith's inspiration. The slow movement, which was revived on 9 November 1978 at a concert in Chichester conducted by Michael Hurd, is neatly built, although Hurd describes it as 'a pleasant, Mendelssohn-ish piece – not very imaginatively scored, however'¹⁹²; the Scherzo becomes rather old-fashioned, and the invention in the finale, in spite of its still considerable energy,

Ex. 92: Fourth movement, second theme



192 Michael Hurd to the author, 23 July 1998.

seems in bits rather dull. But these deficiencies are rather unimportant in comparison to Smith's uncanny ability to judge the permitted and necessary length and instrumentation of a symphony (only the coda teeters on being a bit too long).

John Francis Barnett (London, 16 October 1837-London, 24 November 1916), a fellow student of Sullivan's in Leipzig after studying with Wylde, became a professor at the newly founded London conservatories (fellow of the Royal Academy of Music, professor at the Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music); then, as Weingartner and Brian Newbould would later do, he completed Schubert's fragmentary E major Symphony D729, which was performed on 5 May 1883.¹⁹³ He was mainly successful as a composer of choral festival compositions, such as *The Ancient Mariner* (1867, for Birmingham), *Paradise and the Peri* (1870, for Birmingham), *The Good Shepherd* (1876, for Brighton, rev. 1897), *The Building of the Ship* (1880, for Leeds), *The Wishing-bell* (1893, for Norwich) and *The Eve of St. Agnes* (1913).

In his reminiscences, Barnett writes:

'Somewhere about the year 1863, the Musical Society of London announced giving trials of new orchestral compositions. For these they engaged an excellent orchestra, and appointed a small committee of well-known musicians to choose the works. I accordingly sent in my symphony, which was then finished, and together with other compositions it was selected for performance at one of these orchestral trials. Subsequently it had the good fortune to be included in the programme of the Society's concert for June 15, 1864.¹⁹⁴ And in the ensuing winter season August Manns introduced it at the Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts.'¹⁹⁵

(Alice Mary Smith's First Symphony was also premièred by the Musical Society of London.) The Symphony in A minor is now lost, but if it is anything like his conducting, it is likely to have been rather stodgy and 'correct but colourless'.¹⁹⁶

So we come to the year 1866, the year when Carl Engel started the rumours of the 'land without music'. And it was in 1866 that Arthur Sullivan's 'Irish' Symphony opened a new chapter of British symphonism, a chapter where – it has to be stressed – we find ourselves in the middle of a 'British Musical renaissance'.

193 Cf. John Francis Barnett, 'Some details concerning the work done in connection with completing and instrumenting Schubert's sketch Symphony in E, No. 7, as performed at the Crystal Palace Concert on May 5th, 1883', in: *PRMA* 17 (1890-91), pp. 177–190. (Of this version only the piano score has survived.)

194 A review in the *Illustrated London News* of 14 November 1863 stresses that the Symphony was performed in the same concert as Alice Mary Smith's C minor Symphony, on 4 November 1863.

195 John Francis Barnett, *Musical Reminiscences and Impressions*, London 1906, p. 73.

196 *The Athenaeum*, London 26 April 1884. Quoted in Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford etc. 1995, p. 145.

4. The influence of the ‘great German tradition’ and the foundation of the Royal College of Music

Arthur Sullivan p. 166 – Joseph Francis Duggan p. 172 – Julius Benedict p. 172 – William George Cusins p. 173 – Frederic Hymen Cowen p. 175 – Henry Holmes p. 186 – Henry David Leslie p. 188 – Ebenezer Prout p. 190 – James Hamilton Siree Clarke p. 194 – The Alexandra Palace Symphony Competition 1876 p. 194 – Walter Cecil Macfarren p. 197 – Thomas Wingham p. 197 – William Wallace p. 198 – Benjamin James Dale p. 205 – Frederick Lamond p. 206 – Charles Villiers Stanford p. 207 – Charles Hubert H. Parry p. 226 – Oliver A. King p. 246 – Edward German p. 247 – Charles Wood p. 252 – Frederic Cliffe p. 254 – Henry Walford Davies p. 256 – Samuel Coleridge-Taylor p. 262 – Gustav Holst p. 266 – Michele Esposito p. 268

‘Composition: The art of absorbing the musical ideas of others and reproducing them in such a way that they shall be sufficiently unrecognisable to the composer and scarcely less so to the listener.’¹

*‘The first thing a student does is to write a symphony.’²
‘I like to feel that the English musical revival began with Sir Arthur Sullivan.’³*

Stradling and Hughes point to the widespread opinion in Victorian Great Britain that music, ‘with its dangerous emotional appeal, could herald the call for radical change⁴ and therefore the fall of the British Empire. Of course this was not a central feature of the social and political changes around the end of the nineteenth century, but times were ripe for a period of decadence which Edward Gibbon some hundred years before in his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* had claimed to have been a central reason for the fall of the Roman Empire. The implications that an overly developed culture

1 Frederic Hymen Cowen, *Music as she is wrote*, London 1915, p. 23.

2 John Ireland, quoted from Muriel Vivienne Searle, *John Ireland: the man and his music*, Speldhurst 1979, p. 82.

3 Colin Wilson, *Brandy of the Damned*, London 1964, p. 134.

4 Robert Stradling/Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance 1860–1940*, London/New York 1993, p. 12.

might fall to pieces after having reached its pinnacle may have indirectly stifled some aspects of the arts around the end of the nineteenth century; some British composers may have subconsciously 'held back' – which in turn led to the image of Britain being a country of conservative tastes.

In order to be taken seriously in their native country, nineteenth century British composers had to study in Germany. Accordingly, numerous premières of works by Stanford, Scott, Delius and Smyth were performed in Germany, not to mention the obscure composer Joseph Street, whose name is entirely unknown in England as well as in Germany (see p. 157). Well into the twentieth century, studying in Germany remained fashionable in many respects, although 'the Frankfurt Group' or 'Gang' (Cyril Scott, Percy Grainger, Roger Quilter, Henry Balfour Gardiner) can be called a temporary end to this, and the musical junior league was taught at the recently founded British schools of music. A few important musicians (Bruch, Hindemith, Busoni) were only later consulted in Germany as teachers or models. Even today, the 'great German tradition' is still revered⁵ and German music is thought to be superior to that of any British symphonist.

However, it is important to remember that not all nineteenth-century German composers were geniuses; many have sunk into oblivion. In Germany, as anywhere else, slightly more traditionalist composing was not the exception but the rule. Wilhelm August Ambros, one of the most famous chronicists of the German situation, described the period of 1860-70 as mainly revolving around Mendelssohn, Schumann, Loewe, Beethoven, Gade, Schubert, Berlioz, Wagner, Liszt, but also numerous minor masters, including, Dussek.⁶ Ries, Onslow, Müller, Lachner, Kalliwoda, Burgmüller, Nicolai and Hesse attained importance a bit earlier.⁷ On the European continent, roughly 3–4 new symphonies were published per year from 1830 to 1860; however, many of these have since vanished, and many were never published at all – a dreadful loss.⁸ The United Kingdom was therefore in no way exceptional, but rather similar to Germany.⁹

The early 1860s saw the foundation of two institutions that were, on the whole, to set off major changes in music education in Great Britain. In 1861 the London College of Music was founded, followed in 1864 by the [later Royal] College of Organists. In 1872 the Trinity College of Music was next on the scene, and in 1880 the Guildhall School of Music opened its doors – together with the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, these two became the most important conservatoires in London. Also worthy of mention are the Athenæum School of Music (today the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland)

5 This the author was able to find out at a symposium on the English Musical renaissance on 5 June 1993 at the University of Birmingham.

6 Wilhelm August Ambros, *Die Grenzen der Musik und Poesie. Eine Studie zur Aesthetik der Tonkunst*, Leipzig 21872.

7 Siegfried Oechsle, *Symphonik nach Beethoven*, Kassel 1992, pp. 10–11.

8 At least some works (and composers) of the time have recently been rediscovered by performers, audiences and recording companies (Dabringhaus & Grimm, cpo, and Sterling).

9 For the situation in Germany see Rebecca Grotjahn, *Die Sinfonie im deutschen Kulturgebiet 1850 bis 1875*, Ph.D. diss. Hannover 1997, Sinzig 1998 (Musik und Musikanschauung im 19. Jahrhundert, 7), pp. 161–225 and 291–364.

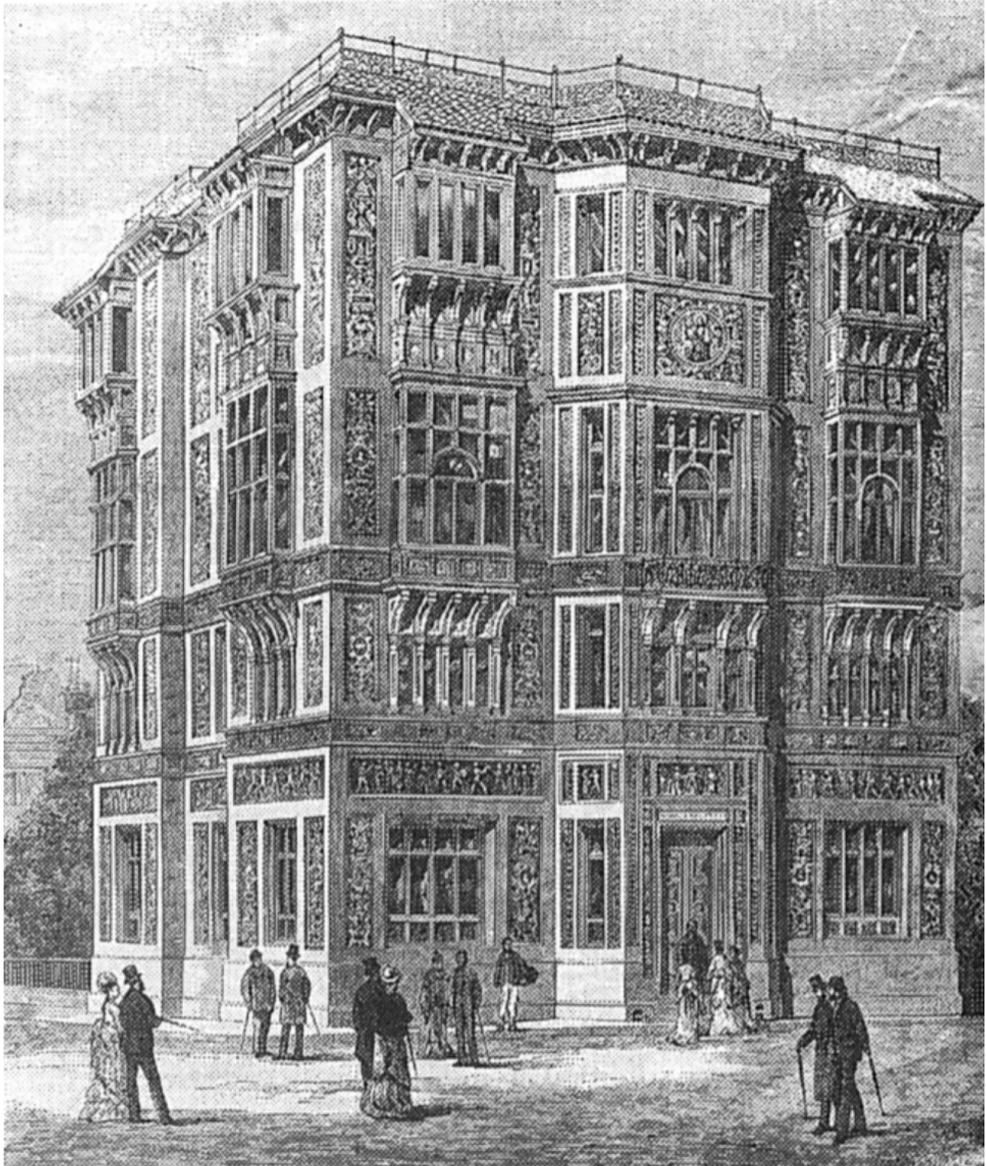


Illustration 19. The first building of the Royal College of Music, later used as the Royal College of Organists; contemporary engraving.

in Glasgow, founded in 1890, and the Royal Manchester (now Northern) College of Music, founded in 1893. But the development of British symphonism would now become strongly connected with the Royal College – even more so than with the Royal Academy of Music.

By March 1866 Carl Engel wrote: ‘The composition of instrumental music either for a full orchestra or in the form of concert pieces for instruments has not yet been successfully cultivated in England. We have not symphonies, quartets or quintets which can rival the works of the German school.’¹⁰ On 10 March 1866 – only a few days before Anton Bruckner completed his First Symphony – August Manns conducted the world-première of **Arthur Seymour Sullivan**’s (Lambeth, London, 13 May 1842–London, 22 November 1900) E major Symphony (the ‘Irish’, 1863) at the Crystal Palace. Sullivan had enjoyed an unusually diversified musical education: self-taught in brass instruments at a very early age, he later spent two years at the Chapel Royal. After that, he studied music at the Royal Academy of Music on a Mendelssohn Scholarship beginning in 1856, ‘first tying with Barnby who was 3 years his senior, and then beating him; Barnby was the oldest, Sullivan the youngest, of the 17 competitors’.¹¹ Following his stint at the Royal Academy of Music, where his piano teachers were O’Leary and Bennett, and his teacher in harmony Goss, Sullivan spent four years at the Leipzig Conservatoire beginning in 1858 (the same year that Grieg matriculated). There he studied piano with Plaidy and Moscheles, and composition with Julius Rietz and Moritz Hauptmann. During his studies at the Royal Academy as well as in Leipzig, Sullivan composed comparatively little, namely one overture per annum in 1857, 1858 and 1860 (the last one entitled *Rosenfest* from Moore’s *Lalla Rookh*); in 1857 and 1858, a choral orchestral composition each; in 1859, a string quartet;¹² and in 1861, the music to Shakespeare’s *Tempest*, with which Sullivan took

London by storm in the early ‘sixties. Neither at that time nor later did he attempt to break away from the facile methods of composition in which he was trained. His personality, however, was marked, his melodic gifts were exceptional, and – “in spite of all temptations to belong to other nations” – he remained “an Englishman”. He had no disposition to make experiments, and certainly showed little desire to enlarge the boundaries of his musical thought. He was, in short, an easy-going musician, content to do what he knew he could do, supremely well.’¹³

Sullivan later and above all became famous for his commercially marketable operettas (which

10 Carl Engel, *An Introduction to the Study of National Music*, London 1866. Quoted from Frank Howes, *The English Musical Renaissance*, London 1966, p. 35.

11 Charles Maclean, ‘Sullivan as a National Style-builder’, in: *PRMA* 28 (1901-02) (1902), p. 95.

12 *Ibid.*, pp. 95–96; Maclean finds, in contrast to Alexander Mackenzie and the author, still no originality in the *Tempest*’s incidental music. Andrew Lamb, on the other hand, stresses the quality of the String Quartet in D minor, composed in consultation with John Francis Barnett and praised by Spohr with the words: ‘So young, and already so far in the art!’ (Andrew Lamb, ‘A note on Sullivan’s instrumental works’, in: *MT* CXVI, 1975, p. 235.)

13 Thomas Frederick Dunhill, *Sir Edward Elgar*, London/Glasgow 1938, p. 2.



Illustration 20. Arthur Sullivan, c1870, photograph.

at the very least are equal to Offenbach's works), but in his day he was (and wanted to be) primarily regarded as a serious composer. He wrote a violoncello concerto (whose score was destroyed in 1964 in a fire at the Chappell publishing firm and was, some twenty years later, reconstructed by Charles Mackerras and David Mackie from two surviving solo cello parts and Mackerras's memory), several overtures (*In Memoriam*, his most important, written in 1866), a few operas (including *Ivanhoe*, 1891, rev. 1895) and a series of oratorios, the best-known of which is *The Golden Legend* (1886), composed in his musically most mature period, 1882–89. Several of his cantatas and oratorios were written for the music festivals that took place in Leeds, Norwich, Birmingham, Gloucester/Hereford/Worcester (Three Choirs Festival) and elsewhere. In Vienna in 1867, Sullivan and George Grove (Clapham, London, 13 August 1820–Sydenham, 28 May 1900), together managed to locate forgotten scores of Franz Schubert's: apart from the Symphonies in C minor D417 and in C major D589, they also tracked down the overture to *Die Freunde von Salamanca* and the incidental music for *Rosamunde* as well as the sketches of the Symphony in E D729, which were elaborated by John Francis Barnett. When in 1876 the National Training School of Music was opened in South Kensington, he became a teacher there; his pupils in the period 1876–81 included Landon Ronald (later Principal of the Guildhall School of Music), Arthur Goring Thomas and Eugène d'Albert (whose youthful Symphony in F minor has some distinct pre-Elgarian traits). Sullivan received the honorary doctorates of the Cambridge and Oxford Universities in 1876 and 1879, respectively, for his merits, and in 1878 was made an Officier de la Légion d'honneur.

Sullivan's Symphony in E¹⁴ was 'kept in cold storage awhile because the production of a British symphony was a risk most managements were reluctant to take'¹⁵ but finally received, mainly thanks to Jenny Lind's championship of his music, its first performance in 1866.¹⁶ The work is harmonically, melodically and formally in succession to Mendelssohn and Schumann,¹⁷ but had a quality that numerous other compositions of the era did not: inner life. Although a born Londoner, apparently the western coast of the British Isles and Ireland inspired Sullivan to write an important, lively work that was clearly at least equal to those by some of his better-known colleagues (for example Cowen). The work at first caused a genuine sensation and was also taken up in Leipzig, but it was not long before it was dismissed as mediocre;¹⁸ even Geoffrey Bush, normally an enthusiast of Victorian music, admits:

14 Joseph Bennett recalls a note from Sullivan to him of 8 March 1893, saying: 'You will see I have called my Symphony *In Ireland*. I sketched it when I was in Ireland in 1864, and always meant to call it the *Irish Symphony*, but I modestly refrained, as it was courting comparison with the *Scotch Symphony* [by Mendelssohn]. But Stanford called his symphony the *Irish*, so I didn't see why I should be done out of my title abroad!' (Joseph Bennett, *Forty Years of Music, 1865–1905*, London 1905, p. 71.)

15 Percy Young, *Sir Arthur Sullivan*, London 1971, p. 40.

16 Sullivan had already planned a second symphony, but never followed through. Cf. Percy Young, *George Grove, 1820–1900*, London etc. 1980, p. 86.

17 Michael Hurd stressed Schumann's influence in a conversation with the author on 18 February 1993.

18 Criticism published in the *Manchester Guardian* as early as 1867 was not especially brimming with praise: 'Fragmentary and disjointed (...) it is impossible to ignore the fact, which is only too apparent, that the symphony wants that inventive genius and co-ordinating power without which such works are mere sound, and although the sound

‘With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to perceive that Sullivan was quite unfitted to be a composer of sacred cantatas. Nor was musical architecture his *forte*; in the long run the sort of picturesque charm exhibited in his only major orchestral work (“The Irish”) is no substitute for symphonic logic.’¹⁹

And Alexander Campbell Mackenzie, general president of the International Musical Society from 1908 to 1912,²⁰ writes, after underlining that ‘vividly and strongly coloured national and racial characteristics’ are missing: ‘As in the case of Mendelssohn’s famous *Scotch*, Sullivan’s “*Irish*” *Symphony* is rather the result of impressions produced by the scenery, the temperament, and the literature of the people, the general atmosphere in fact, than an artistic reproduction of the country.’²¹ Sullivan, however, felt that the work was deeply Irish, as he wrote in 1863 to his mother:

‘(...) the other night as I was jolting home from Holestone (15 miles from here) through the wind & rain on an open jolting car the whole first movement of a Symphony came into my head with a real Irish flavour about it – besides scraps of the other movements.’²²

When Charles Villiers Stanford named his Third Symphony *Irish*, Sullivan, who had drawn inspiration from Mendelssohn’s *Scottish* Symphony, modestly avoided officially calling his symphony the *Irish* (although it was known by this name to him and his friends). Sullivan was rather irked by Stanford’s decision to call *his* symphony the *Irish*, feeling that Stanford had stolen the title. However, in the years that passed between the composition of the two works (that is Sullivan’s and Stanford’s), the estimation of Mendelssohn had changed considerably, and Hamilton Harty, Michele Esposito and Desmond MacMahon eventually wrote *Irish* Symphonies as well.

The Symphony in E opens with a fanfare, which is twice repeated and then followed by a tune which resembles the Dresden *Amen* that Mendelssohn had used in his *Reformation* Symphony, Stanford used in the *Nunc Dimittis* of his B \flat major Evening Service op. 10²³ and that John Stainer re-composed in his choral *Sevenfold Amen* (1873).

may be pleasant to the ear, and the ingenuity of the constructive artist may be freely acknowledged, these are no substitute for the true, spirited inspiration that they should reveal, but do not.’ (Quoted from Michael Kennedy, *The Hallé Tradition*, Manchester 1960, p. 41). Peter Pirie’s deconstruction of Sullivan in his book *The English Musical Renaissance*, London 1979, p. 23 may perhaps be appropriate to the work itself, but by no means reflects the work’s importance for British musical life in the years to come.

19 Geoffrey Bush, *An Unsentimental Education*, London 1990, p. 73.

20 The International Musical Society (usually abbreviated IMG for Internationale Musikgesellschaft), was active from 1899 to 1914 and was in 1927 succeeded by the International Musicological Society.

21 Quoted from Frederick Niecks, *Programme Music in the Last four centuries*, London/New York 1906, p. 381.

22 Arthur Sullivan to Maria Clementina Sullivan, 30 August 1863. Quoted in Reginald Allen/Gale D’Luhy (eds.), *Sir Arthur Sullivan: Composer & Personage*, New York etc. 1975, p. 19.

23 I am most grateful to Lionel Pike for pointing this out in 2010.

Ex. 1

An open first theme, longing and accompanied in a way similar to Mendelssohn,

Ex. 2

displays much of the passion that could have developed in Sullivan had he not been so successful in the field of light opera. A rather motivic second theme

Ex. 3

offers further material for development, and indeed in no bar does Sullivan lose concentration. The development is short, in moments recalling Schumann, and the whole movement, if not rising to great heights, nonetheless comes up to one's expectations.

The lyrical Schubertian second movement

Ex. 4

is linked by a long oboe solo with the third,

Ex. 5

which seems like an entr'acte of incidental music, similar to a variation cycle in best Brahmsian manner, as the secondary themes are in fact variations of the main theme (Hughes analyses the movement with a conception of A–B–C–A, each of the themes given

here representing one section). A second theme begins rather Schubertian, but develops in a typically Sullivanian way.

Ex. 6



A last important melody, first presented by the clarinets before returning to the A section,

Ex. 7

Moderato

foreshadows the operatic music of Ambrose Thomas's *Mignon* (1866).

The lively opening

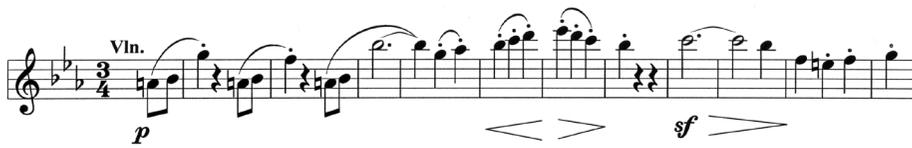
Ex. 8

Allegro vivace con brio

ushers in a finale that, although perhaps not as skilfully orchestrated as the other movements, with the melodic interest largely confined to the first violins, nonetheless possesses unity, charm and complex counterpoint. Schubert's influence may still have been too strong, but we can hardly complain considering that this work was written by a young man of 21–23. Gervase Hughes's grievance thus does not really apply: 'Too much of the material is machine-made – as yet we find few signs of true spontaneity'²⁴ – as can for example be found in the Overture *di Ballo* (as may be noted in ex. 9, in comparison to the persistent off-beat motif in the main finale theme),

24 Gervase Hughes, *The Music of Arthur Sullivan*, London etc. 1959, p. 12.

Ex. 9



although the periodic conception of the themes in this movement is indeed a trifle exhausting. This does not mean, however, that Sullivan has not made an important individual contribution to the development of British symphonism.

Inspired by Ireland in other ways, **Joseph Francis Duggan** (Dublin, 10 July 1817–1900), worked as a correpetitor in New York and as a teacher in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. He became Principal of the Philadelphia Musical Institute in 1841, then lived in Paris as a pianist and teacher, and thereafter migrated to Edinburgh. From Edinburgh, he came to London in 1853, becoming Musical Director of the Marylebone Theatre in 1854 and later a professor of singing at the Guildhall School of Music, editing a number of foreign-language textbooks. Apart from several operas, six string quartets, numerous piano pieces and songs, he wrote two symphonies, one in C and one in E \flat ; only the unfinished second work (1869) has come down to us.

This fragment, however, suggests that the earlier missing symphony could not have been much of a loss. Comprising 190 pages of score, the first movement of the E \flat seems endless; in contrast, comparable movements by other composers do not exceed 80 pages – it seems indeed obvious that Duggan was unable to handle the symphonic form. This first movement, whose development is not only over-long but also rather uninteresting, does not offer a recapitulation until page 116 of the score. The slow second movement very nearly suffers from the same imponderability, but Duggan mercifully cut the movement down considerably, so that the proportions are much more manageable. Here too, however, one cannot speak of a really gripping movement; Duggan himself may have considered the work vapid, and may therefore have felt discouraged from finishing the third movement.

Julius Benedict (Stuttgart, 27 November 1804–London, 5 June 1885) studied as a teen first in Weimar with Hummel and then in Dresden with Weber. Benedict accompanied Weber to Vienna for the 1823 first performance of *Euryantbe*, and was present at Weber's famous meeting with Beethoven in Baden on 5 October. Benedict remained in Vienna as a conductor, later conducting in Naples where he became not only a successful conductor, pianist and teacher, but also composed three operas. In 1834 he went to Paris, in 1835 to London, where in 1836 he was appointed conductor of the Opera Buffa at the Lyceum Theatre. He was musical director at Drury Lane 1838-48, and in 1848 conducted Mendelsohn Bartholdy's *Elijah* at Exeter Hall, with Jenny Lind giving her debut in oratorio. Benedict accompanied Lind on her American tour in 1850, and on his return to London in 1852 became conductor

at Her Majesty's Theatre. From 1845 to 1878, he conducted the Norwich Festival, and the Liverpool Philharmonic Society from 1876 to 1880. In 1871 Benedict was knighted; he continued to teach almost until the end of his life.

In 1873 Benedict wrote two symphonies, in G minor (Op. 101) and C minor (Op. 107). Only No. 1 was published, however. Some sources give 1872 as the composition date of the First Symphony, but the MS score is clearly dated 'London 8/9 October 1873', and a London performance evidently took place on 22 November.²⁵ One can definitely count Benedict's surviving symphony among the most carefully conceived British scores of the entire second half of the nineteenth century. It may seem a bit old-fashioned in conception, but given that Benedict made this apparently first symphonic attempt at the age of nearly 69, the fustiness is understandable. The first movement, with a slow introduction, features a shortened recapitulation, even shortened in the recapitulation of the main theme:

Ex. 10

27 [C]
Vln. I *p*

A comparatively fast slow movement barely concerns itself with large melodic arches but instead features short, precise motifs. The scherzo is very delicate, the outer sections headed *Misterioso*, and accordingly has plenty of *pp* and *piz.*/*arco* changes, also with muted strings. This movement also largely refrains from recognizable melodies, but is in the great tradition of Mendelssohn's and Parry's fairy music scherzi instead. A tremendously fast finale closes the spirited symphony, and the scherzo section is recapitulated shortly before the recapitulation of the movement proper (36 [N]–20 [N]).

In 1867 William Sterndale Bennett withdrew from the conductorship of the Philharmonic Society, and **William George Cusins** (London, 14 October 1833–Remonchamps, Ardennes, 31 August 1893), quite unknown at this time, was appointed to take his place; eminent musicians like Benedict, Hallé or Manns were passed over (perhaps because all of them had been born in Germany). It soon became clear that Cusins was unable to sustain the standards set in former times, and it was remarked 'that it is not the intention of the directors to do much in the way of producing absolute novelties.'²⁶ To remedy

25 There is only very little information regarding Benedict's Second Symphony, once Allegro and Scherzo were performed in London before 8 May 1875.

26 'Philharmonic Society', in: *MMR* IX (1 March 1879), p. 47.

this situation, George Alexander Macfarren was engaged for a high fee to contribute 'analytic essays' in the programme notes. Since Cusins had obviously under-rehearsed the orchestra, the audience was fortunate that Brahms's First Symphony had been premièred in England in 1876 in Cambridge (on the occasion of Brahms's bestowal of an honorary doctorate; the performance had been mediated by Joachim), to be followed by another performance at the Crystal Palace, a number of the orchestral players having taken part in the earlier one. It was, however, not until Hans Richter's appearance in 1877 that modern orchestral conducting, as one critic put it, arrived in London.

William George Cusins became a chorister at the Chapel Royal in 1843, studied at the Brussels Conservatoire starting in 1844, won a King's Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music in 1847 and was re-elected in 1849, studying piano, violin and harmony with Potter, Bennett, Lucas and Sainton. In 1849 he was appointed to the Queen's Private Chapel, entered the orchestra of the Royal Italian Opera, and in 1851 became an assistant professor at the Royal Academy of Music, later to become a full professor. As early as 1856 he performed as a pianist in Leipzig, and in 1867 conducted Bennett's oratorio *The Woman of Samaria* at the Birmingham Musical Festival, which improved his conducting abilities considerably. He became Master of the Queen's Musick in 1870 and Professor at the Guildhall School of Music in 1885. Several further honours followed, among them the knighthood (1892), an honorary membership at the Accademia di S. Cecilia in Rome (1883), the Cross of Isabella the Catholic of Spain (1893), when he died suddenly in the Ardennes from influenza; he was not yet sixty.

Cusins composed two concertos, a number of choral compositions, chamber music, two concert overtures and many more works; his Symphony in C major (1888-89) is relatively unknown, although it was performed at a Sarasate concert in 1892. It is a very carefully elaborated and instrumentated score, displaying Cusins's highly skilled compositional abilities; only the end of the finale may be a bit too long. The opening movement, indeed rather conventional with a repeated exposition, has no special features – here we may only show a typical thematic presentation (of the movement's second theme):

Ex. 11

The musical notation for Ex. 11 is a single staff for Woodwind. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure is marked *mf* and contains a half note chord. The second measure is marked *cresc.* and contains a half note chord. The third measure is marked *f* and contains a half note chord. The fourth measure is marked *f* and contains a half note chord. The fifth measure is marked *f* and contains a half note chord. The sixth measure is marked *f* and contains a half note chord. The seventh measure is marked *f* and contains a half note chord. The eighth measure is marked *f* and contains a half note chord. The piece ends with a first ending bracket and a fermata.

The second movement, in ternary form with *cantabile molto espressivo* outer sections, is in the remote key of A^b major. The scherzo, with two trios, presents the two main themes in the strings (the woodwind had a prominent role in the first two movements) as a fugato. The first trio (from [39]) is headed 'Halali', again ternary in form and dominated by the horns. The second trio (from [43]) is very delicately instrumentated, the second violins playing *divisi* and violin I *flageolet*; this trio is simply repeated. A coda closes the very effective movement. The finale offers a unique twist, a recapitulation in reversed order (before [62]).



Illustration 21. The Royal Academy of Music at Tenterden Street, photograph.

Frederic Hymen Cowen's (Kingston, Jamaica, 29 January 1852–London, 6 October 1935) career, closely connected to the Philharmonic Society, began with the Society's move in 1869 to St. James's Hall, built in 1858 between Regent Street and Piccadilly and demolished in 1903 to make way for the Piccadilly Hotel. Many books have been written on Hanover Square and the Queen's Hall, but not one on the St. James's Hall, where so many works were premièred in the second half of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century. The Society's move was a considerable step, since with it the Hanover Square Rooms and with them the tradition of rather intimate concerts had to be abandoned (in 1910 the Royal Academy of Music also left Hanover Square, or more exactly Tenterden Street, to move to Marylebone Road and Macfarren Place). The new venue would accommodate a larger audience (2,000 instead of 800 possible listeners). The enlarged capacity could have dramatically improved the knowledge of rarely-performed music, but things did not work out that way; this was mainly due to the fact that there was usually too little time for rehearsing, as Ethel Smyth recalled:

I told [Bruno] Walter that you are not a “commercial” but an “artistic” society – well of course the miserable state of things as to rehearsals is (...) a question of money – and about that I feel very strongly. Rehearsing seems to me to be the basis of artistic morality – and there it is. Walter is a very conscientious musician, incapable, as many in England *become*, how do they start, of pretending things “go very well” when they just didn’t break down.²⁷

Cowen, born in the same year as Stanford, is one of the few composers not to have held a professorship at one of the conservatoires; instead, he was – more importantly – conductor of the Philharmonic Society and numerous other orchestras. Of Jewish descent, he became a pupil of Benedict and Goss at the age of 8, when he composed an operetta. In 1865 he won the Mendelssohn Scholarship (Corder and Sullivan had also won it) and went to Leipzig, where he studied with Moscheles, Reinecke, Hauptmann and Richter until the outbreak of war between Prussia and Austria prompted a prudent return to England. In 1867 Cowen went back to Prussia and studied in Berlin at the Sternsches Conservatorium (with Friedrich Kiel), where he took his first steps as a conductor, returning to England in 1868 as a promising young pianist. Following the early success of his *The Rose Maiden* of 1870 and after a number of years as correpetitor to Colonel Mapleson’s Italian Opera Company, Cowen’s first real chance came in 1880, when he was offered the post of conductor of the Promenade concerts at Covent Garden. He succeeded Sullivan, who had made considerable improvements to the situation years and decades before under Jullien and Rivière. With the Covent Garden Promenade concerts, Cowen launched a highly successful career as a conductor of numerous orchestras and concert series. He even organised his own series of concerts, in which he was able to première his own compositions, among them the *Scandinavian* Symphony. The symphony was performed in Vienna as early as 1882 (on 15 January at a Philharmonic concert²⁸) by Richter (and was also published there in the same year) and found immediate recognition on the entire continent (performances in Budapest, Köln, Stuttgart, Paris, New York and elsewhere soon followed). In 1884 Cowen gave his first Philharmonic Society in London concert, later taking over the 1888-92 and 1900-07 seasons. In 1893 he took the baton at the last of the pre-Queen’s Hall Promenade concert seasons at Covent Garden. On 2 December of the same year, he conducted the first public concert at Queen’s Hall; after a series of concerts there, he became, after Hallé’s sudden death in 1895, conductor of the Hallé concerts. In 1899 Richter took over the post of chief conductor; similarly, Cowen assumed the conductorship of the Bradford Festival Choral Society in 1897, and from 1899 to 1902 of the Bradford Permanent Orchestra. George Bernard Shaw was one of the very few to criticize Cowen for the slowness of his conducting; all of the other critics had praised him over the many decades of his career. From 1900 to 1910 Cowen was also chief

27 Ethel Smyth to the Philharmonic Society, 19 November 1908. British Library: Loan 48.13/32. Quoted in Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford etc. 1995, p. 181.

28 Christopher Fifield, *True artist and true friend. A biography of Hans Richter*, Oxford etc. 1993, p. 178.

conductor of the Scottish Orchestra, and from 1883 to 1913 of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society concerts. He remained active as a conductor until well into the 1920s, but no longer with permanent contracts.

Back in 1869, when Cowen was just 17, he began composing his Symphony No. 1 in C minor; five others, often with programmatical titles, followed. Programme symphonies had also come into fashion on the continent, but were unable to replace 'absolute' symphonies completely. Of his very first symphony, Cowen recalls:

'The production of my first symphony, when I was seventeen, at a concert my father gave for me in St. James's Hall obtained me an agreement with Messrs. Boosey to publish all my compositions for a period of three years (...). When this symphony was played at Brighton a few months after its London production the bandmaster of a local regiment, who was present, came to see me in the artists' room, and after expressing himself very pleased with the work, said to me: "Did you score it yourself?" "What do you mean?" I answered, really not understanding the remark at first. "I mean, did you really do all the orchestration?" Being rather proud of this my first important orchestral work, I felt a little huffed, and said haughtily: "You may not be aware that the scoring of a big work" (with emphasis on the big) "is usually one of its chief points." "I am very sorry," he explained, "but I thought that perhaps you only write in the melodies for the clarinet or cornet, as we do, and left someone else to fill up the rest." I suppose he must have noticed the look of disgust on my face, for he left me at once without venturing any further remarks.'²⁹

The Second Symphony, premièred at the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, was soon taken up by the Crystal Palace concerts, and thus Cowen's career as a symphonist was established early. Neither of these two symphonies was published and both seem to be lost.

In November 1879, Walter Macfarren persuaded the director of the Philharmonic Society that every concert should include at least one British composition. (Some forty years earlier, his older brother George Alexander had complained that during the five seasons of the Society of British Musicians, founded in 1834 and dissolved in 1865,³⁰ only three British compositions had been put on the subscription lists; Macfarren blamed the lack of aristocratic patronage, which had also affected English opera.³¹) This indeed resulted in a number of further first performances, although it would still take quite a while to recover to a situation comparable to the early beginnings. Cowen especially helped to rescue the Society, which was about to collapse in 1881 because it had mostly been living on its capital; in 1885, Arthur Sullivan became Conductor-in-Residence.

29 Frederic Hymen Cowen, *My art and my friends*, London 1913, pp. 28–29.

30 Cf. also Simon McVeigh, 'The Society of British Musicians (1834–1865) and the Campaign for Native Talents', in Christina Bashford/Leanne Langley (eds.), *Music and British Culture, 1785–1914. Essays in Honour of Cyril Ehrlich*, Oxford etc. 2000, pp. 145–168.

31 George Alexander Macfarren, 'A national Opera', in: *The Musical World* XIII (1840), p. 364–365. More letters to the editor in this matter follow the one by Macfarren, including one by 'a young composer' (p. 366).



Illustration 22. Frederic Hymen Cowen, photograph.

‘Cowen was a distinctly minor composer’,³² is usually the most that is known about his music, but a handful of commercial recordings of some of his orchestral music has made it possible to re-assess his abilities. In all he composed no less than six symphonies, three of which seem to be lost, although the last, the *Idyllic* (1897), after having been premiered by Hans Richter, was published by Breitkopf & Härtel (regrettably, the firm seems to have lost most of the British music they published). The first symphony to have survived, the *Scandinavian* Symphony (No. 3), on which Cowen had worked since his return from his tour as an accompanist for mezzo-soprano Zélia Trebelli in Norway until the late autumn of 1880 (when the symphony was premièred at St. James’s Hall), was a continuously large success, although not much later (in 1891), its inspiration was said to be that of a bygone age:

‘The Saturday afternoon concerts at the Crystal Palace are now over for the year (...). As usual, the last one was conducted, not by Mr Manns, but by Mr Cowen, who gave us his Scandinavian symphony, a pretty piece of work, although, like the Robertsonian drama, it is not quite so fresh as it was.’³³

Couleur local, which brought Saint-Saëns and Dvořák huge successes in England, was very important in music of this era, and Cowen’s music is thus very much in this vein – in fact, to some extent, Parry’s *English* and Stanford’s *Irish* symphonies can also be seen in this context.

The composer supplied the ‘programme’ of the symphony in his correspondence to the critic Joseph Bennett:

‘The symphony was suggested by my several visits to Scandinavia. The first and last movements may be taken to portray my general impressions – and all the themes have more or less a Northern character about them, the principal theme of the *Finale* being in fact adapted from an old Norwegian Volkslied.

The *Adagio* might represent a summer’s night (moon-light reverie) on one of those lovely lakes – nights and lakes which can only be seen in the North – the theme for the four horns in the middle might be the sounds of a joyful part-song or students’ song wafted across the water and breaking in upon the reverie – and again toward the end of the movement.³⁴

The *Scherzo* might represent winter – a ride in a sleigh – the constant movement of the strings (muted) –

Ex. 12



32 Joseph Potts, ‘Frederic H. Cowen (1852–1935)’, in: *MT* XCIV (1953), p. 351.

33 George Bernard Shaw (16 December 1891), *Music in London 1890–1894*, Vol. I, London etc. 1949, p. 301.

34 A note in the score tells the conductor: ‘The Horns in this movement should be pianissimo, as if in the far distance; in order to produce this effect it is advisable that they should, if possible, be placed in an adjoining room.’ This extra-musical prescription very much recalls Mahler’s special effects – it in fact became a fashion during the time of the composition of this symphony.

being the noiseless gallop of the horses on the snow and the triangle the bells.
Note, in the first movement, the prevailing minor seventh:

Ex. 13



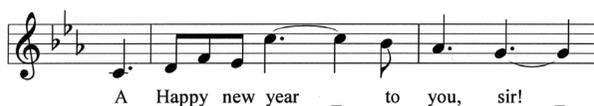
The episode (*tremolo*) after the double bar might represent the wind moving through those immense gloomy pine forests.

Note again the persisting A^b in the horns just before the return to the principal subject. Note in the *Adagio* the theme repeated twice in canon by the basses (second time *pizzicato*). Note also the modulation into G^b and back to G towards the end of the movement. In the *Scherzo*, I think the combining of the *Scherzo* and *Trio* in the Coda is rather a novelty. Note in the *Finale* the recurrence of the second theme of the first movement, and of that and the *Adagio* combined towards the end of the movement, just before the trombones come in.³⁵

The symphony is undoubtedly more colourful than the Fourth Symphony and probably Cowen's most concise – the first movement, whose main theme indeed foreshadows Sibelius, has exactly the right length and is carefully worked out. The energy is taken up in the scherzo, while the finale is a rather complex rondo with recourse to material of the first movement. Like so many programme-symphonies of the time, Raff's (foremost) and Cowen's lost the audience's and especially the concert managers' and conductors' interest when the fashion changed. Rather typical was the following quip in *The Musical Times*:

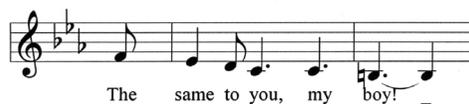
'The *Scandinavian* Symphony having been produced only a few days before the advent of the new year, the composer greeted Mr. Joseph Bennett, his analyst, with the first section of the initial phrase of the symphony, thus:

Ex. 14



The response came most felicitously and cleverly in the continuation of the phrase

Ex. 15



©36

35 Frederic Hymen Cowen to Joseph Bennett. Quoted in: 'Frederic Hymen Cowen', in: *MT* XXXIX (1898), p. 717.

36 'Frederic Hymen Cowen', in: *MT* XXXIX (1898), p. 717.

The Fourth Symphony bore another title, *The Welsh*. Cowen, like his contemporaries Sullivan and Stanford, did not give any other clues as to its ‘programme’, and we are very probably meant to understand the work as a composition mainly inspired by Wales, its landscape, people and atmosphere and the moods evoked by them. Cowen wrote on its title: ‘I do not remember at the moment whether I gave it this title myself, but in any case it had a certain amount of Celtic flavour about, and I expect its composition was not unconnected with the recollections of my rambles, my broken-down old piano, the hymn-singing, and the honeymooners³⁷ of 1882.

The first movement of this symphony, with three main themes,

Ex. 16



Ex. 17



Ex. 18



somehow seems over-long, especially through the long coda/stretta. Typically for Cowen, the movement is carefully constructed, but at the same time somewhat old-fashioned – we are indeed reminded of Raff or Bruch, contemporary continental symphonists.

The second movement is undoubtedly the best of the entire symphony; it is in fact developed from one theme or its single elements.

37 Frederic Hymen Cowen, *My Art and My Friends*, London 1913, p. 127. Francis Hueffer's programme note for the first performance had been printed erroneously with the initials 'F. H. C.'.

Ex. 19

Lento tranquillo
espress.

p
Cor, Vln. II, VI., Vlc.

Cowen shows that he is able to develop melodic material more organically and far more interestingly than symphonic thematic material. A lively scherzo with a cantabile trio and a highly constructed, very carefully conceived finale follow. Cowen's formal mastery sometimes acts to the detriment of his musical originality, doubtlessly a major feature of Cowen's compositions in general.

Cowen's Symphony No. 5 in F (1887) is dedicated to Hans Richter, who premièred it in June of that year in a series of concerts with Stanford's Third and Parry's Second Symphonies. Once again, the work is painstakingly constructed, with an extensive introduction to the first movement, which features a device Cowen apparently loved well, three main themes, but the thematic development is rather uninspired and leads nowhere. In the Schumannian scherzo in binary metre, the trio is interwoven with the scherzo so that no clear boundaries are recognizable. A cantabile, rather rhapsodic slow movement follows, and the finale eventually makes clear why the symphony is 'in F': starting in F minor, it ends in the major. Much of the thematic material is shaped rhythmically or harmonically, and the initial movement's first theme reappears.

Ex. 20

Allegro, poco tranquillo

Vln. *p*

The most intriguing feature of the symphony is a succession of vigorous fugal passages that occurs during the finale. Cowen apparently had difficulty building an organically-

derived, satisfactory climax for his movements. On the other hand, he expressed a flair for delicacy, which manifests itself in the scherzos as well as in the slow movements of the symphonies. In their developments, the latter become more and more internally consistent, independent of attached forms and finding their own formal logic.

Cowen's Sixth Symphony in E major of some ten years later, subtitled *The Idyllic*, opens with an *Allegro vivace* movement in 6/8, in which the woodwind have an important role. The melodic material

Ex. 21



Ex. 22



is immediately, but still within the movement's exposition, transformed and developed. This is why the development proper is rather lacking in substance, and the recapitulation is only partly satisfying, particularly because the main theme (the second given melodic subject) is still treated far too predictably.

The scherzo, in 2/4 and in A minor (with major trio), opens with an 'idyllic' English horn solo, which indeed may have been the impetus for the symphony's subtitle.

Ex. 23



The entire movement indeed remains rather restrained, not only in dynamics, but also with respect to phrasing and other elements, possessing a kind of late-Victorian elegance. Here the harmonically rather innovative *maggiore* trio is extremely short (46 bars), but somehow it has a kind of early Sibelian touch hitherto unheard in British music.

The C major *Adagio, molto tranquillo* is again rather shadowy, growing from a *pp molto legato e misterioso* low strings theme

Ex. 24

Adagio, molto tranquillo
Vlc., Cb.

pp molto legato e misterioso *pp*

only very slowly in loudness, remaining for most of the time under *mf*. The prominence of the woodwind (with bass clarinet, a rarity in this composer) at this juncture finally shows a return of Cowen's careful, inventive instrumentation. However, the inventiveness fades rapidly, and the scoring soon becomes dull and unimaginative again. Cowen at least carries on his technique of fluent development in this slow movement, which is doubtless the symphony's best movement.

Vivace is again part of the tempo prescription for the finale, and indeed we have here a really lively movement,

Ex. 25

Molto vivace $\text{♩} = 100$

mf

with the second theme presented in a different time signature (6/8 as opposed to 4/4 *alla breve* of the beginning):

Ex. 26

Vln. I

mf

The opening chords are the central source of the development, but at this point they are only part of a larger overall concept (from 14 [C] to [G]) that shows the same energy as is demonstrated in the other symphonies as well as in the opening movement. However, it is the slow, calm ending (perhaps one may call it one of the earliest epilogues in British symphonism?) that truly earns 'The Idyllic' its name:

We may ask what caused Cowen to write such an uneven last symphony, especially while he was still at the height of his creative powers as a conductor (although he had resigned from the Philharmonic Society in 1892). Perhaps he felt obsolete alongside the new crop of composers and their novel approach to symphonism.

Other programme symphonies of this era came from Alfred Holmes, whose brother Henry Holmes had also composed symphonies, but the siblings' works are barely known today. Alfred Holmes (London, 9 November 1837–Paris, 4 March 1876) started his career as a child prodigy violinist together with his brother Henry, both travelling extensively and successfully in Europe in the 1850s; Spohr, who esteemed the brothers highly, eventually left his violin to Henry Holmes. In 1864 Alfred Holmes settled in Paris where he established a quartet party in 1866. In 1874 he produced his five-movement *Jeanne d'Arc*, a kind of Berliozian *symphonie dramatique* for soloists, chorus and orchestra, in St. Petersburg; the work was revived at the Crystal Palace early the following year. His further symphonies carry the titles *The Youth of Shakespeare*, *Robin Hood*, *The Siege of Paris*, *Charles XII* and *Romeo and Juliet*. **Henry Holmes** (London, 7 November 1839–San Francisco, 9 December 1905) became a violin professor at the Royal College of Music in 1883, and is described by Edgar Shelton as 'a man of ascetic features, surmounted by a bushy head protruding from behind like a board, and with a fastidious choice of words and manner of utterance'.³⁸ Eventually Holmes lost nearly everything as a result of the scandals that erupted in 1890 and 1893 after he was found to have demanded sexual favours from students on multiple occasions. He tarnished the college's reputation with these indiscretions and was ultimately dismissed, pulling down with him Sir George Grove, under whose directorship this had happened; Grove was succeeded by Charles Hubert Hastings Parry.

Of Holmes's five symphonies, only copyists' MSS of the last two have survived; all original material was very probably lost in a fire that followed the San Francisco earthquake in 1906. The heavily scorched original manuscripts were recopied by Royal College of Music students in 1938.³⁹ The Fourth Symphony in F major Op. 48 (1877) is entitled *Fraternity* and the dedication reads: 'To those many years of ripe brotherhood, my Alfred, and what your love made them, an *ideal* love our *actual* bond and to the fraternity of France and the nations, with that reverence which knows no heat but the fervour of maturity, I bring this votive offering, Cookham Dean. Sep^r 4th 1877.' The fraternal bond remained extremely strong until 1865, when Henry started a career of his own, first in Scandinavia and then in London, where in 1868 he started a series of chamber music concerts.

Alfred Holmes, who had lived in France from 1864, died in 1876; the Fourth Symphony was Henry's tribute to his beloved brother. The first movement, like the last, is rather conventional in conception; both themes were designed in a way that facilitates their development – a foreshadowing of the Fifth Symphony:

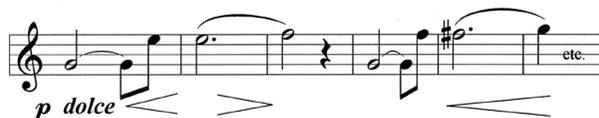
38 Edgar Shelton, 'Victorian Memories', in: *M&L* XXIX (1948), pp. 2–3.

39 Information kindly supplied by Dr. Peter Horton, Royal College of Music, 16 October 2007.

Ex. 28



Ex. 29



The second movement is a highly imaginative slow movement, very well constructed and carefully orchestrated, featuring high-quality counterpoint. A *tutta forza* peak (at [H]) sums up all the underlying energy and offers a passing outlet – passing unquiet in amicable, brotherly banter. In place of a scherzo, Holmes writes a rather chamber-musically conceived movement, beginning and ending in 4/4 in C major, but with frequent changes of metre,

Ex. 30



while in the finale, which is otherwise rather conventional in conception, he repeats the themes of the previous movements in the recapitulation.

The subtitle of the Fifth Symphony in G major Op. 57 is *Cumberland*. The work was mostly composed in Skelwith Bridge, near Ambleside, in August and September of 1887. It is dedicated to George Henschel (Breslau, 18 February 1850–Aviemore, Scotland, 10 September 1934) (‘a tribute of ardent esteem’), the German-born British baritone, conductor and composer who came to England for the first time in 1877 and was a professor of singing at the Royal College of Music from 1886 to 1888, that is during the period in which this symphony was composed. Holmes headed it with the following motto by Matthew Arnold:

‘Some source of feeling he must choose,
And its lock’d found of beauty use,
And through the strains of music tell
Its else unutterable spell.’

The first movement of the symphony is characterized by a highly interesting, rhythmically rather complex development that immediately leads into the recapitulation – the only questionable aspect is the quality of the thematic material. The second movement, with a manifold middle section that mainly consists of variations of the movement’s theme,

Ex. 31



shows instrumentation and formal conception by a highly skilled hand.

The scherzo in 2/4, with two trios, has a rather complex inner structure, since the scherzo section itself is already in ternary form, so that the entire formal construction reads thus:

Scherzo	Trio I (from [D] 8)	Scherzo	Trio II	Coda
ABA	C	AB	C'	

Trio II is somehow (for example by recapitulating its rhythm) a recapitulation of Trio I (which goes from D major to B^b major) and immediately leads to the movement's coda.

In the finale we also find a steady transformation of the two main themes,

Ex. 32



Ex. 33



which to some extent negates the necessity of a development. Given the narrow range (from 6 [D] to [E] 5), the development is indeed practically nonexistent and is instead replaced by a considerable recapitulation and even a coda (from 26 [J]). It is, in spite of the loss of individual personality due to the copyist's new-fangled handwriting, an interesting composition that is probably worth reviving.

Henry David Leslie (London, 18 June 1822–Llansaintfraid, nr. Oswestry, 4 February 1896) was a pupil of Charles Lucas's at the Royal Academy of Music beginning in 1838. From 1847 on, he was associated with the Amateur Musical Society, and in 1855 took charge of what became known as the Henry Leslie Choir, a celebrated a cappella ensemble with a chequered history. In 1864 Leslie became Principal of the National College of Music (dissolved in 1866), and conducted the Herefordshire Philharmonic Society from 1863 to 1889. He founded the Guild of Amateur Musicians in 1874 as well as the Oswestry School of Music in 1879 and later the Oswestry Festival.⁴⁰

40 This lively musical surrounding should become important for Henry Walford Davies's (see pp. 256ff.) evolution as a youth.

Ebenezer Prout (Oundle, Northamptonshire, 1 March 1835–Hackney, 5 December 1909), also known as the last 'theoretician of the old school',⁴¹ was one of the most important professors of music in the second half of the nineteenth century in England. He received hardly any musical education due to his father's objections to this career path, and it was not until 1862, when he won a prize of £10 for his Opus 1, a string quartet, from the Society of British Musicians, that his musical training began. He eventually became a teacher himself, holding professorships at the National Training School of Music (1876–82), the Guildhall School of Music and the Royal Academy of Music (where he succeeded Sullivan; his pupils there included Henry Wood, Richard Harvey Löhr, Arthur Goring Thomas, Edward German, his own son Louis Beethoven Prout and Tobias Matthay), and (from 1894, in succession to Robert Prescott Stewart, the teacher of young Charles Villiers Stanford) at the University of Dublin. His books (that is textbooks) on music became well known and sought after by students.⁴² In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he was an organist, and for a couple of years even a critic for both the *Academy* and the *Athenaeum*. For the latter publication, he wrote in a critique of Antonín Dvořák's *The Spectre's Bride*: 'The greatest merit of the music is that however wild and terrible the situation to be depicted, the line of true beauty is never overstepped; and how difficult such self-restraint is will be seen by comparing Dvořák's treatment of his subject with the final movement of Raff's *Lenore* Symphony. In both cases the appropriateness of the musical illustrations may be admitted; but Raff frequently becomes ugly, Dvořák never ... That the work will take permanent rank among the masterpieces of musical art there cannot, we think, be a shadow of doubt.'⁴³ This reflects both Prout's musical aesthetics (typical of the time and rejected only by Parry)⁴⁴ as well as the reception of Dvořák's choral compositions in Great Britain during these times (see p. 225).

Tobias Matthay summarizes Prout's influence upon himself as follows:

I found him most sympathetic, encouraging and helpful, both in composition and in orchestration, and I always look back upon the time I spent with him as a very happy

41 Harold Jervis-Read, *The Arrant Artist*, London 1939, p. 142.

42 Among others: *Instrumentation* (London 1876), *Harmony: Its Theory and Practice* (London 1889, 201903), *Counterpoint, Strict and Free* (London 1890), *Double Counterpoint and Canon* (London 1891), *Fugue* (London 1892), *Musical Form* (London 1893), and *Applied Forms* (London 1897).

43 Quoted in John Clapham, 'The Progress of Dvořák's Music in Britain', in: *MR* 21 (1960), p. 133.

44 Carl Dahlhaus, *Musikalischer Realismus*, München 1985 defines "musical realism", in contrast to "Romantic", as no fear of the ugly, harsh, uncomfortable, vulgar – although he mainly refers to opera, not to orchestral music. Charles Hubert Hastings Parry wrote in an article called *Ugliness in Art* that ugliness in art is a challenge, but that it should be treated sincerely and not superficially. 'The presence of the offensive kind of ugliness in Art is the penalty society pay for treating Art as negligible. (...) Mankind is mirrored in his Arts in his baser as well as his finer qualities. The uglinesses which represent fine qualities are welcome, and the uglinesses which represent incompetence, insincerity, stupidity, cunning, greediness, narrow-mindedness, and such unfortunate obliquities reveal to us things we could very willingly do without – though we are quite aware that we never shall.' (Hubert Parry, 'The Meaning of Ugliness in Art', in Charles Maclean (ed.), *Report of the Fourth Congress of the International Musical Society London (...) 1911*, London 1912, pp. 77–83, especially pp. 77, 81; quotation on p. 83.)

and stimulating one. His sense of humour was unfailing and he had a vast knowledge of music (the result of being “self-taught,” as he assured us) and he could quote anything from memory. [...] He was quite strict as to the observance of rules and as I was inclined to be wildly revolutionary, harmonically, at the time we made a pact that I was to be allowed to do anything I liked provided I could quote some harmony treatise or other as my “authority,” which had the happy effect of making me read up every harmony book I could lay hands upon, and I usually found one or another that afforded me the required licence, if I could not discover it in the classics! One of his pet amusements was to write mottoes for the fugue subjects of the “48.” Some of these were so ribald (but rhythmically striking) that one could not forget them, and for a time they quite spoilt some of the “48” for us, which was not at all the effect he intended, as he was a great worshipper of Bach and Handel.²⁴⁵

Prout edited Handel’s *Samson* and several other Handel oratorios; he composed mainly chamber music and choral works, including the cantata *Alfred* (1882), but also four symphonies and two organ concertos. His First Symphony in C minor of 1874 was premièred the same year at the Crystal Palace and is now apparently lost; only the Third was published, by Novello.

The Second Symphony in G minor of 1876, whose MS score resides at the Cambridge University Library, was premièred at the Crystal Palace on 1 December 1876. It is quite orthodox in character, though the thematic development is more progressive than might be expected. The first movement’s first theme

Ex. 36



not only ends the exposition, but is also presented only by its encapsulated head in the recapitulation. The second movement is in rondo form (A–B–A–C–A) with coda; the thematic material is derived from the first movement.

Ex. 37



The third movement has a similar form, that is a scherzo with two trios, and is characterized by off-beat rhythmic accents. The first trio is shaped by *staccati*, the second by *legati*. The instrumentation is predictable, but foreshadows orchestration techniques that can be found in several inferior compositions of the 1880s, for example the youthful Richard Strauss

45 Jack Alan Westrup, ‘Ebenezer Prout (1835–1909)’, in: *MMR* LXV (1935), p. 53.

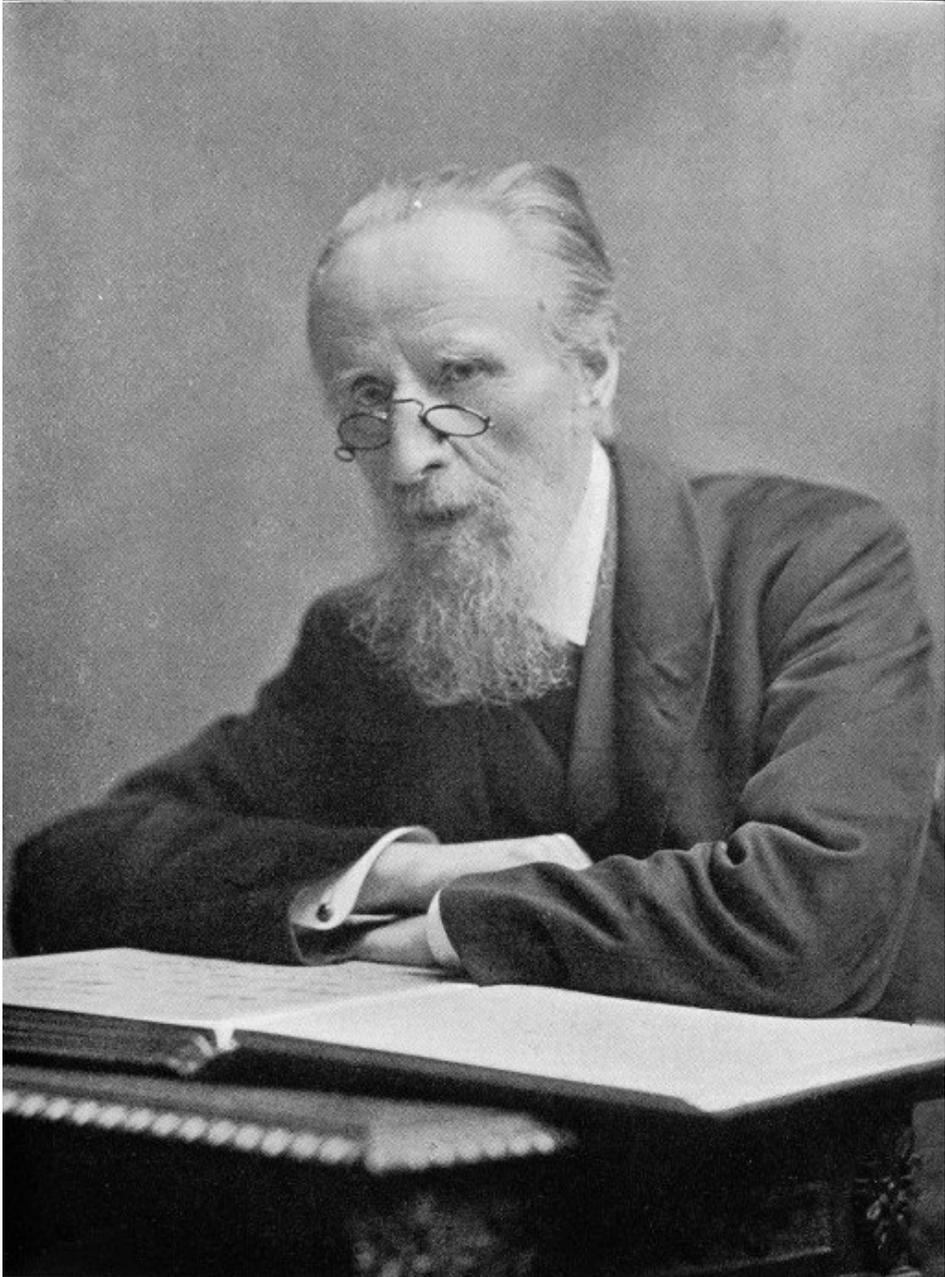


Illustration 23. Ebenezer Prout, photograph.

symphonies.⁴⁶ On the whole the movement – and indeed the entire symphony (the finale offers no further special qualities) – lacks the energy of Julius Benedict, but is of acceptable quality, better perhaps even than Prout's own Third Symphony.

The Third Symphony in F major, the only one with an opus number (Op. 22), was composed for and premièred at the Birmingham Musical Festival in 1885. Prout, who due to his textbooks could have been called – just like Tovey – a 'prince of pedants' (see p. 358), indeed composed a rather humdrum work, whose themes are quite dull:

Ex. 38

C

f tutti (harmonized)

Ex. 39

Fl. I, Clar. I

sf

The first movement features an extensive development (from 7 [K] to P)]; the themes of the slow movement in ternary form as well as of the scherzo (an *Intermezzo à l'Espagnol*) are conceived in a strongly periodic manner and thus rather uninteresting. In their indeed skilfully and thoughtfully composed conception, the movements indeed precall Carse's later symphonies (see pp. 398f.). The finale, in which sequencing is a highly important device for building and developing the themes, combines the qualities of careful overall conception and inspired instrumentation. However, formally speaking, the piece is disappointingly predictable; Prout uses his technical abilities largely in favour of academically 'correct' composition.

Prout's Fourth Symphony in D major of 1886 has survived in manuscript at Queen's College, Oxford, where it was premiered on 4 June 1886 (it was also performed at the Crystal Palace on 27 February 1887). It was revived in 1987 by the Bournemouth Sinfonietta. Doubtlessly a charming composition, sequencing is again an important means of developing the thematic material, and Prout's compositional techniques remain strongly rooted in the first half of the 19th century. The slow movement is a pensive, lyrical piece echoing Schumann at times. Perhaps the most inspired movement (although

46 Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, *Richard Strauss und die Sinfonie*, Köln 1994, pp. 12–34.

the thematic material remains down-to-earth), the scherzo is spirited, charming, elegant. An energetic finale closes a light, though obviously rather fine composition.

James Hamilton Siree Clarke (Birmingham, 25 January 1840–Banstead, 9 July 1912), was first supposed to start a 'serious' profession before turning entirely to music in 1862. He embarked upon his career as an organist in Ireland, where he first worked at Parsonstown Parish Church and later at Zion Church, Rathgar, Dublin. He then joined the Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra, subsequently assisting Robert Prescott Stewart at Christchurch Cathedral. In 1864 he became the Belfast Anacreontic Society conductor and organist of Caremony Church; he was appointed organist of Queen's College, Oxford in 1866. In 1871 he moved to London, succeeding Sullivan as organist at St. Peter's, South Kensington in 1872. At this time he not only started writing symphonies, his First dating from 1873, but he also embraced the theatre, composing incidental music and operas. From 1889 to 1891 he took charge of the Victorian National Orchestra (Melbourne) and became inspector of Australian army bands. By 1893, he was back in London and had risen to the post of principal conductor of the Carl Rosa Company. Clarke apparently wrote numerous compositions; his Third Symphony carries the opus number 298. Unfortunately, only the full score of this Third Symphony seems to have survived; all that remains of No. 1 is a piano transcription of the minuet movement. Clarke was obviously an exceedingly conservative composer when it came to symphonies: both of the partially surviving symphonies have minuet movements at a time when the scherzo movement had completely lost its novelty. He is strongly retrospective in other respects, as well – he calls his Third Symphony a *Sinfonia da Camera*, harking back to the tradition of William Herschel (see p. 68). His instrumentation, however, is masterly, despite the sparseness of his musical ideas (ex. 40). He was well known as an arranger, and scored some of Sullivan's operatic overtures. As a compendium of his orchestral compositions, he published, in 1888, a *Manual of Orchestration*, which very probably is more important than the symphonies themselves.

1876 was to be a year of great importance, both internationally (foundation of the Bayreuth Festival) and for British Music.⁴⁷ It marked the founding of the National Training School of Music,⁴⁸ whose successor, in 1883, was none other than the Royal College of Music. But also another significant event took place that year: the Alexandra Palace Symphony Competition. The Alexandra Palace had opened its doors in 1873, becoming a rival to the Crystal Palace. The Alexandra's conductor was Thomas Henry Weist Hill (1828–1891), who in 1875 revived Handel's *Esther* and in 1876 *Susanna* (from 1880 until the end of his life he

47 Cf. Mike Ashman, 'The Year of Music 1876', in: *Gramophone* 85/1031 (May 2008), pp. 34–39.

48 Principal of the school was Arthur Sullivan, who was already a professor at the Royal Academy of Music.

Ex. 40: James Hamilton Siree Clarke, Sinfonia di Camera in G (No. 3 Op. 298). Full score (copyist's MS), p. 4. Royal College of Music, MS 5821; reproduced by kind permission.

This image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for a symphony. The score is written on multiple staves, with some parts grouped by large curly braces. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The word "Cres" (Crescendo) is written in several places, indicating a gradual increase in volume. There are also some handwritten annotations and markings, including a "p" (piano) marking and a "2" marking. The bottom of the page features the signature "Col. Clarke" and four double bar lines.

was Principal of the Guildhall School of Music).⁴⁹ Alexandra Palace burned down just a fortnight after it opened and was not back in commission until 1875. However, the venue was inefficiently run and was not used for concert purposes for quite some time. Very little is known about the Alexandra Palace Competition; only two brief mentions in *The Musical Times* of 1 February and 1 May 1876 have surfaced to date, reading thus:

'The authorities of the Alexandra Palace offer two prizes of £20 and £5 respectively, together with a certificate, for the best two Orchestral Symphonies to be written by British composers, the judges being Professor G. A. Macfarren and Herr Joachim. The work which gains the first prize is to be performed at one of the Saturday concerts, and the second, if of sufficient merit, will also be presented to the public. Manuscripts must be sent in to Mr. H. Weist Hill, Alexandra Palace, on or before March 13.⁵⁰

'At the Alexandra Palace Symphony Competition, the first prize has been awarded to Francis Davenport, and the second to C. Villiers Stanford. Judges: Professor George Alexander Macfarren, Mus.Doc., Cantab., and Professor Joseph Joachim. There were 38 symphonies submitted.⁵¹

Of those 38 symphonies, only the three mentioned below are known to have been submitted. It is unknown whether the contemporaneous symphonies by Henry Holmes, Charles Edward Stephens and Ebenezer Prout were submitted for the competition; Alice Mary Smith's Second Symphony was probably not ready on time. The contest was won by Francis William Davenport's (Wilderslowe, 9 April 1847–Scarborough, 1 April 1925), who was Macfarren's son-in-law and had studied composition with him (Charles Stewart Macpherson, Walter Macfarren and Frederick Corder were also Macfarren's students). The second prize went to Charles Villiers Stanford's (see pp. 207ff.) First Symphony in B^b major of 1875. The third prize was awarded to Oliveria Prescott's (London, 3 September 1842–1919) *Alkestis* Symphony; Prescott was Macfarren's amanuensis – whether these connections had anything to do with their being awarded cannot be said, since both Prescott's and Davenport's Symphonies appear to be lost to us. Probably in consequence of the competition, Stanford became a close friend of Joachim's from around 1876.

The musical situation in London was meanwhile growing considerably; an 1886 issue of the magazine *Truth* lists the events of a typical season: 'Arrangements are being made for 14 Popular, 20 Crystal Palace, 16 Henschel, 13 Richter, 14 Ballad, 6 Sacred Harmonic, 6 Novello's Choir, 6 Albert Hall, 6 Sarasate, 7 Ambrose Austin, 6 Philharmonic, 3 Strolling Players, 2 Bach Choir, 2 London Musical Society, and a large number of other concerts.'⁵²

49 James Duff Brown/Stephen Samuel Stratton, *British Musical Biography: a dictionary of musical artists, authors and composers, born in Britain and its colonies*, London 1897, p. 199.

50 *MT* XVII (1876), p. 362.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 462.

52 Quoted from Andrew Stewart, *The LSO at 90*, London 1994, p. 9.

Walter Cecil Macfarren (London, 28 August 1826–London, 2 September 1905), George Alexander's (see pp. 146ff.) brother, never quite managed to reach his elder brother's popularity or fame, but was nonetheless described in 1898 as the 'doyen professor at the Royal Academy of Music'.⁵³ Apparently enduring a very hard life with no familial warmth whatsoever,⁵⁴ he became a chorister at Westminster Abbey by the age of nine. In 1842 he entered the Royal Academy of Music, where his teachers included William Henry Holmes, his own brother and Cipriani Potter; he became a professor there himself in 1846. From 1848 to 1850, he was organist at Harrow, and when Joseph Joachim first came to England at the age of thirteen, it was Walter Macfarren who was to accompany him regularly on the piano. He was regular conductor of the Royal Academy of Music concerts from 1873 to 1880; when, after his brother's death in 1887, he was asked to offer himself for the office of Principal of the Academy, he declined. He wrote a symphony in 1879-80; the location of the MS is unknown today.

Thomas Wingham (London, 5 January 1846–London, 24 March 1893) became organist of St. Michael's Mission Church, Southwark in as early as 1856. He studied at the London Academy of Music in 1863, and in Paddington became All Saints' organist in 1864. He entered the Royal Academy of Music in 1867, studying under Sterndale Bennett and Harold Thomas, and was appointed piano professor there in 1871; he later also became a professor at the Guildhall School. In 1882 he was engaged as Musical Director of the Brompton Oratory, where he remained until his untimely death at the age of 47. Although he had been a fairly prolific composer (Wingham's Second Symphony in B \flat , a piano duet version of which was published in 1876⁵⁵, was performed in Bournemouth in 1901 and 1908⁵⁶), very few of his compositions were published; most of the others have been partly or entirely lost, including the score of the only symphony of his to have survived, his Fourth (and last) in D major, which was premièred at the Crystal Palace on 28 April 1883. (Wingham's Third Symphony, apparently composed after 1872, may have been entered in the Alexandra Palace Competition, but we have no actual proof of this.)

The surviving parts of the Fourth Symphony suggest that it was as ambitious as most others of the time, although in conception, the composer only rises above predictability in the finale. This he does with considerable energy and strong development of the first theme:

53 'Mr. Walter Macfarren', in: *MT* XXXIX (1898), p. 10.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

55 Information kindly supplied by Lewis Foreman, 9 July 2008.

56 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British composers*, London 1995, pp. 63 and 84.

Ex. 41



Wingham's other thematic material tends to be strictly periodical,

Ex. 42



and the corresponding predictability only occasionally leads to free expansion in the movement's development, such as in the *Andante con Moto*:

Ex. 43

William Wallace (Greenock, 3 July 1860–Malmesbury, 16 December 1940), like Hamish MacCunn (who composed no symphonies), was a native son of Greenock. He was a pupil at Fettes College, Edinburgh, and went on to study medicine, graduating with the MB and MCh from Glasgow University in 1885. After a period of studying ophthalmology in Vienna, Paris and Moorfields, he returned to graduate with an MD from Glasgow in 1888. This he did mainly to please his father, who was a distinguished surgeon. Soon after gaining his doctorate in 1888, Wallace took up two terms of study of music at the Royal Academy of Music in London; thereafter, he was self-taught. He was one of the 'Six Rebels', which also included his younger contemporary Bantock (also the son of a Scottish-based surgeon), to challenge the conservatism of the music schools of the time. With Bantock Wallace published *The New Quarterly Musical Review*, frequently editing it with Howard Orsmund Anderton when Bantock was away. In 1892 Wallace wrote his first symphonic poem, *The Passing of Beatrice* after Dante, thus openly showing his sympathy with Liszt and helping to pioneer the form in Britain. In an open letter to *The Times* in 1904, Wallace complained



Illustration 24. William Wallace, photograph.

about the protectionism of the Royal College of Music. The First World War saw Wallace more or less regularly in the Royal Army Medical Corps, from which he retired in 1927 to become a Professor of Harmony and Composition and the Professorial Chief of the library at the Royal Academy of Music. Wallace also published several books on music theory and history, including studies on Wagner and Liszt.

After the opening of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, very few Scottish composers were able to evade the London influence, although F. G. Scott, Moonie, Davie and Chisholm managed to do so a generation later. David McCrone and Peter Symon quote Tom Nairn's *Break-up of Britain*,⁵⁷ in which the migration of the Scottish intelligentsia, 'if not in body at least in spirit, to the bigger, more rounded culture of Anglo-Britain',⁵⁸ was usual and an independent musical character is found in Scotland only after 1910. (A reason cited by Stuart Campbell in 1998 was the Presbyterian view of music as being too secular in spirit.⁵⁹) Wallace was more radical than either Mackenzie or MacCunn, but mainly in his freer development of structure and more organic use of thematic material, seen by John Purser as parallel to that of Nielsen.⁶⁰

Wallace's *Creation Symphony* (1896-99), after having been premièred by Bantock at one of his New Brighton concerts in 1899 and subsequently performed in Bournemouth, went unperformed for nearly a hundred years, although 'in the history of the symphony in Britain at the time of its composition, it is unprecedented in scope and daring.'⁶¹ Composition started in 1896, when Wallace's affair with his future wife Otilie McLaren began. She was a sculptress who at that time was studying with Auguste Rodin. That Wallace did not entirely succeed with his musical concept was mainly due to the fact that it was either ahead of its time or had arrived too late – in the 1860s or 1870s, one might have understood the underlying intentions, but the musical means would not have been satisfying. His intentions would only have been intelligible if Vaughan Williams's, Holst's or even Strauss's widening of the harmonic and instrumentary field had also been available to Wallace, especially with respect to lyrical aspects. To a considerable extent, especially in the *Andantino*, Wallace's work very much foreshadows Holst's *Planets*, although Holst refrained from strongly religious aspects, which are in Wallace's music reflected mainly by interpretation of the music rather than by the music itself. As for Bantock himself, the coda of Wallace's first movement (from [27] to [28] 3) was the forerunner to Bantock's *Celtic Symphony*; having realized his debt to his close friend Wallace, Bantock never ventured to compose a bible-based orchestral symphony.

57 Tom Nairn, *Break-up of Britain: crisis and neonationalism*, London 1977.

58 David McCrone, *Understanding Scotland*, London/New York 1992, p. 177.

59 Stuart Campbell in a paper given at the Halle conference of the Gesellschaft für Musikforschung, 30 September 1998.

60 John Purser, CD liner notes to William Wallace's 'Creation' Symphony, London 1997, p. 4.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 2. In terms of scope of ambition, there are few works equal to Wallace's concept. Most of those that come to mind are symphonies with vocal participation, for example Bantock's *Christus* in its first version, with which Bantock was not entirely happy (see pp. 599ff.).

The slow introduction of the first movement (ex. 44.), which in the manuscript score is headed ‘In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep’, indeed makes an indelible impression; the harmony is highly advanced. Described as ‘a passage of profound mystery and great orchestral daring’, the very first bars foreshadow Finzi’s *Intimations of Immortality*. Double basses are divided and solo tuba represents ‘emptiness and space’, the correct and literal meaning of the Greek word ‘chaos’, as Wallace himself describes it. ‘The choice of C[♯] minor as the main key is designed to produce a dark, veiled colouring that contains within itself the potential of brilliance in its relative E major – especially when, in Wallace’s days, horns and trumpets could be pitched in E.’⁶² The use of brass and some of the harmonies, however, are in fact rather Wagnerian; around [2] = bar 21, the horns remind one of Bantock.

Ex. 45

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system is for 'Archi, Bass Tb., Timp.' and the second is for 'Cor'. Both systems are in C major (one sharp) and feature complex harmonic textures with various dynamics like ppp, pp, and mfz.

At 3 [5] = bar 48 we even hear a Holstian modulation:

Ex. 46

The image shows a system of musical notation for 'Bass Tb., Vcl., Cb.' with dynamics mfz, ppp, and pp, and a tempo marking 'un poco cresc. e accel.'.

62 John Purser, CD liner notes to William Wallace’s ‘Creation’ Symphony, London 1997, p. 8.

Ex. 44: William Wallace, Symphony in C \sharp minor 'The Creation'. First movement, bars 1-11.

Adagio $\text{♩} = 80$

Picc

Fl

Ob

Cl

Fg

Cor

Trb

Trbn

Tb

Timp *tr ppp sempre* *ppp*

Gran Cassa

Piatti

Arpa

Vln

Vla *ppp*

Vlc *ppp*

Cb *div.* *ppp*

John Purser's extensive notes on the symphony on the occasion of the world première recording are rather interpretatory, but mainly based on Wallace's own remarks. He called the following theme the 'theme for light',⁶³

Ex. 47

Ex. 47 shows two staves of music. The top staff is for Oboe (Ob.) and Clarinet (Clar.), and the bottom staff is for Woodwind. The music is in 3/4 time and features a melodic line with dynamic markings: *mf*, *p*, *pp*, *fz*, and *pp*. The bottom staff starts at measure 14 and includes a 'etc.' marking.

supposedly derived from the 'void',

Ex. 48

Ex. 48 shows a single staff of music for Brass. The music is in 3/4 time and features a melodic line with dynamic markings: *p*, *mf*, *fz*, and *p*. The staff starts at measure 10.

and closing the movement triumphantly 'with an ecstatic but calm hymn representing "light", in Wallace's own words, "exemplified by very soft strains, as an influence that comes from above". It is reminiscent of his first tone poem, *The Passing of Beatrice*, in which a vision of heavenly love is realized.⁶⁴

The sonata movement is nearly exclusively based on the 'theme for light', which first appears in bar 19 of the slow introduction. It opens into the brightness and leads to the exposition from [6] 4 = bar 65. The exposition itself, however, sinks into stodginess (the composer very probably thereby meant to distance himself from Straussian melodies – but in fact he simply lacked the imagination to write ingenious legato melodies for violins), especially harmonically. To his credit, though, he avoids drifting into empty melodism, especially in the woodwind, and indeed often recaptures the mysteriousness of the slow introduction. A development section cannot be marked definitively, since the 'chaos' theme provides the bulk of the thematic material for the entire movement and is thus of paramount importance. The recapitulation may be marked as starting from [21] 1 = bar 212, when the 'chaos' theme returns in full, soon to be followed by the 'theme for light' ([22] 1 = bar 222).

63 *Ibid.*

64 *Ibid.*

The *Andantino*, according to Purser based on the three different lights God created and representing the trinity, is in fact an unusually interesting tone picture, presaging the best of Holst's achievements to come in *The Planets* (1914-16) and using as a main means for the vastness of space 'minimalist purity, nearly a century before its time'.⁶⁵

Ex. 49

Andantino (♩ = 88)

The melodies themselves are rather vapid. In the *Largo* middle section, the minimalist motifs subside, giving way to the more melodious aspects – to be swept away in the starry, highly imaginative instrumentation of the first section recapitulation (from [17] 1 = bar 172).

Another tone picture follows, this time a sea-shore, supposed to represent the creation of water and land. It is the divergence of the outward painting (which is strikingly imaginative, but in fact rather like a tone poem) and the intended poetic idea that renders the symphony unsatisfactory on the whole; in and of themselves, however, the movements are well-made tone poems. According to Wallace, the only real melody of the movement (4 [9]ff.) is 'in the character of a sea song'⁶⁶, which provides sufficient external evidence for the non-Biblical interpretation of the score.

Ex. 50

65 *Ibid.*

66 *Ibid.*

Heroic fanfares open the finale, ‘the creation of man on the sixth day.’⁶⁷ Harmonically, Wallace echoes Elgar’s earlier marches and mimics the melodic invention of Stanford especially. Here too the second theme

Ex. 51: [4]



is derived from the first movement. ‘To attach a verbal meaning to each individual phrase is as impossible as is the task of analysing [!] the human being’, declared Wallace. But he describes the movement as mainly triumphal, though drawing attention to ‘phrases which may be considered as symbolizing the ultimate dissolution of the flesh that is as grass’. As a doctor and surgeon, Wallace was familiar enough with the dissolution of the flesh, but this movement is primarily symbolic of the creative capacity of humankind – ‘male and female created He them’ – and the triumph is as much the triumph of love and, specifically, his own and Otilie’s love. Wallace may have imagined himself and Otilie as stand-ins for Adam and Eve in the newly-created Eden of his finale, upon which the second-movement theme of the sun rises in splendour.⁶⁸ If we set aside the preceding movements, in which Wallace left the influence of Stanford and his ilk behind, the movement is sufficient for a symphonic finale of the era – but, as mentioned above, it lacks the ingenuity of the preceding movements. The entire symphony was a work of high expectations, especially for the composer himself, but Wallace was unable to fulfil his own prescriptions consistently. The external numerological aspects,⁶⁹ applied to the work somehow to dominate the individual movements’ lengths and inner construction, fail to improve the melodic invention or the inner coherence of the material.

Benjamin James Dale’s (London, 17 July 1885–London, 30 July 1943) Symphony in F major (1899) can barely be taken seriously. Dale became a student at the Royal Academy of Music only in 1900, studying with Corder, and was awarded the Costa Scholarship for composition in 1901. His best-known and first published score, his Piano Sonata in D minor, was written in 1902, followed by the Viola Suite (1906) and much more chamber music, especially for Lionel Tertis; he composed little orchestral or choral music. Dale eventually became a professor at the Royal Academy of Music and was later interned at Ruhleben in the First World War (like Frederick Keel and Edgar Bainton).⁷⁰

67 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

68 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 9.

69 *Ibid.*, pp. 9–11.

70 Cf. Edgar Bainton, ‘Music in Ruhleben Camp’, in: *MTLX* (1919), p. 72–73.

The two movements of the youthful symphony take approximately seven minutes. The extremely short first movement seems to be the exposition or recapitulation of an entire movement, without development or other substantial formal connection. The second movement, a scherzo, is similarly short, and Dale's teacher apparently asked him to at least add a coda to close the two movements to complete the piece. Dale never again attempted to write a symphony; his teacher's feedback was obviously not very encouraging.

Frederick Archibald Lamond (Glasgow, 28 January 1868–Stirling, 21 February 1948) was, together with the short-lived Frederick Septimus Kelly, one of the first to study (in 1882) at the Hochsches Konservatorium (see the members of the 'Frankfurt Group', p. 164), whose director at that time was Joachim Raff (since 1877). Prior to his move to Frankfurt am Main, he had been organist of Laurieston Parish Church, since 1880 (he had been appointed at the age of 12). Early violin studies in Glasgow did not prevent Lamond from becoming a highly successful pianist. His first piano teacher (at Frankfurt) was Max Schwarz (who later wrote his Ph.D. thesis on J. C. Bach), followed by Hans von Bülow and Franz Liszt. By 1885 in Berlin, he was giving his first professional concerts as a pianist, and shortly afterwards gave performances in Vienna. He mainly performed in Germany and lived in Berlin, seldom coming over to England; it was only when he found himself in opposition to the Nazi regime that he returned to Britain for good.

Lamond's compositions, including some chamber and piano works, an overture *Aus dem Schottischen Hochlande* and his Symphony in A major Op. 3, produced by the Glasgow Choral Union in 1889, are relatively few in number. His symphony is a very concise, rather short work, carefully conceived and instrumentated. It is especially interesting in the 'recapitulation' of the scherzo, which unfolds counter to the listener's expectations, and in the finale, which in its compactness may ask too much from the ear; the second theme (B) immediately leads into the development. Two examples illustrating the thematic conception are given here:

Ex. 52: First movement, first theme



Ex. 53: Third movement, first theme

Andante moderato
 Vin. I *poco f espress.* *f espress.*

In his only review of a British composition, as well as of an orchestral composition, Max Reger wrote:

‘With much delight this new creation of a highly gifted composer will be welcomed. It is a work that unites in itself so many advantages of diverse kind so that one is hardly permitted to speak of occasional weaknesses! With regard to the opus number 3 one will praise apart from a great inventiveness the uncommon capabilities of the composer. His muse might slightly be influenced by J. Brahms: but which composer is “he himself” in his very first works! This attachment to Brahms, which cannot basically be opposed, is entirely offset by *Fr. Lamond* by a truly victorious reign over form and the beautiful instrumentation which avoids in the most welcomed kind any search for empty, only sensuously affecting orchestral effects.’⁷¹

Reger and Lamond probably met in connection with a concert the latter gave in Wiesbaden, and Reger dedicated his piano transcription of Bach’s E minor Prelude and Fugue BWV 548 ‘to his friend Frederic Lamond’ in 1895.⁷²

The strongest foreign influence in later nineteenth-century British symphonism (apart from Liszt’s somewhat programmatic influence) was Johannes Brahms, whose first work to appear on an English concert programme was the Serenade in D, Op. 11 (minuet, scherzo and finale only), on 25 April 1863 at the Crystal Palace. Julius Stockhausen, Joseph Joachim and Clara Schumann regularly came to England, and Brahms’s chamber music was presented to the English public around 1867. On 10 July 1871 the *Deutsches Requiem* was given in English with Brahms’s own piano duet accompaniment (a first performance, with orchestra, took place in April 1873); on 9 March 1872 the D minor Piano Concerto made its public debut, again at the Crystal Palace, and the Philharmonic Society presented Brahms’s Serenade in D on 8 July. Stanford issued his praise for Brahms as early as in 1874, when he attended two performances of the Serenade in A (the first still in Leipzig, the second at St. James’s Hall). Brahms’s First Symphony was put on in 1876 (see above, p. 174), followed in 1879 by his Violin Concerto. His Third and Fourth were first performed under Richter’s baton in 1884 and 1886 respectively. Thus it can be seen that from c. 1872 Brahms’s music became increasingly well known, and his choral compositions soon became favourites at the choral festivals, as did his symphonies at symphony concerts.

The extent of epoch-making **Charles Villiers Stanford**’s (Dublin, 30 September 1852–London, 29 March 1924) influence for British music is beyond dispute. He brought, as Sullivan had before, a breath of fresh air into the evolution of British symphonism, even more through his advocacy on behalf of others than through his actual achievements in the field. His promotion of Brahms’s music among his pupils boosted the composer’s influence immensely, so much so that few could escape it.

71 Max Reger, ‘Vom Musikalienmarkt. Sinfonie (A dur) für grosses Orchester von Frederic Lamond, op. 3 (Frankfurt a. Main, Steyl & Thomas)’, in: *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* 21/4 (1894), p. 56.

72 Cf. also Jürgen Schaarwächter, ‘Reger und Britannien – Aspekte einer Wechselbeziehung’, in: Susanne Popp/Jürgen Schaarwächter (eds.): *Reger-Studien 8. Max Reger und die Musikstadt Leipzig. Kongressbericht Leipzig 2008*, Stuttgart 2010 (Schriftenreihe des Max-Reger-Instituts Karlsruhe, XXI), pp. 382–383.



Illustration 25. Charles Villiers Stanford, photograph.

Stanford had studied in Dublin with Robert Prescott Stewart (whose works he described as well-made but not ‘deep’⁷³), Arthur O’Leary and Michael Quarry, who introduced him to Brahms’s and Schumann’s music (Stanford later performed Schumann’s *Genoveva* at the Royal College of Music). He then studied in Cambridge, where in 1873 he became Trinity College’s organist. After that he stayed in Leipzig from 1874–76, studying there with Reinecke and later with Friedrich Kiel⁷⁴ in Berlin; his compositional approach is thus strongly permeated by German influence. At that time, Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Schumann, Loewe, Beethoven, Gade, Schubert, Berlioz, Wagner, Dussek and numerous nowadays less-known masters held centre stage in Germany,⁷⁵ but interest in Bach was also rising again. On the other hand, Stanford was enough of an Irishman to refuse to be cured of his fiery imagination, unlike so many Englishmen. His (Unionist) Irishness remained with him for the rest of his life, although he lived most of it in England. His pupil Ralph Vaughan Williams described him as ‘in the best sense of the word Victorian, that is to say it is the musical counterpart of the art of Tennyson, Watts and Mathew Arnold.’⁷⁶ He was an ardent conservative, especially compared to the much more liberal Parry. Stanford was first Professor of Music at Cambridge, where he taught, among others, Charles Wood, Edward Naylor, Alan Gray, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Edward J. Dent, Harold Darke and Hugh Percy Allen.⁷⁷ He eventually became Foundation Composition Professor at the Royal College of Music⁷⁸ and therefore a member of the ‘Parry Group’, which included, in addition to himself and Parry, Cowen and Mackenzie, plus others often dismissed as academic or ‘muddy conventionals’.⁷⁹ His flock of pupils contained Holst, Vaughan Williams, Bridge, Bliss, Dunhill, Goossens, Boughton, Bainton, Moeran, MacCunn, Clarke, Davies, Butterworth, Dyson, Heward, Benjamin, Ireland, Howells, Coleridge-Taylor, Hurlstone, Rootham, Gurney (whose nerves were not up to Stanford’s instruction⁸⁰) and Jacob.

73 Charles Villiers Stanford, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, London 1914, p. 49.

74 With Kiel studied also Stanford’s pupil Arthur Somervell and Macfarren’s pupil George John Bennett.

75 Cf. Rebecca Grotjahn, *Die Sinfonie im deutschen Kulturgebiet 1850 bis 1875*, Ph.D. dissertation Hannover 1997, Sinzig 1998 (Musik und Musikanschauung im 19. Jahrhundert, 7), pp. 161–225 and 291–364.

76 Ralph Vaughan Williams in Henry Walford Davies et al., ‘Charles Villiers Stanford. By some of his pupils. With two short compositions by Stanford’, in: *M&L V* (1924), 1924, p. 195.

77 Frida Knight, *Cambridge Music from the Middle Ages to Modern Times*, Cambridge/New York 1980, p. 84. Edward Dent thinks that the students in Cambridge would have received more ‘concentrated attention’ than the later students at the Royal College of Music (after Harry Plunkett Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, London 1935, p. 80).

78 The foundation of the Royal College of Music and other institutions prompted Hermann Kretzschmar to make the following statement in 1885: ‘It seems to us probable after this or even certain that England will occupy in the music history of the future again a more important place.’ (Quoted after Hermann Kretzschmar, *Gesammelte Aufsätze über Musik und anderes*, Vol. I, Leipzig 1910, p. 229.)

79 John Francis Porte, *Sir Charles V. Stanford, Mus.Doc., M.A., D.C.L.*, London/New York 1921, p. 1. It is striking, by the way, that Stanford, Cowen and Parry hold up rather well in comparison with, for example, Glazunov’s first three symphonies (1881–90).

80 Ivor Gurney in Henry Walford Davies et al., ‘Charles Villiers Stanford. By some of his pupils’, in: *M&L V* (1924), p. 200 writes, in a short, nearly formal contribution: ‘He was a stiff master, though a very kind man; difficult to please, and most glad to be pleased.’

Stanford perpetuated the programmatic aspects of music insofar as he included folksongs in his *œuvre*; he even took them occasionally as a starting point. That practice was nothing new, and can already be found eighty years earlier in works of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and numerous others who wrote variations on 'popular songs'.⁸¹ In Stanford's case, however, the use of folksongs clearly serves a more ambitious purpose (see below).

Arthur Henry Fox Strangways brings Stanford's personality to life:

'Sir Charles was wise and witty. His wit was caustic, and that is not a crime but a piece of unwisdom; it lost him friends, it lessened opportunities, and it probably cost him the honour he thought most worth having at his university. He never understood Elgar, nor Elgar him: both were sensitive, or – the obverse of the medal – touchy.'⁸² But John Ireland adds: 'In spite of his prejudices, his frequent cynicism, and intolerance for any point of view not coincident with his own, he is to be remembered as a great man and a great musician, who often inspired affection as well as admiration.'⁸³

Other pupils add:

'I remember a good many of his characteristic explosions. I happened once to bring into his room a book or a paper in which he came upon a photograph of Gladstone. He leapt at it. "Look at his face, my boy! Sinister, sinister in every line. Ugh!" Thus Stanford the Orangerian. Another day I heard part of a lesson given to a student who has since become famous. "Blank," he said, "your music comes from hell. From hell, my boy; H E double L." Thus Stanford the purist. Once he suddenly observed that my nose was obstructed. He took particular pains to have me examined gratis by a Harley Street specialist; and I know he did the like for others, too, who seemed to be ailing or disabled in any way. From another angle he once said to me: "I want to talk to you, my boy. Don't spend too much time with So-and-so. He'll do you no good. I'd rather see you with a painted lady." All his judgments were of this uncompromising type. When we were preparing *Tod und Verklärung*, he remarked: "If it's to be Richard, I prefer Wagner. If Strauss, then give me Johann." And after the performance at Queen's Hall of a famous work which to him seemed to smack too much of the hot-house, he is said to have relieved his discomfort in the artist's room by playing scales of C major. He once gave me a similar douche in a terminal report. "Has a bad fit of chromatics. Hope he will soon grow healthy and diatonic."⁸⁴

'Corner any Stanford pupil you like, and ask him to confess the sins he most hated being discovered in by his master. He will tell you "slovenliness" and "vulgarity." When these went into the teacher's room they came out, badly damaged. Against compromise with dubious material or workmanship Stanford stubbornly set his face.

81 British music is unique in that it is often handed down verbally, i.e. real folk songs that are included into art music, not melodies of the popular art music ('popular songs').

82 Arthur Henry Fox Strangways, 'Sir Charles Stanford – composer and teacher', in Arthur Henry Fox Strangways, *Music observed*, London 1936, p. 57.

83 John Ireland in Henry Walford Davies et al., 'Charles Villiers Stanford. By some of his pupils', in: *MeLV* (1924), p. 195.

84 George Dyson in *ibid.*, p. 196.

None of us lived in the easy atmosphere of neutrality when we took lessons with him. Mastery of subject carried with it, in him, a very definite sense of where he stood; and that definition ill accorded with vagueness of attitude in others. By methods in which long practice taught him to believe he brought his pupils themselves to know where, and for what, they stood. Whatever else one might have become under his shrewd guidance, it never could have been a wobbler, a neutral, a befogged practitioner. It was often his way to make a student fight hard in defence of a point of view, an expression, or a mere chord. Failure in this was apt to bring trouble upon the pupil. But that the defence generally prevailed, and brought self-reliance – as Stanford, in his wisdom, always hoped it would – ought to be clear to anyone who observes the remarkable degree to which most of his pupils have established their own particular identities in composition.⁸⁵

‘I think the best quality Stanford possessed as a teacher was that he made you feel nothing but the best would do. He wouldn’t let you write in pencil. He held that you would have more respect for what you did if you wrote in ink. He could be severely critical, almost cruel at times. I recall once writing something for orchestra for him. He looked at it and must have known at once that there were all kinds of errors in it, but he told me to go home and copy the parts. When I brought them back he tried it over with the College orchestra and made me stand on the rostrum beside him. The orchestra made the most appalling sounds. Everything went wrong and I was utterly humiliated. But Stanford played it through in its entirety. Then he turned to me and, handing me the score, said, “Well you see, my boy, it won’t do will it? You’ll have to find some other way.” And one did, you know.’⁸⁶

‘He revered the earlier classics, belonged to both camps in the days of the stormy Brahms-Wagner controversy, admired Dvořák and Franck, was an enthusiast for the modern Russian school as soon as it became known here, and adored the later Verdi. (...) His devotion to his favourite pupils was quite a touching side of his nature – he would hear no ill of them, and bitterly resented any adverse criticism of their works. Some of them were spoilt; and others with whom he was less immediately in sympathy actually profited more by his influence than those to whom he was most devoted.’⁸⁷

Peter J. Pirie summarizes:

‘It is true that Stanford encouraged such composers as he approved of; but his dismissal of the whole rising continental school, and his enslavement to Brahms, was a major element in the besetting amateurishness and insular and reactionary nature of English musical life against which Elgar in particular had to struggle. It seems more likely that Stanford just happened to be there when the English Renaissance started. In any case, Elgar (of whom he disapproved), Delius (who disapproved of him), and Arnold Bax never studied with him.’⁸⁸

85 Herbert Howells in *ibid.*, p. 199.

86 John Ireland in Murray Schafer, *British Composers in Interview*, London 1963, p. 27.

87 Thomas Dunhill in Henry Walford Davies et al., ‘Charles Villiers Stanford. By some of his pupils’, in: *M&L* V (1924), pp. 205–206.

88 Peter Pirie, *Frank Bridge*, London 1971, p. 7. George Dyson formulates Stanford’s influence as follows: ‘In a certain sense the very rebellion he fought was the most obvious fruit of his methods. And in view of what some of these

Stanford loathed most music written since *Parsifal*,⁸⁹ a fact that John Alexander Fuller-Maitland finds hard to explain. But in fact Stanford was, like Parry, probably far too British in nature, very well-read and cultivated,⁹⁰ to have been able to catch on to Wagner's new conceptions, unlike Bantock or other students of Mackenzie's or Corder's, who admired Wagner. In fact his stylistic retrospectiveness (not unlike Parry's) occasionally harks back as far as Gade. His influence on his pupils was clearly enormous (it took Samuel Coleridge-Taylor several attempts to create a finale of his symphony that met with Stanford's approval (see p. 262). Arthur Benjamin reports that Stanford, when he visited him in 1921 after his retirement, said with tears in his eyes: 'All my lovely pupils – mad! They've all gone mad! Vaughan Williams, Holst, Howells, Bliss – all mad!' Then he beseeched Benjamin: 'Don't *you* go mad, me bhoy!'⁹¹ Harmonic or instrumental sharpness in the sense of the 'musical realism'⁹² that had no fear of the ugly, hard, uncomfortable (composers such as Bush, Brian or even Walton and Vaughan Williams showed that their sharpness was never gratuitous or merely a bald rejection of the refusal of the Mahlerian 'Volkston'⁹³ – and the ugly⁹⁴), never failed to annoy the teacher; many of his pupils therefore dared not show their own important works to him. Gordon Jacob reports that Vaughan Williams consequently learned little from his teacher⁹⁵ – although an essential aspect of Stanford's teaching found extremely strong expression in Vaughan Williams: the modal counterpoint. A number of Stanford's students laughed at this archaic device, but it was respected by Vaughan Williams, Holst and also Rubbra.⁹⁶ That Stanford did in fact hold many of his pupils in high esteem is evident in the

rebels have since achieved, one is tempted to wonder whether there is really anything better a teacher can do for his pupils than drive them into various forms of revolution' – not concerning the applicable techniques, 'but on the personal development of novel forms of expression.' (After Harry Plunkett Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, London 1935, p. 95.)

- 89 Cf. Gordon Jacob on Charles Villiers Stanford, 1920, in 'Ralph Vaughan Williams: 1872–1958', in: *RCMM* LV/1 (1959), p. 31. Accordingly, Stanford's *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, London 1914 gives no view on new music, on pupils, etc.
- 90 John Alexander Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford*, Cambridge 1934, p. 12: 'it is not without a feeling of shock that we turn from the wide culture of these men to the hide-bound professionalism of the English composers who went before them. Not without justice are Parry and Stanford considered as the leading spirits in the renaissance of British music.'
- 91 Arthur Benjamin, 'A student from Kensington', in: *M&L* XXXI (1950), p. 207.
- 92 Hans Albrecht writes (in Hans Albrecht, 'Impressionismus', in Friedrich Blume (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Vol. 6, Kassel etc. 1957, col. 1053–1054): 'The so-called neo-romantic music to which Berlioz, Liszt and also Wagner were counted was nothing else but the musical realism of the 19th century.'
- 93 Carl Dahlhaus, *Musikalischer Realismus*, München 1982, pp. 138–139.
- 94 On Stanford's rejection of 'vulgar' music cf. e.g. Charles Villiers Stanford, 'On some recent tendencies in composition', 1920, in: *PRMA* 47 (1920–21) (1921), pp. 39–46 (discussion pp. 46–53). Reprinted in Charles Villiers Stanford, *Interludes. Records and reflections*, London 1922, pp. 89–101.
- 95 Lewis Foreman, 'Gordon Jacob in interview', in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 60. Bernard Shore, first violist at the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra and soloist of the first performance of Darnton's Viola Concerto, put it differently: Vaughan Williams ran through a complete academic training, 'but one of the most unpredictable of musicians was the result.' (Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. 1949, p. 283.)
- 96 Edward Dent wrote: 'Stanford was always right: but it sometimes took one a very long time to convince oneself of that.' (After Harry Plunkett Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, London 1935, p. 81.) And Thomas Dunhill described

following pronouncement, made in 1922: ‘Of the English school we shall, naturally, not speak, but it is far from being destitute of symphonic works on the largest lines.’⁹⁷

Although he had several considerable successes along the way, with, for example, his choral work, *The Revenge* (Op. 24, 1886), his Third Symphony, the *Irish* (Op. 28, 1887), and the fifth, *L’Allegro ed il Penseroso* (Op. 56, 1894), works of a grander and greater scope were yet to come. These included the organ sonatas (1917-18 and 1921), the Second Piano Concerto Op. 126 (1915), the *In Memoriam* Trio No. 3 in A major Op. 158 (1918), the *Irish Rhapsodies* (1901-23), the *Songs of the Fleet* Op. 117 (1910) or the *Preludes in all the Keys* for piano Op. 163 (1919). The symphonies are described by more than one author as not really progressive; in this vein, George Bernard Shaw wrote: ‘Mr Villiers Stanford (...) is sprightly enough when he is not gratifying his fancy for the pedantries of sonata form (...).’⁹⁸ Shaw certainly overstated the case; Stanford’s later development (from the Fifth Symphony onwards) shows highly interesting solutions.

The First Symphony in B \flat major, Stanford’s first symphonic attempt, which took the second prize (£5) at the Alexandra Palace Competition, had to wait until 1879 for performance: it was finally put on at the Crystal Palace. Its score is perhaps the most revised of all of Stanford’s symphonic scores; developments are cut down and the expositions’ repeats are deleted.

All thematic material of the first movement’s exposition is already prepared in the slow introduction, with the second theme indeed being derived from the introduction’s main theme:

Ex. 54: First movement, theme of the introduction



Ex. 55: First movement, first theme



Ex. 56: First movement, second theme



Stanford’s textbook *Musical Composition* as the ‘best book of the kind ever written in our language’ (quoted according to Sacha Stokes, ‘C. V. Stanford: man of letters’, in: *MMR* 85/964, 1955, p. 43).

97 Charles V. Stanford, *Interludes*, London 1922, p. 88.

98 George Bernard Shaw, *London Music in 1888-89*, London 1937, p. 103.

Ex. 57: First movement, theme of development



The theme mentioned last is prominent in the beginning of the development ([G] 52–[O] 8), where, among all of the other material, an inversion of the second theme is also developed. As usual in this time, Stanford ends the movement in a brilliant, triumphant, brassy stretta.

The scherzo is 'In Ländler tempo', with two contrasting trios, looking back to Schubert and Potter, and to the symphonic situation out of which Stanford had to grow. The rather inward-turned slow movement (the high strings play *con sordino* throughout) is mainly based on one theme,

Ex. 58



in which contrapuntal complexity is rather important. To some extent, the movement recurs to material from the first movement's slow introduction; the treatment of the horns already paves the way for Stanford's use of these instruments in later works.

After a short upflaring the very quick finale begins,

Ex. 59: Fourth movement, first theme



Ex. 60: Fourth movement, second theme



Ex. 61: Fourth movement, third theme



with the second and third theme being derived from the first. The development (from 22 [G] to [M]) opens with a fugato on the first theme, followed by a rather imaginative development of all important material.

Stanford's Second Symphony in D minor (1879) is entitled the *Elegiac* and was revised in part shortly after its composition, especially the ending. The symphony is prefaced by lines from Tennyson's *In Memoriam*.

I cannot see the features right,
When on the gloom I strive to paint
The face I know; the hues are faint
And mix with hollow masks of night;

Cloud-towers by ghostly masons wrought,
A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,
A hand that points, and pallid shapes
In shadowy thoroughfares of thought;

And crowds that stream from yawning doors,
And shoals of pucker'd faces drive;
Dark bulks that tumble half alive,
And lazy lengths on boundless shores;

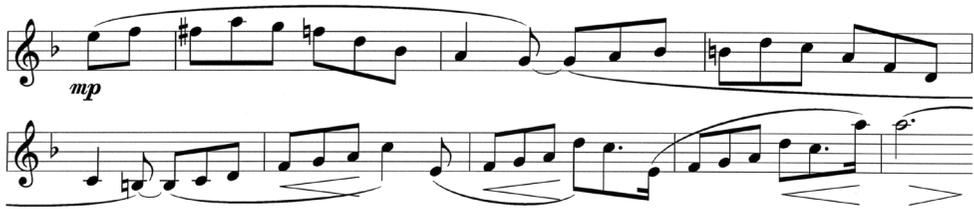
Till all once beyond the will
I hear a wizard music roll,
And thro' a lattice on the soul
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

The symphony, the second that Stanford did not supply with an opus number, is rather conventional in conception. This becomes apparent in the first theme, which shows Stanford's typical symphonism. With its syncopism, the second theme reflects an early influence that is obviously not Brahms's (perhaps it is Prescott's, O'Leary's, or even Joachim's, whose *Theme and Variations* were not only given at the première programme, but who also played Brahms's Violin Concerto).

Ex. 62



Ex. 63



The quiet F major slow movement, *Lento espressivo*, develops itself out of the opening theme,

Ex. 64



but increasingly leaves the original theme behind, to return to it only in diminished form at the end. The scherzo, again in minor, is mainly shaped by the rhythms ♩ or ♩, with a quieter trio. The finale is the most complex of the movements, with the individual sections passing fluently into one another; exposition and recapitulation are hardly recognizable, and little motivic material

Ex. 65



reigns the movement. The ending, the only section that was considerably revised, was in one section intended as a solemn chorale-like major coda.

The first performance of Stanford's Third, the *Irish* Symphony in F minor Op. 28 (Stanford's first printed symphony) on 27 June 1887 in London under Hans Richter (almost all works performed by Richter were a considerable success in Great Britain⁹⁹) was followed in January of the next year by performances in Berlin (the première performance of the Fourth Symphony took place there in 1889) and Hamburg; the Hamburg performance was conducted by Hans von Bülow, to whom Stanford had sent the score on Joseph Joachim's advice. Stanford finished his symphony on 30 April 1887 in Cambridge, writing:

'The *Irish* Symphony and Brahms' E minor Symphony [No. 4] were written simultaneously. The slow movement of Brahms' work begins with a phrase which is note for note identical with a passage in the slow movement of mine. But the passage

99 From 1877 Richter promoted Wagner in England and won him great successes.

Ex. 66



is from an Old Irish lament in Petrie's MSS.¹⁰⁰

George Bernard Shaw dealt extensively with the work in a review of 10 May 1893:

'The success of Professor Stanford's Irish Symphony last Thursday was, from the Philharmonic point of view, somewhat scandalous. The spectacle of a university professor "going Fantee" is indecorous, though to me personally it is delightful. When Professor Stanford is genteel, cultured, pious, and experimentally mixolydian, he is dull beyond belief. His dullness is all the harder to bear because it is the restless, ingenious, trifling, flippant dullness of the Irishman, instead of the stupid, bovine, sleepable-through dullness of the Englishman, or even the aggressive, ambitious, sentimental dullness of the Scot. But Mr Villiers Stanford cannot be dismissed as merely the Irish variety of the professorial species.'¹⁰¹

The motto of the symphony is: 'Ipse fave clemens patriae patriamque canenti, / Phoebe, coronata qui canis ipse lyra.' ('Be thou gracious to my country, and to me who sing of my country, / Phoebus, who thyself singest with the crowned lyre.'¹⁰²) Formally, the work is not highly individual, but it is also less dependent on Brahms than usually suggested. The first movement opens with a long melodic arch in the strings:

Ex. 67

Two conventionally conceived themes are presented in a repeated exposition and developed 'in a masterly and ingenious manner,'¹⁰³ with a coda bringing the movement to a melodious conclusion.

100 Charles Villiers Stanford, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, London 1914, p. 262. One also is referred to the last-named fact in the preliminary note of the score. In the Fifth Symphony in D major *L'Allegro e il Penseroso* Op. 56 (1894), Frank Howes hears 'teutonic reminiscences'.

101 George Bernard Shaw, *Music in London 1890–1894*, Vol. II, London etc. 21950, p. 303.

102 English by Lewis Foreman.

103 John Francis Porte, *Sir Charles V. Stanford, Mus.Doc., M.A., D.C.L.*, London/New York 1921, pp. 33–34.

The scherzo is mainly characterized by the chief subject in the manner of a hop jig,

Ex. 68

Allegro molto vivace

an Irish national dance; the trio melody,

Ex. 69

however, strongly suggests Brahms's influence, which is even more pronounced in the next movement. The Andante especially features solo harp and flute, thus rather drastically evoking idyllic 'Irish' moods. Very interesting is the transition to the second half of the movement, where the Irish folksong *The Lament of the Sons of Usnach* finds use, as the undoubted climax of the movement, before Stanford returns to the mood of its beginning.

The finale starts off with introductory matter until an old Irish tune, *Molly McAlpin* (*Remember the Glories of Brian the Brave*), appears in the oboe and clarinet, with pizzicato accompaniment. It is succeeded by a second subject, which in turn becomes absorbed in the old Irish air *The Red Fox* (*Let Erin Remember the Days of Old*), announced by four horns. The movement is in rondo form and grows more and more triumphant as it proceeds, until at last the symphony ends 'in a shout of victorious splendour.'¹⁰⁴ George Bernard Shaw in his account of the work discusses it as a 'record of fearful conflict between the aboriginal Celt and the Professor',¹⁰⁵ with no satisfactory results:

'In the last movement the rival Stanfords agree to a compromise which does not work. The essence of the sonata form is the development of themes; and even in a rondo a theme that will not develop will not fit the form. Now the greatest folk-songs are final developments themselves: they cannot be carried any further. You cannot develop *God Save the Queen*, though you may, like Beethoven, write some interesting but retrograde variations on it. Neither can you develop *Let Erin remember*. You might, of course, develop it inversely, debasing it touch by touch until you had *The Marseillaise* in all its vulgarity; and the doing of this might be instructive, though it would not be symphony writing. But no forward development is impossible.

104 *Ibid.*, p. 35.

105 George Bernard Shaw, *Music in London 1890-1894*, Vol. II, London etc. 21950, p. 305.

Yet in the last movement of the Irish Symphony, Stanford the Celt, wishing to rejoice in *Molly Macalpine (Remember the Glories)* and *The Red Fox (Let Erin remember)*, insisted that if Stanford the Professor wanted to develop themes, he should develop these two. The Professor succumbed to the shillelagh of his double, but, finding development impossible, got out of the difficulty by breaking Molly up into fragments, exhibiting these fantastically, and then putting them together again. This process is not in the least like the true sonata development. It would not work at all with *The Red Fox*, which comes in as a flagrant patch upon the rondo – for the perfect tune that is one moment a war song, and the next, without alteration of a single note, the saddest of patriotic reveries “on Laugh Neagh’s bank where the fisherman strays in the clear cold eve’s declining,” flatly refuses to merge itself into any sonata movement, and loftily asserts itself in right of ancient descent as entitled to walk before any symphony that ever professor penned.

It is only in the second subject of this movement, an original theme of the composer’s own minting, that the form and the material really combine chemically into sonata. And this satisfactory result is presently upset by the digression to the utterly incompatible aim of the composer to display the charms of his native folk-music. In the first movement the sonata writer keeps to his point better: there are no national airs lifted bodily into it. Nevertheless the first movement does not convince me that Professor Stanford’s talent is a symphonic talent any more than Meyerbeer’s was.¹⁰⁶

“The parallel is of course not exact; and the temperament indicated by it does not disqualify Stanford from writing symphonies any more than it disqualified Raff; but it suggests my view of the composer of the Irish Symphony as compendiously as is possible within present limits.”¹⁰⁷

Queen Victoria had ascended the throne in 1837 and her government had not answered the Irish question up to this instant. Foreign policy was very consciously attuned to the colonies in order to avoid scrutiny of the problems at home. The nineteenth century remained, as formerly on the European continent, a century of imperial battles and later of ‘missionary work’; consequently, the churches in Great Britain exerted tremendous influence over people. In this way, the Irish question remained an enormously fertile territory for British composers. John Field and Charles Wood had been an Irishmen themselves, and Sullivan, Bax, Hart, Moeran, Stanford were all exceptionally influenced by Ireland. Leigh Henry maintained that hardly a British composer, even Vaughan Williams, Bantock, Elgar, Parry, German, Goossens or Holbrooke was purely English – either Irish, Welsh or Scottish ancestors can be proven.¹⁰⁸ This assertion highlights the importance of the Celtic world of legends and of the ‘Celtic’ disposition for British music to at least 1940 and the multiple forays into Celtic subjects. Irish, Welsh or Scottish blood makes up, as many English understand themselves, ‘Britishness’. ‘No other race ever boasts of being mongrel. I’m

106 *Ibid.*, pp. 306–307.

107 *Ibid.*, p. 308.

108 Leigh Henry, ‘The Celt in Music’, in: *MQ* XIX (1933), pp. 413–415.

quite offensively English myself, because I'm one-sixteenth French, besides all the usual nationalities.¹⁰⁹

The Symphony No. 4 in F major Op. 31 (1889), which incorporates music from the incidental music from *Oedipus Tyrannus*, also carries a motto: 'Through Youth to Strife, / Through Death to Life.' The four nouns very probably somehow represent the single movements;¹¹⁰ the third movement in particular very much reflects thoughts on death and transience. Doubtlessly, this *Andante molto moderato*, with sighing falling seconds and minor thirds, is the emotionally and musically deepest movement. The first two are even more Brahmsian than the Third Symphony, while the last movement is far too lightweight to be an appropriate counterpart to the preceding slow movement.

Ex. 70



Ex. 71



Stanford's Fifth Symphony was not published until one year before his death, that is 29 years after it had been written, and then 'only' under the auspices of the Carnegie Trust, which provided for the publication of the best British musical compositions submitted to it each year. The official report by the Trust on Stanford's Fifth Symphony was as follows: 'A work written in 1894 of remarkable freshness and individuality. It should be enjoyed not only for its intrinsic merits but because it represents a phase of British music of which the composer was a pioneer.'¹¹¹

The work, the second-best-loved of all of Stanford's symphonies after the *Irish*, is subtitled *L'Allegro ed il Penseroso*, and on strictly musical terms, it may indeed be one of Stanford's best. It is constructed on the classical plan, but with a distinct freshness and individualism. The work was inspired by Milton's poem, and each movement is headed by a quotation from it:

I.

'Hence, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight horn

109 Dorothy Sayers, *Gaudy Night*, London 241972, p. 67.

110 In this respect very probably the symphony is a model for Davies' Symphony in D (1893-94; see p. 261) and Parry's Fifth Symphony (1912; see p. 240).

111 Quoted from John Francis Porte, *Sir Charles V. Stanford, Mus.Doc., M.A., D.C.L.*, London/New York 1921, p. 56.

In Stygian cave forlorn
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks and sighs unholy
Find out some uncouth cell.
When brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks
In dark Cimmerian desert even dwell.
But come those Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by man, heart-easing Mirth;
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful jollity,
Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,
Nods and Becks and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides,
Come and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew.'

II.

'Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill.
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower wets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sun-shine holy-day,

Till the live-long day-light fail:
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How faery Mab the junkets eat;
 These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.'

III.

'But hail, thou goddess sage and holy,
 Hail, divinest Melancholy!
 Whose saintly visage is too bright
 To hit the sense of human sight,
 And therefore to our weaker view
 O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
 Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
 Sober, steadfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain
 Flowing with majestic train,
 And sable stole of cypress lawn
 Over thy decent shoulder drawn:
 Come, but keep thy wonted state,
 With even step, and musing gait,
 And looks commercing with the skies,
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
 But first, and chiefest, with thee bring
 Him that yon soars on golden wing
 Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
 The cherub Contemplation;
 And the mute Silence hist along,
 'Less Philomel will deign a song
 In her sweetest saddest plight, ...'

IV.

'— Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy!
 Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among
 I woo, to hear thy even-song;
 And missing thee, I walk unseen
 On the dry smooth shaven green,
 To behold the wandering Moon
 Riding near her highest noon, ...
 Oft, on a plat of rising ground
 I hear the far-off curlew sound
 Over some wide-water'd shore,
 Swinging slow with sullen roar:

Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
 In scepter'd pall come sweeping by
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelop's line,
 Or the tale of Troy divine;
 And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
 Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
 But let my due feet never fail
 To walk the studious cloister's pale,
 And love the high-embow'd roof,
 With antique pillars massy proof,
 and storied windows richly dight
 Casting a dim religious light:
 There let the pealing organ blow
 To the full-voiced quire below
 In service high and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies,
 And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.'

In particular the melodic features are highly inspired, for example the third theme of the first movement.

Ex. 72

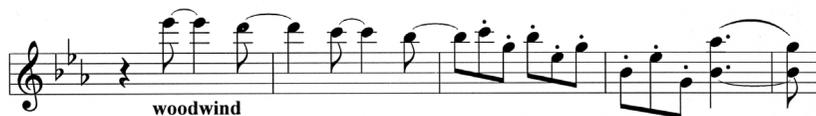


This symphony may be Stanford's most relaxed, comparable indeed to Beethoven's Fourth.

The Sixth Symphony is inscribed 'in honour of the life-work of a great artist,' ostensibly a reference evidently to G. F. Watts, who died in 1904. The music seems to represent four phases of the painter's art, and 'there is a Death theme that is easily recognisable; the slow movement has a very important part for cor anglais (is this representative of Love?) and the scherzo struck one hearer as suggesting the charming picture "Good luck to your fishing," while the finale might be taken as the musical picture of the equestrian statue in Kensington Gardens.'¹¹² As in the Seventh Symphony, Stanford gives no clear separation between the last two movements, instead linking scherzo and finale. The formal aspects are meanwhile entirely internalized: the development of the first movement unfolds naturally out of the exposition, and the recapitulation is handled individually, whereby the thematic material is varied and compressed.

112 John Alexander Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford. An Essay in Comparative Criticism*, Cambridge 1934, p. 47.

Ex. 73: First movement, first theme



Ex. 74: First movement, second theme



The slow second movement, which Stanford pared down more and more over time, is a set of variations on the movement's main theme

Ex. 75



that leads to an *espressivo* middle section (from [30] 8) flute solo, counterpointed by a clarinet figure,

Ex. 76



a motif from which becomes very important before the recapitulatory section (from 4 [34]) makes the interrelationship of both themes rather more obvious.

A fast scherzo with an only slightly distinguished trio leads (6 [62]) to the quasi-finale,

Ex. 77



which, although not overflowing with special features, is nonetheless very well-constructed.

The score of the symphony was immediately written into full score, according to Jeremy Dibble's research, and the hurried pace at which Stanford worked either suggests that he was commissioned to write a symphony (the symphony was premièred in January 1906, seven months after the score's completion, by the London Symphony Orchestra) or that he simply was in a highly inspired mood.

The Seventh Symphony in D minor Op. 124, composed six years later in 1911 and thus historically in close company with Parry's Fifth Symphony, has indeed a rather different but no less impressive individual form. The first movement is nothing spectacular, but it is carefully worked out (the development begins at 2 [5], the recapitulation of the augmented first theme at [8] 8, the coda at c. [11]). The presentation of the themes is entrusted to the strings and woodwind, respectively:

Ex. 78



Ex. 79



With the second movement (in B \flat major) Stanford returns to the minuet form, marked, however, from the very beginning by off-beat accents. The end of the movement, which develops into a kind of scherzo, is more strongly characterized by staccato, and at the end of the movement, a fleeting return of the trio and minuet can be observed.

The third movement (opening in F major) combines the slow movement and the finale insofar as the slow movement is a series of (six) variations;¹¹³ the seventh is the nearly entirely independent finale, comparable in size to that of Elgar's 'Enigma' Variations (1899),¹¹⁴ but simultaneously a simple, but in any case recognizable sonata movement. This highly individual formal conception crowns Stanford's symphonic output successfully and was almost certainly a model for Arnold Bax. Stanford's formal control was in any case much stronger than his successor's, however.

Stanford was not the first composer to help British music to achieve a breakthrough. This honour goes rather to Hubert Parry, whose oratorio *Prometheus Unbound* (1880) was, in terms of success, on a par with Gounod's *Mors et vita* (1885) and *La rédemption* (1882) or Dvořák's *Svatební košile* Op. 69 (1884), *Svatá Ludmila* Op. 71 (1885-86), *Mass in D major* Op. 86 (orchestral version) (1892) and *Requiem* Op. 89 (1890); it has been said that with this 1880 performance the British Musical renaissance started.¹¹⁵ Norman Demuth maintains

113 A summarized analysis of the movement can be found in A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire. Vol. III Part B: The European Symphony from ca. 1800 to ca. 1930: Great Britain, Russia, France*, ed. Brian Hart, Bloomington/Indianapolis 2008, p. 152.

114 Elgar conducted a performance of the Symphony in February 1912 in Cambridge (cf. Percy Young, *Elgar O.M. A Study of a Musician*, London 1955, p. 161).

115 Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, 'Chasing a myth and a legend: "The British Musical renaissance" in a "Land without music"', in: *MT* 149/1904 (2008), p. 54.

that in Parry's music Mendelssohn Bartholdy's influence in the British oratorical tradition might barely have been replaced by that of Brahms¹¹⁶ – and he might be right with respect to the importance of the aesthetic perspective for which Parry stands. He stands in a long tradition, with numerous successors and predecessors; the fashion is supported by the following general understanding of music's place in society: 'The diffusion of a taste for music, and the increasing elevation of its character, may be regarded as a national blessing. The tendency of music is to soften and purify the mind. The cultivation of musical taste furnishes to the rich a refined and intellectual pursuit, which excludes the indulgence of frivolous and vicious amusements, and to the poor, a "*laborum dulce lenimen*", a relaxation from toil, more attractive than the haunts of intemperance.'¹¹⁷

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (Bournemouth, 27 February 1848–Knight's Croft, Rustington, 7 October 1918) was educated at Eton and Oxford, was a pupil of Macfarren's and Sterndale Bennett's at the Royal Academy of Music, and was taught by the Wagnerian Edward Dannreuther in London and Henry Hugo Pearson in Stuttgart. He later became Professor of Music at Oxford¹¹⁸ (his successor in 1908 was Walter Parratt, Parry's colleague at the Royal College of Music), Foundation Professor and later Grove's successor as Principal at the Royal College of Music. A multifaceted – or, in today's parlance, 'holistic' – man, Parry not only propagated literature, art (his family was friends with Edward Burne-Jones), history and philosophy,¹¹⁹ but also sport. In contrast to Stanford's ideas, Parry saw each of his pupils as an individual personality and was convinced that by treating them as individuals would most deeply result in individual perspectives (and individual compositional approaches) might be achieved. Vaughan Williams reports: 'The fact is [...] that Parry had a highly nervous temperament. He was in early days a thinker with very advanced views.'¹²⁰ He estimated his achievements modestly,¹²¹ and in the last weeks of his life Parry was especially concerned with the welfare of his students at the Royal College of Music and asked himself how he could instil in them 'steadfastness' and

116 Norman Demuth, *Record Collector's Series II*, Hayes 1950, p. 38.

117 George Hogarth, *Musical History, Biography and Criticism*, London 1835, p. 430.

118 The Oxford Chair of Music was established in 1626; Cambridge's was introduced in 1684. The next chair that was established was in Edinburgh in 1839, Aberystwyth followed in 1874, 1893 Manchester, 1897 Durham, 1903 Birmingham, 1908 Cardiff, 1910 London, 1928 Sheffield, 1930 Glasgow, 1946 Bristol, 1947 Liverpool, 1951 Belfast, etc. Parry's predecessor had been John Stainer (1889–1899), and already during this time Parry had, as Choragus, lectured often at the University of Oxford, on medieval theorists, the troubadours, Italian choral music, the beginnings of opera and oratorio, Monteverdi, Carissimi, music of the seventeenth century, Purcell, string quartets. On this problematic cf. Rosemary Golding, *Music and Academia in Victorian Britain*, Franham/Burlington 2013.

119 Parry's daughter Gwendolen Maud Greene reports Parry's aversion to the church: 'Alas! that he felt the Church *must* veil God from our eyes!' (Gwendolen Maud Greene, *Two witnesses*, London etc. 1930, p. 64.)

120 Quoted from Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 1992, p. 5.

121 Hubert Parry to Herbert Howells, 27 February 1918: 'I have come to the last milestone; and looking back I am troubled to realize how little I have been able to do.' Quoted in Herbert Howells, 'Hubert Parry', 1968, in: *RCMM* LXV/3 (1969), p. 19, reprinted in: *M&L* L (1969), p. 223.

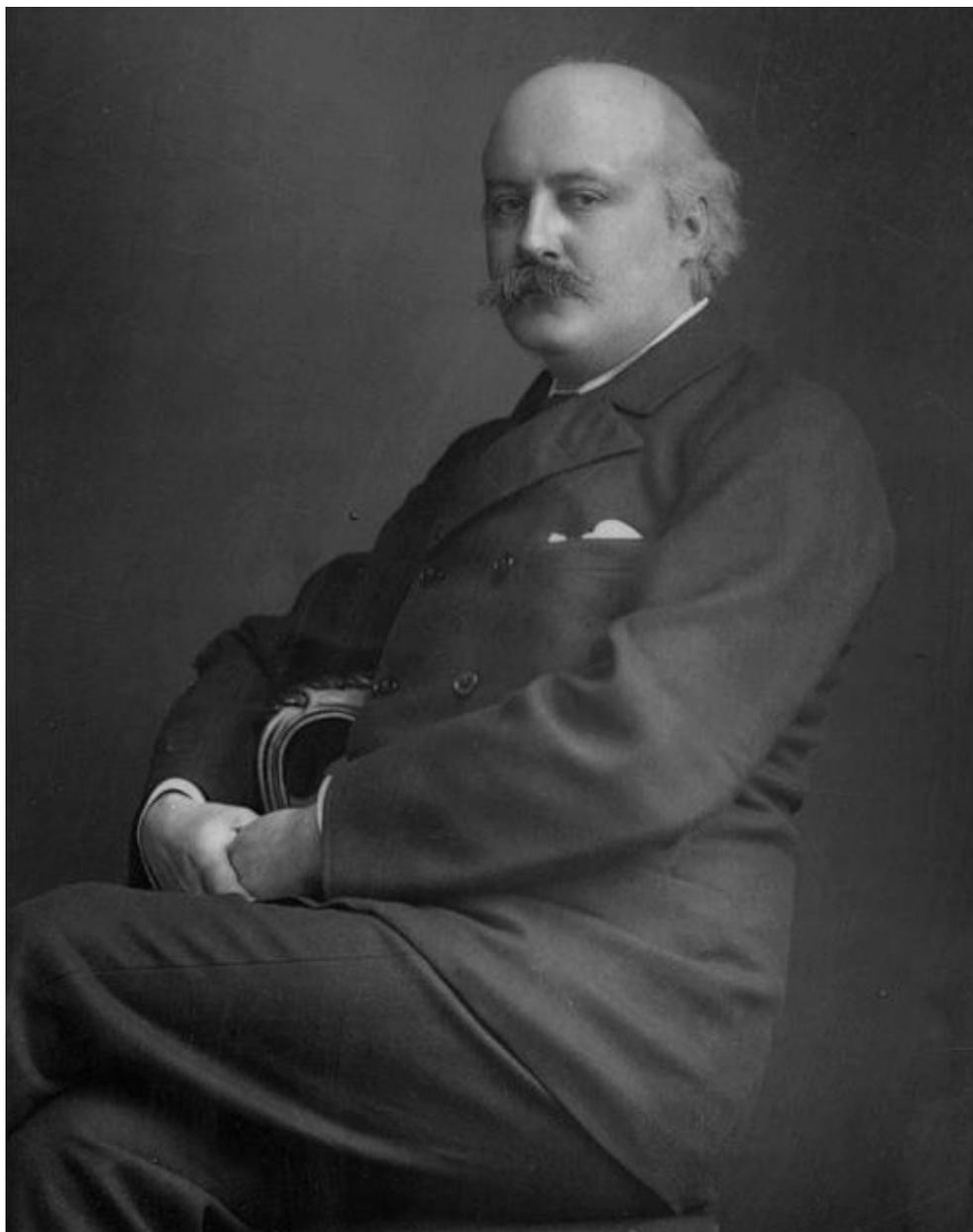


Illustration 26. Charles Hubert Parry, photograph.

'courage'.¹²² Before his death on 7 October 1918, he very much longed for peace; the First World War ended shortly after he died. As a composer, Parry was not revived until the end of the 1970s. Two M.Mus. theses were written on Parry's symphonies in that decade, and in 1986, Dibble's Southampton Ph.D. thesis followed, paving the way for a thorough re-assessment of his music.

By promoting his ideal of keeping the composition as close to the literary source text as possible,¹²³ Parry influenced the vocal works of his most intellectual successors, Gustav Holst, George Dyson and Gerald Finzi.¹²⁴ Certainly Brahms's influence on Parry's music¹²⁵ was enormous, not only in his *Elegy to Brahms* (1897), but also in his five symphonies and in his handling of text as it was modelled in Brahms's *Schicksalslied*, *Gesang der Parzen* and *Nänie*. Parry did not internalize Wagner due to the latter's tendency to detract from music as an abstract art form by emphasizing theatrical and leitmotivic aspects. Unlike Corder and Mackenzie, Parry did not embrace Wagner or Liszt but rather Schumann and Brahms (there are also some similarities between Parry's music and that of Felix Draeseke).¹²⁶ Stanford meanwhile saw Wagner as a dilemma and a challenge, and Wagner left hardly any trace in Stanford's music.¹²⁷ The teaching situation reflected in the personalities of Stanford and Parry is best presented in notes by George Dyson and Henry Walford Davies:

'Stanford's real and abiding influence lay in qualities of mind and character of which he was probably never even conscious. His fundamental reactions were fierce and intuitive. There were some things to him so elemental that they rarely required to be expressed, much less argued about. And on this plane he carried most of his pupils with him, without their being in the least alive as to what was actually happening. Vagueness, shallowness, sentimentality, froth, and a score of other temptations to which every talent, young or old, is subject, were simply outside his orbit. They could not exist in his presence, and men left them outside his door like a coat or a hat. This was the real infection. His direct judgment, his tightness of speech, his fury of integrity, these were what he gave to those who could digest them. It was an influence as indirect as was the breadth and scholarship of Parry. One did not have to know Parry. He had only to sit in the Director's room at the Royal College, and it was impossible for slack or superficial work to feel at home

122 Gwendolen Maud Greene, *Two witnesses*, London etc. 1930, p. 191.

123 John Brown's *History of the Rise and Progress of Poetry, Through its Several Species of 1764* bears as a motto the first lines of Milton's *At a solemn music*, composed by Parry as *Blest Pair of Sirens* – more than a hundred years later.

124 Dan Godfrey, *Memoirs and Music*, London 1924, p. 183.

125 'Parry could accept Brahms because he had his foot in the past, which is something that all Englishmen like.' (Hubert Foss, *Music in My Time*, London 1933, p. 172.) Furthermore, Parry was more interested in form than colour, which made the difference to the sometimes highly effective instrumentation of the Liszt-orientated Royal Academy of Music much clearer.

126 In 1886, still during Brahms's lifetime, Parry places Brahms Beethoven almost entirely to the side (cf. Hubert Parry, *Studies of Great Composers*, London 1902, pp. 361 and 367).

127 Cf. Charles Villiers Stanford, 'The Wagner Bubble. A Reply', in: *The Nineteenth Century* XXIV (1888), pp. 727–733.

there. How could an institution be aimless that had Parry at its head? How could a composition be meaningless vapour that had Stanford at its heels?¹²⁸

‘I had but one term of close contact at College with him [Stanford]. The things I remember most vividly in his teaching were: that the ground-plan of each movement had to be perfect; that he “sensed” it in a wonderful way if any measurement was wrong that he did not repair the disproportion there and then except so far as the ground-plan was concerned. He would go to the piano and hammer out the necessary scheme with a more or less definite bass and a vague super-structure which left a pupil quite free to fancy for himself, but in no doubt as to the exact measurements within which his fantasy was to range. Parry seemed to have intimate concern for and sympathy with the pupil’s thought itself; Stanford’s concern was to see the thought through to the hearer, whatever it was; so when the design seemed right he simply nodded and that was done with. The two men made so splendid a combination that we who had lessons from both were uniquely fortunate; and I may be pardoned here for mentioning Brahms’s remark to me that “he hoped I taught others as well as my teachers had taught me.” “Make my compliments to your teachers” was his message as we parted, with a greeting to “Sir Grove.”’¹²⁹

Parry’s first ideas for symphonies began to take shape in 1876, but he did not start composing his First Symphony seriously until 23 December 1880 after preliminary considerations of 25 December of the preceding year.¹³⁰ The Symphony in G major (finished in 1882) was first given at the 1882 Birmingham Festival, and repeated at the Crystal Palace under Manns in 1883. Parry himself noted of the Birmingham performance:

‘The greater part of the audience were absolutely cold throughout, and the applause at the end I suppose to have been evoked by the good nature of the stewards and my friends.’¹³¹

Manns’s comment in a letter to Grove was:

‘Parry’s symphony is a very remarkable work. A little less polyphony and a little more ‘placido’ in the midst of the ceaseless *Sturm und Drang* would be improvements at least to my enjoyment of such genuinely enthusiastical flow of high-souled aspirations. Such music is awfully difficult to master and my ears will ring with it for some time to come, in consequence of the close study which I had to make of the score. However I am myself pleased with the result.’¹³²

The symphony – the only one of Parry’s never to have been published – already displays most of Parry’s fine qualities – as well as many of his imperfections, especially his dependence

128 George Dyson in Henry Walford Davies et al., ‘Charles Villiers Stanford. By some of his pupils’, in: *M&L V* (1924), p. 198.

129 Henry Walford Davies in *ibid.*, p. 194.

130 For the composition of the score, cf. Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, pp. 195–199.

131 Quoted from Charles Larcom Graves, *Hubert Parry – his life and works*, Vol.1, London 1926, p. 235.

132 August Manns to George Grove, April 1883. Quoted from Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, p. 201.

on Schumann and Brahms in harmonic and instrumental respects. The development of the thematic material (from [D]),

Ex. 80

Ex. 81

derived from the second theme, is nonetheless highly complex and shows a master of symphonic thinking. A false recapitulation ([K]) simply hints that lots of further development has to happen before the real recapitulation ([Q]).

The slow second movement, in ternary form, is mainly derived from one theme praised by Dibble for its 'unusual rhythmic features',¹³³

Ex. 82

even in the middle section, and here we find the idyllic, slightly melancholic 'Englishness' that generations of later composers were to condemn in favour of Elgar's 'Englishness'. Concerning the movement's influences, it appears to bear traces of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Wagner – indeed, Wagner's style of instrumental progress is fairly obvious.

A highly original, energetic and spirited, contrapuntally complex scherzo

Ex. 83

flanks a typically Parryesque lyrical trio, foreshadowing many second themes of important

133 Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. 21998, p. 202.

first movements to come, and thus also recaptures the mood of the first movement that has just passed.

The finale exudes even more energy than the scherzo, containing canonic entries and utilizing the technique of passing a theme or motif from one part to another. This last device culminates in a fugato of the first theme of the movement,

Ex. 84

The image shows a musical score for a Clarinet in A. It consists of two staves of music in 2/4 time. The top staff is labeled 'Clar. in A'. The music features a rhythmic motif of eighth notes and quarter notes, with various articulations and dynamics. The bottom staff shows a similar rhythmic pattern, possibly representing a canon or a related part.

which opens the development ([G]), the recapitulation (from [M]), with recurrence to the lyrical Parryesque mood of the first and third movements, leading the symphony to an impressive, brilliant conclusion.

Richter had originally been scheduled to conduct the first performance of the First Symphony, but rehearsals for *Tristan* proved so tiring that the performance had to be cancelled,¹³⁴ and was later postponed another time.¹³⁵ It was eventually the Second (1882-83) that Richter ended up conducting, but not until 6 June 1887 (followed by Cowen's Fifth on 13 June and Stanford's Third, which had been premièred by Richter just a month before, on 27 June). According to Christopher Fifield, Parry revised the symphony after Richter and he had played it through in June 1886. They had another session together two weeks before its performance. 'He played the upper part and I the lower, and even at *presto* pace in the Scherzo he was hardly ever at a loss, always picking out the particular part of the score that would be prominent at the moment, and playing fiddles, clarinets, and horns with equal success. It is an astounding gift.'¹³⁶ Richter had already suggested that Parry might compose a celebratory work for the festivities, but the offer was declined. 'I had a letter from Richter this morning inviting me to write a Jubilee overture. I really can't. The idea is disgusting. I'm so stupid. It's just as if all my wits were clean gone.'¹³⁷ Stanford's new work was almost a disaster. 'The society functions at the Castle very nearly imperilled the first performance (under Richter). At the last moment several of the best players in the Richter orchestra, who were also members of the Queen's band, were ordered down to Windsor, and if it had not

134 Christopher Fifield, *True artist and true friend. A biography of Hans Richter*, Oxford etc. 1993, p. 189.

135 *Ibid.*, p. 200.

136 Parry's diary, 23 May 1887. Quoted in Christopher Fifield, *True artist and true friend. A biography of Hans Richter*, Oxford etc. 1993, p. 239.

137 *Ibid.*, 18 April 1887. Quoted *ibid.*

It may also be noted that the first movement's secondary idea is, as the second idea of the finale, first heard on a solo clarinet. Dibble stresses that still more significant 'is Parry's use of essentially three-part counterpoint combined with his own personal development of diatonic dissonance and wide registral tessitura that seems to foreshadow the expressive language associated with Elgar's musical style.'¹⁴⁷ He also mentions the importance of Dvořák's music in the language and rhetoric of the slow movement, 'particularly in the simple manner in which Parry prepares the way for the long lyrical span of the main theme (a comparison with the opening bars of the slow movement of Dvořák's Sixth Symphony provides a telling parallel), and the reorchestrated recapitulation of the main subject on the cellos also seems to recall similar contexts in Dvořák's orchestral works.'¹⁴⁸

Parry composed his works on a strictly delineated daily schedule; Herbert Howells gives an exemplary diary schedule from c. 1888-89, relating to the Third Symphony in C major, which was premièred at a Philharmonic Society concert on 23 May 1889 and conducted by the composer:

9.30 to 1. Pupils.
2-3.45. Symphony.
3.45-4.45. Pupils.
5-7. Symphony.
Dinner and cards.
9.15-12. Revising score and parts of *Judith*.¹⁴⁹

Parry was in fact not entirely happy with the symphony, since he had originally planned it to be of a very moderate size, not really suited to the Philharmonic Society's requirements. He suggested that the Second Symphony, which he considered worth performing again, be put on instead, but the Philharmonic Society opted for the novelty. In reply, Parry voiced his disappointment at their decision and was even faintly disparaging about his new symphonic creation:

'I apologize for being so slow in answering your note. I can't help being sorry you should choose the small symphony I spoke of, but as you prefer it, I must of course accede. It is quite a small and unimposing kind of symphony, in the plain key of C major and consists of an opening Allegro, a slow movement in A minor, Scherzo in F, and a set of variations. I suppose it must be announced as a Symphony – Sinfonietta looks too affected. The announcement might perhaps give it as a "Short Symphony". As to naming me, I really don't care. Somehow people have got to call me Dr H. P., but C. Hubert H. Parry seems more natural to me personally.'¹⁵⁰

147 Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, p. 212.

148 *Ibid.*, p. 212.

149 Charles Larcom Graves, *Hubert Parry – his life and works*, Vol. 1, London 1926, p. 301.

150 Hubert Parry to the Philharmonic Society, 14.12.1888. Quoted in Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, p. 276.

Extensive revision of the so-called ‘small symphony’ (or ‘Symphony for Small Orchestra’ as appears on the original autograph) took up most of January, though further small amendments were subsequently before the score was dispatched to the copyist at the beginning of April.¹⁵¹

The Symphony won immediate favour and for the next twenty years was the most frequently performed symphony by any English composer – Henry Hadow even lectured on it at Oxford in 1892.

‘It is the most characteristic of Parry’s five symphonies, his orchestral masterpiece on a large scale. He achieves perfectly what he sets out to do: to create an exuberant English equivalent to the Mendelssohn *Italian* and Schumann *Rhenish* Symphonies. The structure and developmental procedures resemble the *Italian*, with nods to Beethoven 4 and 8, but the themes are all thoroughly English in their rhythmic cut. (...) *The English* is inspired and well wrought in every detail; it has the “inevitability of the classics”.¹⁵² ‘The markedly English character of Parry’s third symphony (...) struck every hearer, and the name *English Symphony* has stuck to it ever since.’¹⁵³

It may indeed be that Parry did not realize that using folksongs in his symphony might have given it an even more typically English flair; in any case, this was not his intended effect: “‘Love of country, of freedom, of action and heartiness” were the qualities¹⁵⁴ which he conceived to be the heritage of the Englishman, and therefore of English music, and it was these qualities which he wished specially to embody in the *English* Symphony.’¹⁵⁵ With this title (supposedly applied by Joseph Bennett) the work was published after numerous revisions in 1907; the first of these was made for the 1895 Leeds Subscription Concerts, when Parry added to the very moderately-sized orchestra (which helped it to soon find a place in the repertoires of many amateur orchestral societies) three trombones;¹⁵⁶ the first movement was extensively rescored twice in all, the second time for a Bournemouth performance on 18 December 1902.

Without doubt the ‘English’ Symphony exudes ‘the fresh, sturdy diatonicism (such as the main theme of the first movement, six bars after [A]) with which we have become so

151 Cf. Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, p. 276.

152 Bernard Benoliel, Sleeve-note to a recording of Parry’s Third Symphony, London 1990, p. 5.

153 John Alexander Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford. An Essay in Comparative Criticism*, Cambridge 1934, p. 41.

154 ‘Parry’s book *The Evolution of the Art of Music*, 1893, contains a valuable chapter on “Folk-music” which quotes one English tune, The Carman’s Whistle, and makes some generalizations on rather insufficient evidence about the characteristics of English folk-music. The phrase quoted above is the sum of them. (...)’ (original footnote.)

155 Henry Cope Colles, *Symphony and Drama, 1850–1900. The Oxford History of Music, VII*, London etc. 1934, p. 275.

156 Charles Hubert Hastings Parry reports to William Hannam, 4 January 1895: ‘That *English* Symphony is one of the most unfortunate pieces of MS I ever had to deal with. The first score was lost, and a fresh copy made in a hurry (for a performance) from the parts, and now the parts are lost! I lent them to a friend and he without giving me any notice has disappeared up the Nile, and his relations can’t find any trace of the parts. I am having fresh ones made as fast as I can.’ Quoted from Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, p. 326.

familiar in Parry's mature language.¹⁵⁷ Certain other stylistic features, such as his propensity for three-part contrapuntal textures (for example in the first movement four bars after [B], and in the slow movement at [B]), 'a texture one more readily associates with Elgar, are even more prominent than before.'¹⁵⁸ In being deliberately 'classical' in his formal approach, the nature and treatment of the material is much simpler and direct than in either of Parry's earlier symphonies, having instead more in common with the lighter vein of the *Suite Moderne*. Both thematic groups in the first-movement sonata form are clearly defined and the ideas themselves are concise and infectiously melodious. The second group, more earnest than the first one and marked *largamente*, begins the recapitulation (again on the clarinet), a typical Mannheim procedure¹⁵⁹ but not altogether rare in England in the past decades.

The following *Andante sostenuto*, opening rather introspectively, develops into a magnificent yearning melody immaculately scored for divided strings, and the whole movement expands with a Brahmsian richness both in harmony and orchestration. The scherzo is described by Dickinson as having 'a commonplace vigour, as of second-rate Haydn at second hand',¹⁶⁰ an opinion shared by Dibble, while Benoliel avoids mention of it. Only the finale 'develops into an almost Beethovenian expansiveness in the finale, built up through an engaging set of variations';¹⁶¹ some of these variations were exchanged during the revisions. 'Yet Parry's response to the classical constraints imposed by the small scale of the symphony is disappointingly conservative. In preserving both the phrase and harmonic structure of the theme throughout without once resorting even to a change of mode, the series of variations (with repeats) courts a sense of monotony – a feeling that is thrown into relief by the sudden excursion into new tonal areas in the extended coda.'¹⁶²

In 1889, only five weeks after the Third's première performance, the Fourth Symphony in E minor appeared, but Parry was so dissatisfied with it that it took until 1904, when Dan Godfrey persuaded Parry to exhume the score for a Bournemouth performance on 29 December, before the work was staged. It was eventually revised in 1910 for a Philharmonic Society concert, then 'issued (...) with descriptive titles to its four movements which showed the symphony to be in line with that subjective attitude of mind which dominated his later years';¹⁶³ he gave it the title 'Finding the way' and subtitled each movement (probably inspired by Walford Davies). The reason for the rewriting of the scherzo of the E minor Symphony in 1910 was very characteristic of Parry, as Emily

157 Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, p. 277.

158 *Ibid.*

159 Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, stresses several times Parry's use of "Mannheim" procedures, to show his conservative musical thinking. It may be borne in mind that Parry wrote, apart from a book on Bach, *The Evolution of the Art of Music* [1893], London 1931, *Studies of Great Composers*, London ⁷1902, and *The music of the seventeenth century. The Oxford History of Music*, III, London/Edinburgh/New York 1902.

160 A. E. F. Dickinson, *The Neglected Parry*, in: *MT* XC (1949), p. 109.

161 Bernard Benoliel, Sleeve-note to a recording of Parry's Third Symphony, London 1990, p. 5.

162 Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. ²1998, p. 278.

163 Cf. Henry Cope Colles, *Symphony and Drama, 1850–1900. The Oxford History of Music*, VII, London etc. 1934, p. 276.

Daymond reports: “People liked it so absurdly, I thought there must be something wrong about it!” And I remember the answer to a query in some proofs about a pair of 5ths: “Yes, I saw those 5ths – I looked them straight in the face and said ‘Yes, you’re a pair of brutes, but I’m going to leave you in.’”¹⁶⁴

The première performance had been conducted by Richter (Parry unofficially called the work ‘Richter’ Symphony), who had commissioned the work for the Birmingham Musical Festival, and Parry recalls in his diary:

‘Parts of it came off pretty well, first part of first movement, development of slow movement and I think all the scherzo. Middle of first movement and development of slow did not please me, nor last movement either. It was much better received than I expected and after scherzo I had to go up and make a bow or two.’¹⁶⁵

The serious mood of the Fourth Symphony moves beyond the intellectualism of either the First or Second Symphonies.¹⁶⁶ Clearly Parry had attempted to inject a new level of pathos into this score, and certainly this is the case with both the first movement and the affecting *Lento* (mottoed ‘Thinking on it’). Again he impresses by his careful craftsmanship, with energetic and poetic moments, with only a few hints of Brahms. The first movement, ‘Looking for it’, a sonata rondo, is highly concise and strict, an unequivocal masterpiece in conception, already identifiable as such from the rather Brahmsian Doric opening motif (which does not, however, develop in a Brahmsian way), intended to show man rejoicing ‘in the consciousness of effectual forces working within him’:

Ex. 90



although the movement ends with a kind *tranquillo* coda, or epilogue. Similarly tense is the opening of the finale (‘Girt for it’):

Ex. 91



The second movement, *Lento*, is particularly rich in original melodic ideas, striking a much deeper note than its counterpart in the Second Symphony; the fine closing idea of the first group, with its sequence of falling figures ‘is prophetic of Elgar (who, incidentally, was at

164 Emily Daymond, *How Sir Hubert Worked*, in: RCMM XV/1 (1918), p. 26.

165 Parry’s diary, 1 July 1889. Quoted in Christopher Fifield, *True artist and true friend. A biography of Hans Richter*, Oxford etc. 1993, p. 285.

166 Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. 1998, pp. 436–440 offers a thorough analysis of this symphony.

the first performance) and bears interesting comparison with some of that composer's most mature thematic utterances.¹⁶⁷

Ex. 92



Though the symphony as a whole lacks the cyclic thread that runs through its predecessor, there is one fascinating structural innovation in the second movement, entitled *Intermezzo*, which functions as a link between the first and third movements not only in atmosphere but also in a tonal sense, since the initial tonic major (E major) yields to the dominant of C major, the key of the impending slow movement.

Ex. 93: *Intermezzo*, opening

Allegretto semplice

The scherzo in A minor ('Playing on it' – also available in an unpublished version for four hands) was the only movement that satisfied Parry. 'It is certainly an intriguing piece. Described as "an *al fresco* fête in the olden time – a coquettish dance of lords and ladies, interrupted by a song"¹⁶⁸ it has more in common with the lighter vein of the *Suite Moderne* with which it shares the same key. Thematically, however, it is less distinguished, though this is made up for by greater rhythmical interest, notably in the fluctuations of metre between triple and duple.¹⁶⁹

The Fifth Symphony in B minor (1912),¹⁷⁰ in the posthumously published version labelled 'Symphonic Fantasia 1912' (though in the MS score entitled only *after* the first performance 'Symphonic Fantasia'), is in fact Parry's most interesting symphony. Here the influence of Schumann's Fourth Symphony (itself originally entitled *Symphonische Phantasie*) is most prominent, especially in the method of linking the movements thematically. Parry's lengthy article under the heading of *Symphony* for Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* clearly reveals his response to Schumann's symphony, as evident in

167 *Ibid.*, p. 279, music examples p. 280.

168 'Richter Concerts', in: *MT* XXX (1889), p. 472.

169 Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. 1998, p. 279, music examples p. 280.

170 Dibble also offers an extensive analysis of this work in *ibid.*, pp. 456–462.

the following description:

‘The first subject of the first movement and the first of the last are connected by a strong characteristic figure, which is common to both of them. The persistent way in which this figure is used in the first movement has already been described. It is not maintained to the same extent in the last movement; but it makes a strong impression in its place there, partly by its appearing conspicuously in the accompaniment, and partly by the way it is led up to in the sort of intermezzo which connects the scherzo and the last movement, where it seems to be introduced at first as a sort of reminder of the beginning of the work, and as if suggesting the clue to its meaning and purpose’. (...) ‘the series of movements are as it were interlaced by their subject-matter; and the result is that the whole gives the impression of a single and consistent musical poem. The way in which the subjects recur may suggest different explanations to different people, and hence it is dangerous to try and fix one in definite terms describing particular circumstances. But the important fact is that the work can be felt to represent in its entirety the history of a series of mental or emotional conditions such as may be grouped round one centre; in other words, the group of impressions which go to make the innermost core of a given story seems to be faithfully expressed in musical terms and in accordance with the laws which are indispensable to a work of art. The conflict of impulses and desires, the different phases of thought and emotion, and the triumph or failure of the different forces which seem to be represented, all give the impression of belonging to one personality, and of being perfectly consistent in their relation to one another.’¹⁷¹

Concerning orchestration as well as a number of other technical devices (especially the composition for woodwind, for example at the end of the slow movement), Brahms was obviously Parry’s model:

Ex. 94: [C]

171 Hubert Parry, ‘Symphony’, in George Grove (ed.), *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians (a.d. 1450–1883)* 4, London 1899, p. 37.



But Jeremy Dibble also mentions Liszt as an important influence, the 'elongated recapitulation of the whole work, articulated by Theme 1 in the tonic major, [being] decidedly Lisztian, and brings to mind the sophisticated cyclic design of the Sonata in B minor'¹⁷² – although even in this parallel case Dibble mentions noticeable differences of treatment.

The four movements carry the following subtitles: 'Stress', 'Love', 'Play', 'Now'. The first two themes of the first movement will return in later movements, especially the second one:

Ex. 95



Ex. 96



Three further themes follow (also in the development), all of considerable weight, but obviously only the first one has structural importance in the first movement, being the only one that is recapitulated in full ([H] 1) – elements of the second theme lead to the second movement, a slow movement in ternary form. The outer sections are mainly structured by one theme, introduced canonically, although a second theme occurs in the first section and a third one leads to the middle section:

Ex. 97



172 Jeremy Dibble, *C. Hubert H. Parry*, Oxford etc. 1998, pp. 461–462.

Ex. 98



Ex. 99



An ethereal scherzo (from 9 [Q] and again from 7 [Aa]), the beginning of which is derived from the head of the first movement theme,

Ex. 100



with a slightly more earthbound trio ([U] 13),

Ex. 101



shows Parry's best qualities in instrumentation, the muted strings with delicate woodwind orchestration. A kind of solo cadenzas (for harp, violin, English horn, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, violoncello, viola and flute in *concertante* manner) lead ([Gg] 1) to the head of the first theme of the first movement, which has now been transformed into a new theme:

Ex. 102



This strongly diatonic theme develops in Parry's hand into the second theme,

Ex. 103

Cor in D I e III, Fg II

which is developed and led back to the first theme (7 [Oo]); the thematic material is treated in a Brahmsian manner. The woodwind and brass recapitulate ([Rf] 8) the head of the first movement theme, announcing the whole symphony's laudatory coda, which starts at [Tt] in a mood of reconciliation and proud joy, expressing noble feelings and lifting the spirits, taking up elements of former themes.

A comparison to Liszt's Piano Sonata in B minor and some works of Schoenberg may be interesting. Liszt's Finale acts as the omitted recapitulation of the first movement's interrupted sonata. Parry's Finale, on the other hand, attempts to be a movement in its own right (that is, complete with exposition, development, and recapitulation) using material derived from that of the first movement. The addition of further development and the peroration of Theme I after these events would seem, at least in the context of cyclic unity, to explore a new evolutionary phase. The complex cyclic procedures essayed in Schoenberg's Quartet No. 1 in D minor, Op. 7 and the *Kammersymphonie*, Op. 9 show a fascinating affinity with the processes revealed in Parry's symphony, particularly in the manner in which material undergoes constant transformation. Certainly all Parry's restatements (including the Scherzo) follow this trend either through the use of new consequent material, new tonal developments, or through thematic transformation which is especially telling in the last movement, final recapitulation, and coda. It seems unlikely that Parry knew either of Schoenberg's works.¹⁷³ In fact, with this work in four inter-connected movements, Parry

173 *Ibid.*, p. 462. Additionally Dibble reports: 'It is remotely possible that he may have seen a score of the Quartet which had been published in 1907 by Birnbach, but a performance in London was not forthcoming until November 1913 when it was given by the Flonzalay Quartet. The *Kammersymphonie* was not published until 1912 and then not performed publicly in England until 1921.' (*ibid.*)

proves himself to be a master of the symphonic form, although the prominence of diatonic themes may seem slightly antiquated for the era in which it was composed, especially at a time when Schoenberg and Strauss had already left the path of tonality. But this is easily explicable by the Royal College of Music's general adherence to Schumann and Brahms.

The first performance of the symphony took place on 5 December 1912 at Queen's Hall under the composer's direction and it made a deep impression on its audience. Balfour Gardiner, who had forged a reputation at his own concerts for music by members of the younger generation (such as Grainger, Scott, O'Neill, Bax, Holst and Harty), was highly taken with the work and included it in his 1913 season. A third performance took place in Bournemouth on 17 April 1913, and at the request of Henry Wood, it was given at Queen's Hall again on 1 November; according to the composer, the latter was a 'really wonderful performance. Warm and elastic.'¹⁷⁴

For a long time the concert halls in the bathing resorts (especially in the period starting with the opening of the Queen's Hall) remained, apart from occasional performances in larger cities like Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle and Edinburgh,¹⁷⁵ some of the most eminent venues outside London: music was intended as a remedy or for relaxation and important conductors like Basil Cameron (1884–1975),¹⁷⁶ Julius Harrison (1885–1963)¹⁷⁷ and Dan Godfrey (1868–1939)¹⁷⁸ were employed as heads of the municipal orchestras in Brighton,¹⁷⁹ Hastings and Bournemouth, respectively.¹⁸⁰ In this capacity they attained status

174 Parry's diary, 1 November 1913. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 456.

175 Joseph Bennett, 'Victorian music', in: *MT* XXXVIII (1897), p. 598.

176 Cameron was not one of the best-known conductors, but certainly one of the most important. He had, among others, performed from 1923–30 in Hastings, then went to the USA for some years and became, upon his return in 1938, assistant to Sir Henry Wood.

177 Harrison, from 1930 until 1940 head of the orchestra in Hastings, directed Havergal Brian's overture *Doctor Merryheart* according to the composer better than Henry Wood. Cf. Kenneth Eastaugh, *Havergal Brian – the making of a composer*. London 1976, p. 123.

178 Sir Daniel Eyers Godfrey had begun in 1893 to build up the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, which he directed up to his retirement in 1934. His concept of the *Lecture Concerts* was highly praised by Allen, Hadow, Macpherson, Newman and Bantock.

179 Brighton never had a really prominent orchestra, but was instead famous for the Brighton Festival that debuted in 1847 and still exists to this very day – although with important interruptions. The Brighton Festival Chorus, founded in 1968 by László Heltay, became the symbol of the festival; the chorus has participated in numerous important disc recordings, for example Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*, Walton's *Belsazzar's Feast* under André Previn, Patterson's *Mass of the Sea* under Geoffrey Simon, Bax's *Enchanted Summer* under Vernon Handley, Lloyd's *A Symphonic Mass* under the composer, Haydn's *Il ritorno di Tobia* under Antal Doráti and Kodály's *Psalmus Hungaricus* under István Kertész.

180 The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra has meanwhile been conducted among many others by Richard Austin, Rudolf Schwarz, Charles Groves, Constantín Silvestri, George Hurst, Paavo Berglund, Libor Pešek, Norman Del Mar, Vernon Handley, Richard Hickox, Kees Bakels, Andrew Litton and Marin Alsop.

nearly equal to that of Henry J. Wood (1869–1944),¹⁸¹ Hans Richter (1843–1916),¹⁸² August Manns (1825–1907),¹⁸³ Charles Hallé (1819–1895),¹⁸⁴ Thomas Beecham (1879–1961),¹⁸⁵ Albert Coates,¹⁸⁶ Malcolm Sargent (1895–1967),¹⁸⁷ Adrian Boult (1889–1983)¹⁸⁸ and John

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- 181 Together with the manager of Queen's Hall, Robert Newman, Wood initiated the Promenade Concerts in 1895 in the concert hall opened two years before. Wood had been scheduled as conductor of the first performance of Vaughan Williams's Fifth Symphony, but was by then too ill; the composer himself took his place. A year later Wood was dead.
- 182 Born in Austria Hungary, Richter was, before he went to England, active in München, where he had already conducted Wagner in 1868. From 1871 to 1875 he worked in Pest and made a triumphant debut in Vienna in 1875. He directed the first complete performance of the *Ring des Nibelungen* in 1876 in Bayreuth, but never conducted *Parsifal*. In 1885 he became head of the Birmingham Musical Festival, which was temporarily halted by the First World War and only later revived, mainly through the efforts of the City of Birmingham (later Symphony) Orchestra. George Weldon, who established a proper orchestra, played an especially important role here, as have Louis Frémaux and Simon Rattle. From 1899, when he settled to England, to 1911, Richter was also employed in Manchester, where in 1858 the Hallé Orchestra had been founded, whose later conductors included Michael Balling (another German), Thomas Beecham, Hamilton Harty (1920-33, through recommendation of Beecham and Albert Coates), Malcolm Sargent, John Barbiroli (1943-68), James Loughran and Stanislaw Skrowaczewski (one of the Associate Conductors of the orchestra from 1952-63 was none other than George Weldon). Richter was also regularly employed from 1904 to 1911 as a conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra. In 1916 Richter wanted (like Bruch) to return his honorary doctorate awarded by Cambridge University due to the Britons' use of dum-dum bullets. The first monographical book about Richter appeared only in 1993: Christopher Fifield, *True artist and true friend*, Oxford etc. 1993.
- 183 The German August Manns, born in Stolzenberg, began visiting London after his service in the Prussian army in 1854. He soon became Schallehn's assistant at the Crystal Palace, succeeding the latter in the following year and remaining there for the rest of his life.
- 184 Carl Halle, born in Hagen, emigrated in 1836 to Paris, where he became acquainted with Chopin, Liszt, Berlioz and Wagner. In the revolutionary year of 1848 he and his American wife moved to London; overcrowded as the city was with emigrants, however, they rapidly left again and went to Manchester, where he took over the Gentlemen's Concerts. The orchestra was enlarged in 1858 considerably and Hallé undertook the direct responsibility.
- 185 During his most fruitful career, Beecham was instrumental in the development of many important British musical institutions, such as the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, which he founded in 1946. Beecham also served as music director of the Seattle Symphony and the Houston Symphony Orchestras in the United States.
- 186 Coates was of Russian origin and rapidly became one of England's most sought-after opera conductors. See also p. 553.
- 187 In spite of his reputation as a showman (adored by choirs, disliked by orchestras), Sargent, whose career began in 1921, was admired as a conductor of works by Walton and Vaughan Williams and also conducted Rubbra, Tippett and Britten. He was a brilliant Sibelius interpreter and had many other talents. But in fact Sargent, who had above all blossomed in the opera (one of his special interests were the works of Arthur Sullivan), had difficulties to deliver purely lyrical works successfully.
- 188 In 1930 Adrian Cedric Boult was first Chief Conductor of the newly founded B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, which was mainly constituted from members of the Queen's Hall Orchestra. The foundation of the orchestra and the salaries offered by the B.B.C. sparked a migration of professional musicians from across the country, and a result was that Hamilton Harty resigned his post as head of the Hallé Orchestra. Lennox Berkeley in Nigel Simeone/Simon Mundy (eds.), *Sir Adrian Boult, Companion of Honour*, Tunbridge Wells 1980, p. 60: 'Adrian Boult has been all through his life a real friend to living composers, approaching their work with understanding and minute attention to detail. His power of drawing beautiful and meaningful playing from the orchestra, with very little movement on his part, is truly extraordinary.' That Boult had enormous difficulties with contemporary music, as at the first performance of Tippett's Second Symphony, is usually kept quiet; Kaikhosru Sorabji stressed in 1948 that Boult was a bad Mahler conductor (Kaikhosru Sorabji, 'Mahler's Symphonies', in: *NEW* XXXII/17, 1948, p. 168).

Barbirolli (1899–1970),¹⁸⁹ thus belonging to the most important British conductors of their time. Frederic Hymen Cowen praised in 1913 the improvement of orchestral quality ‘in recent years’.¹⁹⁰

In this context, we must also mention the Promenade Concerts, established by Henry Wood and Robert Newman by 10 August 1895 to enable people to attend concerts at very moderate prices. Indeed, their idea was in part based on the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens Concerts (1661–1859), and its rival, the Raneleagh Gardens (1742–1803), which had already been preceded amongst others by the Marylebone Gardens, with a band established there in as early as 1738 and from 1771 to 1776 run by Samuel Arnold (see chapter 2, pp. 49ff.). A next step had been Edward Eliason’s and Louis Antoine Jullien’s (1812–1860) Promenade Concerts from 1840 to 1858, where famous soloists made their appearance. These events were made rather more attractive by Jullien’s showmanship; after Jullien’s death, they declined accordingly, since their popularity was strongly linked to his personality. Neither Jullien’s son Louis in 1863–64 nor Michael Balfe (1808–1870) or Alfred Mellon (1820–1867) were able to fill Jullien’s shoes at the Proms. From 1874 to 1877, Luigi Arditi (1822–1903) gave successful Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden. His successors were Arthur Sullivan (until 1880) and Frederic Hymen Cowen (until the end of the Covent Garden Proms in 1893).

At many of the Promenade Concerts in the mid-nineteenth century, the programmes’ effects were more important than their quality – for example a ‘heroic’ symphony entitled *The Ashantee War* written in 1870 by Hervé (Florimond Ronger), a well-known composer of light operas, was given. Special nights were established: Beethoven Nights, Russian Nights, French Nights, British Nights, Tchaikovsky Nights, Wagner Nights, but also (and most often) Popular Nights.¹⁹¹ These all took place parallel to the Philharmonic Society’s concerts, the concerts of the Royal Choral Society, the Richter Concerts and (for a few years) the concerts of the London Symphony Orchestra; these were the only fully ‘serious’ concerts, and all commanded a high price. The Crystal Palace Concerts led by August Manns, who conducted there from 1855 to 1901, had just, apart from Hallé’s Manchester orchestra, another ‘permanent’ symphony orchestra. Under these circumstances, the Queen’s Hall was opened on 2 December 1893 (destroyed in 1941), and in February 1895 the Hallé and the Crystal Palace Orchestras received a third companion, the Queen’s Hall Orchestra (although Wood was still complaining in 1904

189 Barbirolli is remembered above all as conductor of the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester, which he helped save from dissolution in 1943 and conducted for the rest of his life. Earlier in his career he was Arturo Toscanini’s successor as music director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, serving there from 1936 to 1943. He was also chief conductor of the Houston Symphony Orchestra from 1961 to 1967, and was a guest conductor of many other orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic and the Vienna Philharmonic.

190 Frederic Hymen Cowen, *My Art and My Friends*, London 1913, p. 295.

191 Luigi Arditi wrote in his recollections that Wagner Nights became increasingly popular in his day. (Ateş D’Arcy Orga, *The Proms*, Newton Abbot etc. 1974, p. 37.)

about the latter orchestra's musicians failing to show up without telling him in advance because of better-paid engagements at music festivals¹⁹²). Often, items first performed at any of the larger festivals were taken up at a Prom, and so it often became evident whether the work would have a future or not: the audience of the Promenade Concerts thus had the power to usher a composition directly into the dustbin.

Oliver A. King (London, 1855–1923) was a chorister at St. Andrews, Wells Street, London, becoming a pupil of Joseph Barnby's and William Henry Holmes's, and then studying in Leipzig under Reinecke and others (1874–77). In 1879 he was appointed pianist to Princess Louise Marchioness of Lorne, and in that capacity resided in Canada from 1880 to 1883, also visiting New York. He later became a professor of the piano at the Royal Academy of Music.

His compositions were very numerous. We find among his works church compositions, chamber and piano music, a concert overture entitled *Among the Pines* (awarded a prize by the Philharmonic Society in 1883) and another concert overture (in D minor, 1888) as well as a piano and a violin concerto (1885 and 1887, respectively). His Symphony *Night* in F major Op. 22, dedicated to the Marchioness of Lorne and published before 1882, resembles in its five-movement conception Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony; the outer sections of the scherzo are supposed to represent a thunderstorm. The first movement, the only sonata movement of the symphony (the finale is, like all the other movements, in ternary form),

Ex. 104



is very concisely conceived, with a short development and severely shortened recapitulation. The second movement is a beautiful night idyll with an agitato middle section; the third has a rather strange conception of key, beginning in A minor and ending in A major, but with a trio in D^b major.

The second slow movement, another night idyll (one is somehow reminded of the *Nachtmusik* conception in Mahler's Seventh Symphony, 1904–05), is quite long. The harp structures the movement, which, in the repeat of the initial section, appears rather transformed, and only the head of the main theme

192 As a consequence, Wood decided to bind the musicians more strongly to his orchestra. He introduced better payment in order to guarantee their loyalty to the orchestra, achieving success with his methods only in 1930 (Thomas Russell, *The Proms*, London/New York 1949, p. 41).

Ex. 105



recaptures importance.

Edward German (Jones) (Whitchurch, Shropshire, 17 February 1862-London, 11 November 1936), mainly known as a composer of successful light operas (*Merrie England*, *Tom Jones*), was first supposed to take a ‘serious’ profession before starting to study music. This he began to do around 1880 in Shrewsbury, then at the Royal Academy of Music, where he took two ‘principal studies’, organ (with Charles Steggall) and violin (with Thomas Henry Weist Hill and Alfred Burnett). Among his fellow students were Edwin Lemare¹⁹³ and Henry Wood. In 1885, he won the Lucas Silver Medal for the composition of a *Te Deum* in F; less than a year later, the first movement of his *First Symphony* in E minor received its première performance at the Royal Academy of Music. The first complete performance took place in 1887, the year he left the Academy (he became a fellow of this institution in 1895), at St. James’s Hall. In 1890, the piece was played (together with the *Richard III* overture) with great success at the Crystal Palace; the programme notes were written by George Grove. The critic of *The Musical Times* wrote:

‘The Symphony is undoubtedly a work of great promise, though it is somewhat unequal. The first movement is in themes and workmanship thoroughly admirable, and the piquant Scherzo is even better. But in the slow movement Mr. German indulges in the modern vice of straining after effects by over-orchestration, and the result is unsatisfactory. However, this defect may be due merely to inexperience, and we have every confidence that Mr. German will develop into a composer worthy to rank with those who are already at work in the formation of a genuine English School.’¹⁹⁴

There are indeed shades of Mendelssohn and Schumann in the work, such as in the middle movements (the second movement being a set of variations):¹⁹⁵

193 Edwin Lemare’s symphonies are organ symphonies, although the Second has been orchestrated by H. M. Higgins (for Novello; Royal College of Music: MS 5127b).

194 *MT*, August 1887. Quoted in: ‘Edward German. A Biographical Sketch’, in: *MT* XLV (1904), p. 21.

195 Cf. James Brown, ‘Edward German’, in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 13.

Ex. 106

Ex. 107

David Russell Hulme, director of the German Archive at Aberystwyth, stresses that the symphony is in fact a student work and 'far less sophisticated' than Parry's symphonies,¹⁹⁶ the recapitulation of themes of former movements being a rather conventional device. According to Hulme, the symphony's most interesting element is the first theme of the first movement, which echoes the English folk tune *Begone, dull care*; Hulme suspects German may have been alluding to his experiences as a student:¹⁹⁷

Ex. 108

In any case, the work garnered enough critical acclaim to warrant the publication, by Novello, of an arrangement for piano duet. Not even Bernard Shaw's nit-picking was able to destroy the work's short-lived success:

'Mr Edward German's symphony, performed at the last Crystal Palace concert, shews that he is still hampered by that hesitation between two distinct *genres* which spoiled his *Richard III* overture. If Mr German wishes to follow up his academic training by writing absolute music in symmetrical periods and orderly ingenuity of variation, let

196 David Russell Hulme in conversation with the author, 5 February 1998.

197 *Ibid.*



Illustration 27. Edward German, photograph.

him by all means do so. On the other hand, if he prefers to take significant *motifs*, and develop them through all the emotional phases of a definite poem or drama, he cannot do better. But it is useless nowadays to try to combine the two; and since Mr German has not yet made up his mind to discard one or the other, the result is that his symphonic movements proceed for awhile with the smoothness and regularity of a Mendelssohn scholar's exercise, and then, without rhyme or reason, are shattered by a volcanic eruption which sounds like the last page of a very exciting opera finale, only to subside the next moment into their original decorum. I can but take a "symphony" of this sort as a bag of samples of what Mr German can do in the operatic style and in the absolute style, handsomely admitting that the quality of the samples is excellent, and that if Mr German's intelligence and originality equal to his musicianship, he can no doubt *compose* successfully as soon as he realizes exactly what composition means.¹⁹⁸

In 1887 German went with four fellow students to Germany and saw, among others, *Parsifal* and *Tristan* at Bayreuth, which impressed him greatly. In 1888 he was appointed conductor of the Globe Theatre, for which he contributed the incidental music for *Richard III*; during the 1890s he was increasingly in demand as a composer of orchestral and stage music.

1893 witnessed the first performance of German's Second Symphony in A minor, which had been written for the Norwich Festival and, similar to Parry's Second (*Cambridge*) Symphony, which had been premièred in Cambridge, received the epithet *Norwich* Symphony. It was this Second Symphony that bolstered German's reputation. The symphony in no way offers unexpected formal or harmonic elements; it does, however, exhibit careful workmanship and instrumentation, 'delightful thematic content'¹⁹⁹ and imaginative melodic invention:

Ex. 109: First movement, first theme



Ex. 110: First movement, first theme in a second form



198 George Bernard Shaw (24 December 1890), *Music in London 1890–1894*, Vol. I, London etc. ²1949, pp. 104–105.

199 James Brown, 'Edward German', in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 13.

Ex. 111: Second movement, first theme



Ex. 112: Fourth movement, first theme



Ex. 113: Fourth movement, second theme



It does in fact appear somewhat old-fashioned in comparison to Frederic Cliffe's (and probably also Algernon Ashton's) symphonies, but nevertheless links into the twentieth century.

The critic of *The Times* called it

'a work of very decided merit and beauty, marked by much breadth of style, ingenuity of treatment, originality and, in at least two movements, distinction. The two best sections are precisely those in which success is most rarely attained in the present day, the first and the slow movement. The opening *larghetto maestoso* is full of dignity and the *allegro* which it ushers in is effective, masterly in construction, and well sustained in interest. The *andante con moto* in D minor is an exceedingly beautiful and expressive movement, well-conceived and excellently carried out (...). The work as a whole takes very high rank among the symphonies of the younger generation of the modern English school, and it compares most favourably with anything Mr. German has yet given us, not excepting any of his clever productions in the way of incidental music for the theatre.'²⁰⁰

And Joseph Bennett, in the *Daily Telegraph*, praised it as 'pure music' and 'a notable and valuable addition to English orchestral music, a strong and manly work, the creation of one who has something to say.'²⁰¹ The critic of *The Musical Times* reported:

'With Wednesday morning came the first of the five novelties, acting as a 'curtain-raiser' for Sullivan's *Golden Legend*. This was Mr. Edward German's Symphony in

200 *The Times*, 1893. Quoted in William Herbert Scott, *Edward German. An Intimate Biography*, London 1932, pp. 68–69.

201 Joseph Bennett in *DT*, 1893. Quoted in William Herbert Scott, *Edward German. An Intimate Biography*, London 1932, p. 69.

A minor – a work written expressly for the Festival. Mr. German is a man of the Abraham Lincoln type, in that he keeps 'pegging away.' From obscurity into light, through defeat into success, this musician knows the path and travels along it with dogged perseverance [!]. His first Symphony met with a fate which was not encouraging, but Mr. German was far from discouraged, and, when Norwich invited an orchestral work from his pen, he characteristically sat down to compose another. This is almost certain to find favour as a strong and masterful effusion. The qualities just mentioned are especially conspicuous in the Introduction and first *Allegro*, these sections being laid out upon broad lines, and distinguished by a thoroughly masculine style. The feebly sentimental and the lackadaisical have no friend in Mr. German, whose music, in this instance, while showing sufficient elaboration and ingenuity, is virile to a degree rarely met with at the present time. The *Andante con moto* belongs to another order. It is wholly given up to beauty and grace, as we know those qualities in melody, in harmony, and orchestral colouring. To the slow movement the *Scherzo* is attached by a connecting bar or two for no apparent reason. But one does not question the composer's judgment when listening to music so well made, so full of sprightliness and power. The two main sections of the movement are in effective contrast of theme and general expression. Mr. German introduces his second *Allegro*, like his first, by a short prelude, which anticipates the leading theme. The *Finale* is elaborately wrought, and shows a good deal of harmonic and contrapuntal ingenuity. Here and there it seems a little overdone, the result being that more than a single hearing appears necessary in order to judge clearly of design and effect. But there is no difficulty in saying at once that Mr. German's second Symphony has great claims upon the attention of the musical world. It is not of the sort to be listened to and then dismissed, but challenges careful judgment upon the data of familiar acquaintance. The composer conducted a very fair performance, and was most cordially applauded and several times recalled at the close of his work.²⁰²

Bernard Shaw was more critical, however: "The Norwich symphony struck me as a mass of clever composition wasted. It is dramatic music without any subject, emotional music without any mood, formal music without conspicuous beauty and symmetry of design, externally a symphony, really a fulfilment of a commission or seizure of a professional opportunity, otherwise purposeless."²⁰³ Indeed the work was well-loved around the turn of the century, and was performed by Manns and at a Philharmonic Society concert. It was only published shortly before German's death (at his own expense,²⁰⁴ however) following a performance at the Royal Academy of Music in November 1931.

Charles Wood (Armagh, Ireland, 15 June 1866–Cambridge, 12 July 1926) is known mainly for his choral compositions and for his work as a teacher at the Royal College of Music

202 'Norwich Festival', in: *MT* XXXIV (1893), p. 657.

203 George Bernard Shaw (27 December 1893), *Music in London 1890–1894*, Vol. III, London etc. 1950, p. 119.

204 Hamilton Harty's *Irish Symphony* was printed in 1924, Bainton's *Before Sunrise* in 1927.

and the University of Cambridge (among his pupils were Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Herbert Howells, Cecil Armstrong Gibbs, Michael Tippett, Edward Dent, Charles Herbert Kitson and Thomas Beecham). A chorister at Armagh Cathedral, he was in 1883 elected to the Morley Open scholarship at the newly instituted Royal College of Music, where he studied with Stanford and Parry. In 1888 he won an organ scholarship to Selwyn College, Cambridge, after five terms migrating to Gonville and Caius College. In 1888 he became teacher in harmony at the Royal College of Music and in 1897 university lecturer in harmony and counterpoint in Cambridge, succeeding Stanford as Chair of Music at Cambridge in 1924, surviving Stanford by only two years, however. Wood's successor was Edward J. Dent, who edited Wood's six extant string quartets.

Wood never completed any of his symphonic attempts; his only large-scale orchestral works are his Piano Concerto in F major (1885-86), a concert overture *Much Ado about Nothing* (1889), symphonic variations on the Irish air *Patrick Sarsfield* (1899) and an orchestral suite adapted from his incidental music *Iphigenia in Tauris* (1894); an organ concerto is lost. He wrote two one-act chamber operas, the *Scene from Pickwick* (1921), inspired by Charles Dickens's novel, and *The Family Party* (1923), but his main achievements lie in his choral and church works, his chamber music and his songs.

Three fragments of symphonies have survived, all undated and all deposited at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. The first two fragments (main sonata movements in C minor and F major; the second is nearly complete) probably belong to Wood's student days, as did his Piano Concerto. Their thematic development is not highly individual, though the themes themselves are quite concise, showing inter-relationships, even to the much later fragment in D – Wood was obviously very keen on fanfaric derivations from chords:

Ex. 114



Ex. 115



Ex. 116



The third fragment (in D major), in fact 57 bars of piano draft, plus (inverted on the same page) 27 bars of short score and 102 bars of elaborated full score (very probably preserved incompletely – we can assume that more was composed), 'would appear to have been written much later in Wood's career.'²⁰⁵ The elaboration differs considerably from the short scores. It is inappropriately marked by an unknown hand 'Trio to a Scherzo?' but it is in fact obviously the beginning of a movement, in form 'reminiscent of the sort of "Intermezzo" movement which Brahms would occasionally write in lieu of a scherzo, but the style has something of the amiable discursiveness that we associate with Dvořák. The canonic opening is infectious in its lilting warmth.'²⁰⁶

Ex. 117

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece in D major, 3/4 time. The first system consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a half note G4. The bass staff begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a half note G3. The second system continues the music with more complex rhythmic patterns in both staves, including eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece concludes with a coda in D minor, indicated by a key signature change to one flat.

Of this movement, the beginning as well as the end has come down to us. The coda leads from D major into D minor, a highly individual touch, but it is very difficult to judge what the movement might have sounded like had it been elaborated.

In his twilight years, **Frederic Cliffe** (Low Moor, nr. Bradford, 2 May 1857–London, 19 November 1931) had already been almost entirely forgotten, even though his symphonies rank among the best of the late nineteenth century. After 1910, he hardly wrote anything any more, and thus constitutes yet another 'example in history of a young composer's exhausting his vein after a youth of happy promise'²⁰⁷ – in this case, however, because Cliffe had grown too complacent. One of his pupils, Arthur Benjamin, spoke very favourably of Cliffe and his music, and in an obituary letter to the editor of *The Musical Times*, Algernon Ashton wrote:

205 Ian Copley, *The music of Charles Wood – a critical study*, London ²1994, p. 123.

206 *Ibid.*, pp. 123–124.

207 Arthur Benjamin, 'A student in Kensington', in: *M&L* XXXI (1950), p. 197.

‘Sir, I am much surprised that scarcely any obituary notices have appeared about Frederic Cliffe, who died on November 19 last at the age of seventy-four. Some forty years ago he was a very prominent and distinguished composer, among his principal works being two Symphonies (No. 1, C minor, and No. 2, E minor), the first of which was produced at the Crystal Palace in 1889, and subsequently performed at a Philharmonic concert, each time with the greatest success, and well do I remember the enthusiastic praise bestowed upon it by that famous music critic, Joseph Bennett, on that occasion. Although not openly programmatic, its first movement was influenced by a visit to Norway.

Cliffe’s Second Symphony had its first performance at the Leeds Festival in 1892, and other notable works of his include a Violin concerto in D minor, an orchestral tone-poem entitled *Cloud and Sunshine*, *The Triumph of Alceste*, for contralto voice and orchestra [written for Clara Butt], and *Ode to the North-East Wind*, for choir and orchestra. I knew Frederic Cliffe personally having been for many years his colleague as pianoforte teacher at the Royal College of Music. Considering how brilliantly he began his career as a composer it is strange indeed that after his splendid initial success he completely ceased to write any more music, and so sank more or less into oblivion. Possibly, like many another right-minded musician, he became disgusted with the atrocities perpetrated by certain present-day so-called composers, and thus thought he could not keep up with their times!²⁰⁸

Both Cliffe symphonies were performed again at Bournemouth in 1902 (on 13 February and 13 November, respectively), and there followed some performances until the last one Dan Godfrey gave of the First Symphony in Bournemouth in 1917, but no evidence of later performances has been detected by the author until their revival (due to Lewis Foreman’s advocacy, especially of the First Symphony), even though both works have extremely fine qualities, and are probably among the best British symphonies composed between 1885 and 1895 (next to Davies, German, Lamond, Parry, Stanford and Ashton).

The First Symphony in C minor, completed in March 1889, seems, although very carefully conceived and worked out,²⁰⁹ somewhat uninspired.²¹⁰ The first movement strikes one as being rather too symmetrical in thematic conception,

Ex. 118



208 Algernon Ashton, ‘The Late Frederic Cliffe’, in: *MTLXXIII* (1932), pp. 62–63.

209 It received a most favourable review in *The Daily Telegraph*, reprinted in the liner notes of Cliffe’s Violin Concerto (Hyperion CDA67838, London 2011, p. 4).

210 Cf. also Jürgen Schaarwächter, ‘Vorwort’, in Frederic Cliffe, *Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 1* [reprint of the full score], München 2008, pp. 3–5.

Ex. 119



and most of the other movements are rendered somewhat uneventful by the composer's overly fastidious approach. Something of an exception is the third movement, which was also published separately. This Ballade follows the principles of variation, in which the material is developed extensively, in part in the direction of simplification, making it more concise; it is the first section to return ([M]) and structure the movement.

The Second Symphony in E minor (1892), which was never published but performed at the Leeds Festival, contains a kind of programme that provides only a broad outline of the moods to follow: I. At Sunset. II. Night. III. Fairy Revels. IV. Morning. These moods are in fact very successfully captured, and all formal aspects are successfully fulfilled: here we find a model upon which Granville Bantock was to build, as was Bax with *Spring Fire*. Some movements feature a kind of recapitulation of presented material – indeed done in the most succinct possible way – but it is the development, the progression of time that is of importance. A masterwork in its own right is doubtlessly the spirited scherzo. The rhythmic energy coursing throughout the entire symphony is represented by the theme of the finale:

Ex. 120



Henry Walford Davies (Oswestry, Shropshire, 6 September 1869–Wington, Somerset, 11 March 1941; see also pp. 563f. and 597f.), born only a few miles from Wales and often referred to as a Welshman, started as a pupil of Parratt's at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. He then became one of the first composition students at the Royal College of Music, where he studied with Stanford, Rockstro (Rackstraw) and Parry, later becoming a professor there himself. After various organist posts in London (among others at the Christ Church in Hampstead, where Cyril Rootham succeeded him), he became Music Director of the Royal Air Force in 1917. In 1918 he was engaged as a music professor at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, where he was regarded as an amateurish musicologist, described by Alec Robertson thus: 'No one could be less "professional" or academic than he.'²¹¹ In 1926 he started broadcasting for the B.B.C.,

211 Alec Robertson, 'Sir Walford Davies', in Anna Instone/Julian Herbage (eds.), *Music Magazine*, London 1953, p. 98.



Illustration 28. Henry Walford Davies, photograph by Russell of London. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

and a well-loved broadcaster he was to become.²¹² After Vaughan Williams had refused, Davies became in 1934 Elgar's successor as Master of the King's Musick.

Davies wrote his First Symphony in D in 1893-94, which was premièred in 1895 by August Manns and the Crystal Palace Orchestra. He paid a visit to Brahms shortly before the latter's death; the call coincided with the end of his studies, and he had a copy of this score with him. 'Apparently Brahms had put his finger unerringly on all the weak spots, sent kind messages to College, and "regards to Sir Grove."²¹³ Davies gives in the score exact notes as to where and when the separate sections or movements were composed, and the score is dedicated to 'my dear Friend Marie G. Matheson and written according to her desire. (Streben, Sehnen, Erfüllen, Leben [strife, longing, fulfilment, life].)' Once again we have four catch-phrases that very probably apply to the individual movements, like Stanford's Fourth (1889; see pp. 220ff.), which was very probably Davies' model, and Parry's Fifth (1912; see pp. 238ff.). However, the catch-phrases themselves very much resemble those given for the themes of the Symphony in G (see below).

The first main theme of the first movement grows with increasing intensity out of the introductory theme:

Ex. 121



Ex. 123



but also by not recapitulating the first theme

Ex. 124



in its original form, but only in part and each time ([H] 1 and [L] 4) a second lower, so that one can hardly speak of a recapitulation proper – the coda, however, is clearly definable (from [O]).

The 1904 oratorio *Everyman* (and later the 1910 *Solemn Melody* and the 1912 cantata *Song of St. Francis*) made the composer well known to the larger musical public, and from then on his style and command of the orchestra matured considerably. The next symphony was his choral *Lift up your Hearts* (1906; see pp. 597f.); the next orchestral symphony, in G Op. 32, was much more ambitious than any before or after it, and was probably composed in 1908-09. It was premièred by Arthur Nikisch and the London Symphony Orchestra and dedicated to A. J. Jaeger (“Greet the Unseen with a cheer”), who was to die on 18 May 1909.²¹⁴

The symphony does not contain a scherzo proper; instead Davies has composed a Romanza (*Allegretto feroce*). As in the dedication of the First Symphony, especially for ‘M. G. M.’, all themes have been given titles or programmatic implications.

The first movement is very carefully constructed and instrumentated, with the second of the two main themes

Ex. 125



Ex. 126



214 It is not entirely clear who was actually meant as the dedicatee. Similar to the 1894 score, the following dedication appears on the title page: ‘To Marie G. Matheson from her always loving H. W. D. Christmas Day, 1911.’ It seems, however, very likely that this score was presented as a Christmas present to Matheson, although the dedication to Jaeger is only to be found on the top of the score of the first movement.

already preparing the finale (if not its theme, then at least its mood, according to Davies). The movement's careful and clear conception is exemplified by the entry of the themes: the first theme is presented first from bar 49, the second at [11], to be developed from c. [14]; at [20] 8, a reference to the first theme is made, which is recapitulated from [27], as is the second theme from [31] 2.

The slow movement's (*Lento espressivo*) theme appears to be 'Resignation and longing',

Ex. 127

Lento Clar.

but it is – and this must be stressed in connection with the dedication – by no means an elegy. Rather, it is an expressive movement in ternary form, in some parts recalling passages in *Everyman*, such as the Song of Knowledge, and originally apparently intended to be performed after the Romanza, but this was changed before the first performance took place.

The Romanza's first theme, implying 'Sweet Content', is clearly derived from the second theme of the first movement, but this theme is not recapitulated after the middle section – only the second one is.

Ex. 128

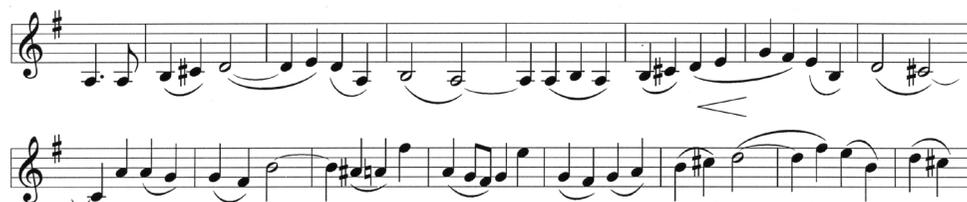
Allegretto felice

Ex. 129

Ob.

The finale, whose themes are headed 'Joy in work', 'Fun' and 'Everything happily accepted (Sane optimism)',

Ex. 130



Ex. 131



Ex. 132

underscores the similarity to Parry's Fifth Symphony (1912) even more. The thematic material receives development at very different stages of the movement: the first theme is initially presented in shortened form, to be presented in full only at [F]; the two other themes appear only from the development onwards (from [J]), although motifs from the latter of the two appear even before the presentation of the first theme. The recapitulation (from [S] 3) leads into a triumphal treatment of the last theme; the multifold material and its highly individual development make it a considerable rival in quality (and not only in length) to Elgar's symphonies. Rutland Boughton, who had studied with Davies himself, issued a different judgment: 'he has thoroughly succeeded so far as the first movement is concerned; the rest of the work is increasingly dull and tedious.'²¹⁵

215 Rutland Boughton, 'The Failure of the Symphony', in: *The Musical Standard* XXXVI/932 (1911), p. 305.

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor²¹⁶ (Holborn, London, 15 August 1875–Croydon, 1 September 1912) is even today regarded by some authors as a composer quite progressive for his time. A more correct assessment, however, is that he mostly satisfied the entertainment needs of the masses, as evidenced in the huge success of the staged performances of his highly successful oratorio *Hiawatha* in the Royal Albert Hall (under the direction, among others, of Goossens and Sargent). That Britten, Vaughan Williams and Howells admired him may perhaps be explained by the fact that despite his comparatively small output (he died at the age of 37), he found an individual voice. Charles Villiers Stanford wrote: 'Music sprang from two essential elements, Rhythm and Melody. Many could concoct a sounding score, but few could create a good melody'.²¹⁷ Coleridge-Taylor belonged to the latter category.

Coleridge-Taylor, son of a Sierra Leone physician, received early musical training first privately by arrangement of his guardian and benefactor, Colonel Herbert A. Walters, entering the Royal College of Music in September 1890. He took up the violin as a 'first study' (with William Henry Holmes), but in 1893 won an open scholarship for composition after only a couple of months' study with Stanford. His other professors were Frederick Bridge (counterpoint), Walter Galpin Alcock (organ) and Algernon Ashton (piano). The scholarship, lasting 3 years, was renewed for another year, and he left the College in 1897.

Particularly as one of the first composers of chamber music (among McEwen, Holbrooke, Dale, Hurlstone and Wood), Coleridge-Taylor had great successes, first with his Piano Quintet in G minor (1893), a Nonet in F minor (1894), 5 *Fantasiestücke* for string quartet (1895), a Clarinet Quintet in F \sharp minor (1895), a String Quartet in D minor (1896) and 3 *Hiawathan sketches* for violin and piano (1897), but some of the real triumphs were the Violin Sonata in D minor op. 28, posthumously awarded the Cobbett Prize, 7 *African Romances* Op. 17 and the *Ballade* in A minor Op. 33 for orchestra, composed for the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival, and several cantatas – apart from *Hiawatha*, of course.

On the virgin manuscript of one of the earlier versions of Coleridge-Taylor's freshly composed finale of his Symphony in A minor, Stanford, who had already rejected four versions of the finale,²¹⁸ is supposed to have accidentally spilt his tea, an event he would joke about for a long time thereafter.²¹⁹ The symphony, Coleridge-Taylor's most ambitious orchestral composition before leaving the Royal College of Music, was first performed on 6 March 1896 (without the finale) at St. James's Hall²²⁰ by the Royal College of Music

216 Coleridge was first the second Christian name.

217 Quoted from John Francis Porte, *Sir Charles V. Stanford, Mus.Doc., M.A., D.C.L.*, London/New York 1921, p. v.

218 William Tortolano, *Samuel Coleridge-Taylor*, New Jersey 1977, p. 166.

219 Harry Plunkett Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, London 1935, pp. 112–113. This event, however, is very likely a myth – Greene derives it from Marion Scott who recalls the joke thus: 'A Symphony in B – well, now it is a Symphony in tea!' (the development of the finale is in fact in B major.) Percy Young points out Stanford's sensitiveness after Coleridge-Taylor had been misused by a fellow-student (Percy Young, 'Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, 1875–1912', in: *MT* CXVI, 1979, p. 703).

220 On this occasion, upon which William Hurlstone's Piano Concerto in D major was also given, Holst played the trombone, and Vaughan Williams, as mentioned in the programme note, the triangle. For more details about the

orchestra.²²¹ It is not true, however, that the score was destroyed, as many thought; due to the rumour, the piece was ignored almost entirely – apart from a most recent revival. Indeed, two scores of discarded finales have survived, one at the Royal College of Music and another, torn in the middle but rescued and now re-pasted, at the British Library.

With his first movement, Coleridge-Taylor already shows us that he is not greatly interested in orthodox form. The complex exposition (until [E] 30, whose repeat was deleted and which in fact commences very early with material development) opposes a shorter recapitulation (from [H] to [M] 15) which varies the material of the exposition that has just been developed

Ex. 133

Ex. 134

Ex. 135

(notice the relationship of the second theme to that of the scherzo).

The second movement, a *Lament*, is partially based on a 'Negro melody',²²² similar to Frederick Delius's *Appalachia*.

concert, cf. Geoffrey Self, *The Hiawatha Man. The Life and Work of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor*, Aldershot/Brookfield (Vermont) 1995, p. 44.

221 William Tortolano, *Samuel Coleridge-Taylor*, New Jersey 1977, p. 166.

222 *Ibid.*



Illustration 29. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor at age 23, photograph by Debenham & Gould. Royal College of Music, London/ArenaPAL; reproduced by kind permission.

Ex. 136

Lamento. Largo affettuoso

Ob., Archi



This melody clearly dominates the entire movement, apart from a few very short episodes, after which it immediately returns, thus giving the movement strong unity.

The scherzo is rather conservative in conception, but nonetheless demonstrates all of Coleridge-Taylor's talents as an orchestrator, as do the other movements and many other of his orchestral compositions. The short trio is much more legato than the scherzo section, but the thematic material is identical:

Ex. 137



Ex. 138



Apparently, the finale was for a long time headed *Alla Marcia*, at least until the final version was conceived (both surviving manuscripts are thus headed and are largely identical in content). This *Alla Marcia, Allegro Energico*, is an imaginative sonata-form movement with several off-beat accents and shows ingenious melodic invention. A considerable development (from c. [B]) concentrates the thematic material to such an extent that individual themes are no longer recognizable. A motif derived from the exposition's beginning marks the development's middle, after which it leads into B major – a device which Stanford very probably disapproved of – ultimately returning to the recapitulation in A minor.

The fifth version of the finale was finally premièred on 30 April 1900 at the Winter Gardens in Bournemouth.²²³ It is somewhat more *maestoso* than the former finale versions, in binary form, and the second half is a variation of the first, followed by a short coda. Here also the invention of thematic material is impressive:

Ex. 139



Each half is halved again, and the second section provides a contrast to the first, so as to create a kind of trio to a fictitious march (consequently, the *Alla Marcia* has not left us entirely). The latter, however, displays numerous off-beat accents to break the strict rhythm and metre.

To some extent, Coleridge-Taylor was the token black for the English, and thereby

‘introduced a new element into British music, already indicating that narrowly English views on ethnic relationships were under assault from unexpected quarters. In Ireland meanwhile the political movement that was causing increasing alarm in England was flowing across wide areas of cultural aspiration. Musically, the Irish had been treated as a colonial people to the second degree; that is, the Europeans who had dominated British music in part had come to dominate Irish music almost entirely, although the admirable Esposito was rapidly trying to turn himself into a nationalist Irish composer by a preference for basing his original works on Irish ideas and by making arrangements of Irish folk-songs.’²²⁴

Gustav[us Theodore von] Holst²²⁵ (Cheltenham, 21 September 1874—London, 25 May 1934; see also pp. 648ff. and 724f.) came from a family of musicians (as did Eugène Goossens). The first symphony he composed, in C minor, was written from 11 January to 5 February 1892, and apparently Holst became rather bored with it, because the latter parts of the score clearly show Holst’s impatience. The comparatively short symphony is far from compelling, but nonetheless reveals that Holst was clearly already able to fill the symphonic form. He began to study under William Smyth Rockstro and Charles Villiers Stanford at the Royal College of Music in 1893.

In 1899 Holst embarked upon his second symphonic attempt, the Symphony in F (Opus 8, originally Opus 11), subtitled *The Cotswolds*, which he finished up in 1900 while on tour as a trombone player. It was premièred in 1902 in Bournemouth under Dan Godfrey, and was in fact the first performance of a Holst orchestral work to date. ‘It was meant to express his deep love of the Cotswold hills,’ his daughter recalls,

‘but his feelings are scarcely recognizable. Searching for a symbol of the English country-side he found nothing to build on except the imitation Tudor heartiness of Edward German. It was a makeshift symbol, and having borrowed it, he hardly knew

224 Percy Young, *George Grove, 1820–1900. A Biography*, London etc. 1980, p. 255.

225 According to Percy Scholes (*The Mirror of Music, 1844–1944*, Vol. I, London 1947, p. 484), he advised Holst to strike the German title during the First World War.

what to do with it, beyond placing it in the approved mould, and hoping it would turn out all right. The first movement makes all the correct gestures and travels in the appropriate directions but it bears no resemblance to the journey of his mind while walking the stretch of hills between Wyck Rissington and Bourton-on-the-Water. The slow movement, an Elegy in memory of William Morris, has moments in it where the intensity of his thought breaks through the inadequacies of his language. Here the words “senza espress” make their first appearance, showing the beginnings of a line of thought that was to lead him through the “dead” of *Neptune* to the mysterious monotony of *Egdon Heath*. It is by far the best movement in the work. There is nothing characteristic about the Scherzo except the fact that its tune is built on a structure of melodic fourths while in the last movement he is back once again in a surge of chromatic modulations and striving sequences. There was to be no escape from their clutches for many years to come.²²⁶

A. E. F. Dickinson judged the work in a similarly negative vein: ‘A plain and anything but far-reaching first movement, an affecting Elegy for slow movement (...) and two further and uneventful movements provide slender material for the advocacy of a hearing of this unpublished work, Holst’s last complete orchestral symphony.’²²⁷ Only Edmund Rubbra esteemed the work, describing it as one of Holst’s few important early works, and not solely due to the *Elegy in memoriam William Morris* (‘one of the early Socialists’²²⁸ and a founder of the Arts and Crafts movement); this profoundly melancholic elegy with a livelier middle section is indeed later taken up, in terms of atmosphere, in the tone poem *Egdon Heath*, which Holst considered his best composition. The theme of the scherzo is formed melodically by a succession of fourths (a widespread stylistic means in British music, and, according to Rubbra, ‘prophetic of the leaping fourths in *Jupiter*’²²⁹); the movement has, however, otherwise no individual style.²³⁰ ‘The opening of the Elegy movement from the *Cotswolds Symphony* (...) is remarkably close to the harmonic world that Scriabin was developing at exactly the same time’;²³¹ the movement’s main theme, ‘square-cut and academically balanced in the phrasing, but possessing at the same time a directness of speech which is so characteristic of all Holst’s work’,²³² is as follows (other examples of a 2/4 hemiola accompaniment to material in 3/4 can be found in the *Country Song*, *The Cloud Messenger* and *A Fugal Concerto*²³³):

226 Imogen Holst, *The music of Gustav Holst*, Oxford etc. 1951, p. 8.

227 A. E. F. Dickinson, *Holst’s music: a guide*, ed. by Alan Gibbs, London 1995, p. 3.

228 Edmund Rubbra, *Gustav Holst*, Monaco 1947, p. 11.

229 Edmund Rubbra, ‘The early manuscripts of Gustav Holst’, in: *MMR LXV/768* (1935), p. 124.

230 Cf. Imogen Holst, *The music of Gustav Holst*, Oxford etc. 1951, p. 8.

231 Colin Matthews, ‘Some Unknown Holst’, in: *MT CXXV* (1984), p. 269.

232 Edmund Rubbra, ‘The early manuscripts of Gustav Holst’, in: *MMR LXV/768* (1935), p. 124.

233 Cf. Michael Short, *Gustav Holst. The Man and his Music*. Oxford etc. 1990, p. 361.

Ex. 140

The scherzo is full of high spirits, but the ideas are not particularly exciting. A robust breadth, not very far from Parry, pervades the finale. Publishers had no interest in Holst as an orchestral composer at that time; only some of his part-songs were published. Holst's fellow student Fritz B. Hart describes as early influences on Holst Grieg, Sullivan and Wagner (to whose music he had introduced Holst personally²³⁴), and later Bach and Purcell (in opposition to the contentions in the chapter on Tippett!).²³⁵ Holst himself said frequently: 'When I'm composing, I feel just like a mathematician.'²³⁶

Let us close this chapter with another composer to have written an Irish Symphony,²³⁷ Commendatore **Michele Esposito** (Castellammare, nr. Naples, 29 September 1855-Florence, 26 November 1929), a Neapolitan who had been appointed professor of piano at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1882. A man of great personality and broad musical interests, himself a conductor, pianist, violinist, composer and publisher, Esposito was then the leading light in Dublin musical life. He founded a small symphony orchestra, the Dublin Orchestral Society, and organized frequent chamber music recitals for the Royal Dublin Society. In addition, to ensure that the Academy would influence the standard of teaching throughout the country, he established a plan of local centre examinations in 1894. Perhaps his most enduring achievement was the foundation of a piano school at the Academy, a tradition which was carried on there by his pupils. For his services to music in Ireland he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Trinity College in 1905.

His *Irish* Symphony, premièred in Dublin in December 1902, won the *Feis Ceoil* prize in the same series in which Hamilton Harty would issue his only symphony a short time later, but was not published until 1955. Esposito was in fact a teacher of Harty's, not in the formal sense, but rather through his influence and friendship; he seemed to have taken 'the place of his father with respect to musical guidance and assistance. This association grew into a lifelong and close

234 Imogen Holst, *Gustav Holst*, Oxford etc. 51988, p. 11.

235 Cf. Alfred Louis Bacharach (ed.), *British Music of Our Time*, Harmondsworth/New York 1946, pp. 46–47.

236 Quoted from Imogen Holst, *Holst*, London 1974, p. 89.

237 A further *Irish* Symphony is mentioned in an article on the Newcastle Conservatoire, supposedly composed by a 'Dr. Milner' (D. H. Thomas, 'The Newcastle Conservatoire of Music (and other Music Schools in the City). An Aspect of Musical Education 1894–1938', in: *BM* 14, 1992, p. 6). Since Thomas frequently misquotes names, this one might also be incorrect.

Ex. 141: Michele Esposito, *Irish Symphony* Op. 50, full score, p. 1.

Allegro con brio (♩ = 69)

Γκαούσιςιν (Piccolo)
 Φλύιτ (Flauto) I II
 Όβό (Oboi) I II
 Κορν Σαράνακ (Corno Inglese)
 Κλαρινέτο (Clarinetto) I II *In A*
 Βασικό Κλαρινέτο (Clarinetto Basso) *In A*
 Φαγόττο (Fagotto) I II *42*

Allegro con brio (♩ = 69)

Κορν (Corno) I II *In F*
 Τρομπά (Tromba) I II *In Bb*
 Τρομπών (Tromboni) I II III
 Τούβα (Tuba)
 Τριανγκόν (Triangolo) Ciombait (Piatti) Ciompáin (Timpani) *D & A*

Allegro con brio (♩ = 69)

Βιολίν (Violino I) *piv*
 Βιολίν (Violino II) *piv*
 Βιόυλ (Viola) *piv*
 Βιολοντσέλλο (Violoncello) *piv*
 Κοντρα-Βασό (Contra-Basso) *piv*

friendship, and Harty came to regard him with the greatest respect and even reverence.²³⁸ It was Esposito to whom Harty dedicated his Comedy Overture and Piano Concerto.

The symphony (see ex. 141) is rather school-like, in the second movement incorporating jig rhythms, in the finale rhythms of the reel; according to Axel Klein, it is 'skilfully worked out (...) and exhibits attracting themes',²³⁹ and Jeremy Dibble mentions its 'considerable charm which undoubtedly merits an occasional revival',²⁴⁰ – the only point of contemporary criticism was the gay hilarity of the finale after the solemn, funereal slow movement.

There must, as in any other period, have been numerous other symphonists – we can deduce this from the number of scores delivered to the Alexandra Palace Competition, but also from the works Stephen Lloyd mentions in his history of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra – numerous pieces by local or ephemeral composers now very probably lost, for example Arthur Barclay's Symphony in C minor,²⁴¹ E. Bertini's *Bournemouth* Symphony,²⁴² Joseph Cox Bridge's Symphony No. 3 in F,²⁴³ Thomas Arthur Burton's Symphonies Nos. 1–4,²⁴⁴ Roger Sacheverell Coke's Symphony No. 1,²⁴⁵ Francis William Gladstone's Symphony in G,²⁴⁶ Percy Godfrey's Symphony in G,²⁴⁷

238 Philip Hammond, 'Dublin and London', in David Greer (ed.), *Hamilton Harty. His Life and Music*, Belfast 1979, p. 23.

239 Axel Klein, *Die Musik Irlands im 20. Jahrhundert*, Ph.D. dissertation Hildesheim 1995, Hildesheim etc. 1996, p. 144.

240 Cf. also Jeremy Dibble, *Michele Esposito*, Dublin 2010 (Field Day Music, 3), p. 92.

241 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 56. Barclay (1869–1943) was a Guildhall professor in charge of music at the Brompton Oratory; his Symphony in C minor was performed on 15 November 1900 under the composer.

242 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, pp. 18, 65 and 87. Bertini's first name is unknown, although he was Godfrey's predecessor as conductor of the Bournemouth then Corporation Military Band. His *Bournemouth* Symphony, perhaps identical with the *Sinfonia Originale*, was performed in March 1909. The last movement is entitled 'Impressions taken from the local press of the doings of the Town Council', and Lloyd asks whether this movement 'did (...) bring the work to some fiery conclusion, one wonders?' (p. 87).

243 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 68. Bridge (1853–1929) had composed the symphony for the Chester Music Festival, and it was performed in Bournemouth on 26 November 1903 under the composer.

244 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, pp. 42, 65, 77 and 99. Burton was the organist of St. Peter's in Bournemouth; his First Symphony in E major was premiered in Bournemouth under Godfrey on 6 March 1899, and his Fourth, under the composer, on 13 November 1911. As for the middle two, only performances on 16 March 1903 (No. 2 in E minor) and 1905 (No. 3 'Variations') are recorded.

245 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 198. Coke (1912–1975) was a Derbyshire amateur musician who studied composition with Frederick Staton and Alan Bush. In 1940 he founded the Brookhill Symphony Orchestra with which he performed some of his own music. Among his œuvre one finds three symphonies, six piano concertos, an opera called *The Cenci*, four symphonic poems and much more; the First Symphony was heard in Bournemouth under Richard Austin in 1935.

246 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 45. Gladstone (1845–1928) was a cousin of the former Prime Minister; his symphony was performed in Bournemouth in 27 November 1899 under Godfrey, and the Minuet was repeated in 1920.

247 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 65. Godfrey (1859–1945), unrelated to the famous conductor, conducted the first performance of his Symphony on 20 April 1903, to be repeated in 1927.

Charles Hoby's Symphony,²⁴⁸ Henry Holloway's Symphonies Nos. 1–2,²⁴⁹ John William Ivimey's Symphony in C,²⁵⁰ Richard Harvey Löhr's Symphonies Nos. 1–2,²⁵¹ Desmond MacMahon's *Irish* Symphony,²⁵² Frank Merrick's Symphony in D minor and Schubert completion,²⁵³ Montague Phillips's 'relatively undemanding' Symphony in C minor,²⁵⁴ Speer's Symphony in E,²⁵⁵ Bruce Harry Dennis Steane's *Dreadnaught*,²⁵⁶ Edith Swepstone's Symphony in G minor²⁵⁷ and Arnold Trowell's Symphony in G minor.²⁵⁸ Apart from these works by Bell, Sterndale Bennett, Boughton, Brent-Smith, Bryson, Carse, Cliffe, Coleridge-Taylor, Cowen, Demuth, Dunhill, Elgar, German, Gibbs, Harty, Hely-Hutchinson, Holbrooke, Holst, Keyser, Lloyd, McEwen, Parry, Prout, Somervell, Stanford, Tapp, Vaughan Williams, Wallace, Wilson and Wingham were given (see also

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- 248 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 187. Hoby, who died in 1938, got his symphony performed in summer of 1930.
- 249 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 56. Holloway (1871–1948) was Chorus Master of the Bournemouth Municipal Choir. His First Symphony in E minor was premièred by Godfrey on 25 March 1909 and repeated in 1909, 1910 and 1912(?), and was also given in 1909 in Harrogate under Julian Clifford. Joseph Sainton, who conducted the symphony at the 1910 Brighton Festival, was quoted as considering the work as 'ranking next to Elgar's, among the symphonies of modern composers' (p. 88). Holloway's Second was premièred, also by Godfrey, on 9 February 1911, to be repeated in 1911, 1912, 1916, 1920 and 1921. Holloway retired as organist of St. Stephen's where he was succeeded by Percy Whitlock in 1930.
- 250 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 179. Ivimey's (1868–1961) symphony was composed in connection with the Schubert Centenary Competition and was performed in Bournemouth on 14 February 1928.
- 251 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, pp. 65–66. Löhr (1856–1927) was mainly a pianist and organist, born in Leicester and trained at the Royal Academy of Music. Beside five symphonies he wrote an opera, *Kenilworth*, an oratorio called *The Queen of Sheba*, chamber music and vocal music. His First Symphony was premièred in Bournemouth on 22 December 1902 under the composer; the Second was performed only once in 1909 under Godfrey.
- 252 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 198. MacMahon was born in 1896 in Sunderland, and he conducted his *Irish* Symphony in an 'uncompromising' programme on 17 December 1933.
- 253 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, pp. 172 and 179. Merrick (1886–1981) conducted his Symphony in D minor in Bournemouth on 24 February 1927; his completion of Schubert's Symphony in B minor was the only British prize-winner of the Schubert Centenary Competition in 1928.
- 254 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 105. Phillips's (1886–1969) symphony was performed on 6 November 1913, with himself on the podium.
- 255 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, pp. 46 and 82. The conductor and composer W. H. Speer (1863–1937) was best known for his cantata *The Juckdaw of Rheims*; his symphony was performed in Bournemouth twice, with Godfrey conducting the première performance on 5 March 1906.
- 256 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 99. Steane's (1866–1939) *Dreadnaught* was obviously called a suite in Bournemouth, where it was performed in 1911.
- 257 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, pp. 62–63. Movements of Swepstone's (fl 1885–1930) symphony, a student composition, had already been played in Leyton on 10 March 1887, with the composer conducting the Aeolian Lady Orchestra and at the London Guildhall on 7 December 1889, respectively, but this (on 3 February 1902) was the first complete performance, conducted by Godfrey.
- 258 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 100. Trowell (1887–1966), cellist and composer, was born in New Zealand. His symphony was given (in incomplete form) twice in Bournemouth in October 1911; his overture-fantasia *Aglavaine and Sebsette* and his Cello Concerto were also given at that time.

under these composers).²⁵⁹ 'Bournemouth is a good index to the prevailing tastes and activity',²⁶⁰ and sadly, it is up to now the only place that has been able to give the complete listings of all orchestral performances during a considerably long period, 1895-1921.

259 See also the index of Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, pp. 234–264 and Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Music in England 1885–1920 as Recounted in Hazell's Annual*, London 1994, pp. 15–17.

260 Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Music in England 1885–1920 as Recounted in Hazell's Annual*, London 1994, p. 17.

5. Brian, Harty, Elgar and the end of the Victorian era

John Blackwood McEwen p. 275 – Arthur Somervell p. 281 – Henry Balfour Gardiner p. 284 – Harry Assur Keyser p. 288 – Percy Sherwood p. 291 – Algernon Ashton p. 293 – Percy Pitt p. 295 – Charles O'Brien p. 296 – York Bowen p. 296 – Cyril Scott p. 298 – Hamilton Harty p. 303 – Havergal Brian p. 310 – Robert Ernest Bryson p. 317 – Frederic Austin p. 318 – Edward Elgar p. 323

*'Were there no Form, there would certainly be no art-works, but quite certainly no art-judges either; and this is so obvious to these latter that the anguish of their soul cries out for Form, whereas the easy-going artist (...) troubles his head mighty little about it when at work. And how comes this about? Apparently because the artist, without knowing it, is always creating forms.'*¹

Lothar Hoffmann-Erbrecht points out that stylistic change was in flux at the turn of the nineteenth century. 'In our century hardly any less symphonies have been composed than in the preceding one, though they do not any more have the same artistic impact as in former times. Therefore, the decline of the genre can scarcely be prophesied at the moment.' Still (other than Hoffmann-Erbrecht, who speaks of an 'almost 'symphony-less' time of the first decades' of the twentieth century), the continuity was largely guaranteed by

'the stylistic surplus (...), a phenomenon that is to be observed in all big incisions of music history. While the young generation had already for two decades and even longer radically expressed its turning away from the ideals of late romantic music, still a line of important personalities were active (Sibelius, Francesco Malipiero and many others) who belonged from their mind and their musical intentions entirely to the end of the 19th century.'²

1 Richard Wagner, quoted in W. Ashton Ellis's translation in Edward A. Baughan, 'A Plea for the Symphony', in: *The Chord 2* (1899), p. 36.

2 Lothar Hoffmann-Erbrecht, *Die Sinfonie*, Köln 1967, p. 44.

As per usual, the tiers of ‘progress’ overlapped, and clear generational boundaries could often be drawn, with few outliers. For example, none of the composers born up to 1870 broke entirely with the harmonic ideals of the post-Wagnerian era, and in the matter of musical form just around the turn of the century, the re-assessment of traditional genres such as the symphony resulted in numerous ingenious, almost landmarking new ideas (and these were by no means limited to Schoenberg).

Ernest Newman writes in 1902:

‘The tendency of the modern young men, almost without exception, is towards the orchestra and the larger forms of music. (...) Modern music is, of course, developing in every direction; but the greatest progress has been made in our sense of musical colour, owing to our having, in the present-day orchestra a huge paint-box with which we can be incessantly experimenting. Hence the young composer, when he sits down to write music of his own, has his brain throbbing with the gorgeous tints of Wagner, Tchaikovsky, and Richard Strauss. The piano, or the single voice with piano accompaniment, is a medium too pale, too cold, too virginal for his incandescent thoughts. He feels, when restricted to these, much as a scene-painter would feel if he were asked to do his work with a child’s paint-box and a tiny camel’s-hair brush. It is a rare thing to find an Englishman writing well for the piano now. Mr. Elgar and Mr. Wallace fight shy of it; Mr. Bantock and Mr. Coleridge Taylor essay it with only partial success; Mr. Percy Pitt writes for it as if it were an orchestra; Mr. Holbrooke knew how to write for it delightfully at one time, but is fast forgetting the art, seduced by the more glowing colour of the orchestra.’³

In full pride of the importance of the Royal Academy of Music, Frederick Corder points out that ‘I find that between 1898 and 1908 alone we produced 35 student-works of ambitious scope, such as Overtures, Symphonies and Concertos.’⁴ Edward Elgar, not contradictingly, describes the situation in 1905 in his Birmingham lectures thus: ‘[T]he number of new Symphonies, Concertos, Quartets and Sonatas published in London during the last ten years is quite insignificant. (...) The number of talented young composers is nevertheless – strange to say – very large at the present time.’⁵ As a result the *Society of British Composers* was founded, with the objective of promoting British music;⁶ some other organizations have since joined in this pursuit: the *British Music Information Centre* (which has now been renamed *British Music Collection*), to which the *Scottish Music Centre*⁷ and the *Welsh Music Information Centre* are connected as parallel centres; the *Composers’ Guild*, the

3 Ernest Newman, *The New School of British Music*, 1902, reprinted in Ernest Newman, *Testament of Music*, London 1962, pp. 262–263.

4 Frederick Corder, *A History of the Royal Academy of Music from 1822 to 1922*, London 1922, p. 89.

5 Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and other Lectures*, London 1968, pp. 83–85.

6 The society, which endured for thirteen years, was presided over by Frederick Corder, and in 1918 became the *British Music Society*.

7 Originally founded as *Scottish Music Archive* and later renamed *Scottish Music Information Centre*.

Carnegie United Kingdom Trust for the publication of important compositions (1914-29)⁸ and the *British Music Society* (1918-29 as well as 1979 up to the present).

Vaughan Williams and Elgar did not single-handedly forge the new musical development, as even Michael Kennedy suggests;⁹ rather, it was the cumulative joint energies in works that were able to succeed in the concert hall that brought about the change. **John Blackwood McEwen** (Hawick, Scotland, 13 April 1868–London, 14 June 1948; these biographical dates are strikingly similar to Bantock's), like many other Scotsmen, did not become famous in Scotland, but in London. McEwen was a Professor of Harmony at the Royal Academy of Music, from which he retired in 1936 as Principal; he had in fact been connected to the Academy since 1891 as a student and professor, eventually succeeding Mackenzie as Principal in 1924. Among his pupils had been William Alwyn, who described the situation at the Royal Academy of Music thus:

‘I managed to gain an entry to the Royal Academy of Music as a budding flautist at the early age of 15. My “second study” was the piano, and my theoretic instruction was deputed to a subprofessor of Harmony and Counterpoint (no one at that time, 1921, was supposed to be capable of actually composing music unless he had first been thoroughly grounded in Thorough-Bass!). The Academy was academic in the worst sense of the word. The Principal, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, forbade the performance of Debussy at R.A.M. concerts on the grounds that Debussy’s music was musical anarchy, and Puccini was roundly condemned for his heinous indulgence in “consecutive fifths”. A chance conversation with my flute professor who had previously seen some of my youthful efforts, revealed the fact that I was not being allowed to compose. Horrified, he secured my transfer to John B. McEwen (later to become Principal and, through the terms of his will, permanent benefactor to Scots composers). I was lucky, for McEwen, in this academic Sahara, was a brimming oasis of musical enlightenment. On my first lesson I was told to throw away my text-books. “Go and get the scores of Debussy’s *L’Après-midi d’un faune* and Strauss’s *Don Juan*; you will learn more from them than anything I can teach you!” But that was not true. He opened a new world for me, introducing me to Schoenberg (this in 1922!), and Szymanowski, and to Scriabin’s *Promethens* and the *Poem of Ecstasy*, and of course Debussy, for Debussy was his first love. And more than this he concerned himself with my general education, guiding me in my reading, particularly in philosophy. In the three years I was at the Academy this remarkable man converted me from a raw provincial lad to the semblance of a scholar and the makings of a musician. (...) But

8 Among the works that were published under the scheme of the Trust were Finzi’s *Severn Rhapsody*, Bridge’s *The Sea*, Rootham’s *Ode on the Morning of Christ’s Nativity* and *Brown Earth*, Bantock’s *Hebridean* Symphony, Howells’s Piano Quartet in A minor, Vaughan Williams’s *London* Symphony, Bainton’s *Before Sunrise*, McEwen’s *Solvay* Symphony, Wilson’s *Skye* Symphony, Holst’s *Hymn of Jesus*, Morris’s Fantasy for string quartet, Boughton’s opera *The Immortal Hour*, as well as Stanford’s *The Travelling Companion* and Fifth Symphony, *L’Allegro ed il Penseroso*. The Trust began promoting amateur music in 1935.

9 Michael Kennedy, ‘Vaughan Williams, Whitman, and Parry’, in: *The Listener* LXXII/1859 (1964), p. 778.

in his anxiety to educate me, the one thing McEwen had not taught me was the vital importance of composition technique, and in the late 'thirties I realized that I could no longer look Mozart, Debussy or Puccini in the face. Their immense professionalism dazzled me.¹⁰

In 1898 McEwen's Symphony in A minor was finished, a work supposedly never performed,¹¹ but published in 1903 as a string quartet by Novello after McEwen had arranged it, apparently recognizing the improbability of an orchestral performance. Three further symphonies could not be located or dated – according to John Purser,¹² they were most likely destroyed by the harshly self-critical McEwen himself.

The A minor Symphony already exhibits many of the qualities of the *Solway* of some thirteen years later. Here too we find unbounded energy, careful instrumentation and counterpoint, and some of the *Solway*'s thematic material seems to have been lifted from this earlier symphony, for example its first theme, which appears at the very outset of the first movement.

Ex. 1



The second theme, however, is not revived in the later work; it is not only conceived much more melodically, but also spans larger intervals.

Ex. 2

Shortly thereafter the development starts (from 3 [C]), although thematic transformation and development can already be found in the exposition. Fragmentation and motivic transformation are much more intensely used at this juncture, causing a strong feeling of compactness that is rarely found in other contemporary British symphonies. The

10 William Alwyn, sleeve notes to his Symphony No. 1, Burnham (Buckinghamshire) 1992, pp. 3–4.

11 In January 1944 McEwen wrote that the symphony had never been performed – the score, however, has numerous performing marks and very much looks as though it had been performed at least once (even duration notes are given), perhaps at a later date. On the other hand, McEwen died fairly soon after that, in 1948, and it is rather improbable that the symphony was performed after his death.

12 Telephone conversation by John Purser with the author, 24 February 1998.

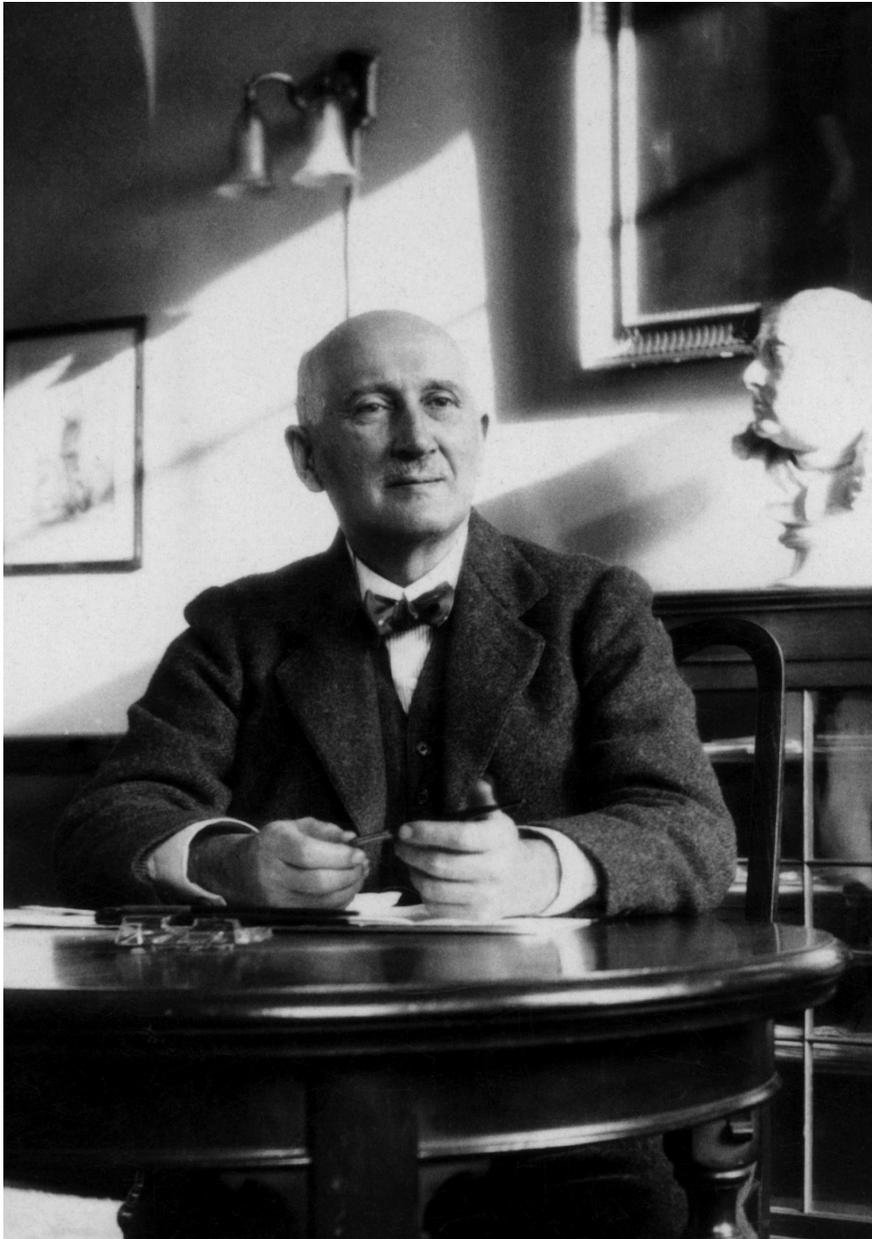


Illustration 30. John Blackwood McEwen, photograph by Elsie Gordon (extract). The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

development seems too long, however, although a false recapitulation ([G]), which starts the development of the head of the first theme, absorbs this impression to a large extent. The real recapitulation actually begins at [J] and is rather complex, re-developing thematic material before the second theme is recapitulated much later ([P]), soon leading the movement to its close.

Instilling a feeling of calm after so complex an opening movement, the slow movement, *Andante Quasi Adagio*, follows in A–B–A–B–A form. The clarinet opens, accompanied by violas and cellos only,

Ex. 3

Andante quasi Adagio
Clar. I in A

pp

Vla., Vlc.

pp

its theme taken over by the horn before an ostinato of more vivid semiquavers begins in the cellos, accompanying the woodwind in a secondary thought that gives the violins room to take over the main theme, together with the clarinet. The contrapuntal texture mounts until ([B] 8), when the first *Più Mosso* section begins. Here we have another theme, introduced by the first violins and from the very beginning heavily contrapuntated.

Ex. 4

Più mosso
largamente

p Vln. I

f

This theme is taken up by the clarinet, then the flutes, oboes and first violins, and eventually nearly the entire orchestra, the counterpoint subordinated to the theme (6 [D]). The A section of the movement is resumed again, and at its return the B section ([F]) incorporates the secondary thought of the A section, developing the theme of section B. A second return of the A section ([H]) closes the movement, giving more space in the coda (from [I]) to the secondary thought.

The 1898 symphony is in four movements (unlike the *Solvay*). The scherzo's main motif is derived from the first movement's main theme, and the second theme is again characterized by larger intervals ([C]). The extensive trio starts with rather quiet solos in horn, trumpet and first violins (from 6 [F]),

Ex. 5



the texture swelling up and down before leading back to the scherzo ([H] 1).

Apparently McEwen was no fan of slow introductions – in neither of his surviving symphonic movements do we find any. The finale starts full of energy, *Allegro Vivace*, with nearly all of its thematic material derived from earlier movements, for example the first theme

Ex. 6



from the second half of the first theme of the first movement. However, the joyous second theme, presented first in the oboe,

Ex. 7



is entirely new material: its fanfaric character highly suitable to development (as all thematic material of McEwen's).

The development begins soon ([C]), even featuring a new theme

Ex. 8



that receives extensive treatment until the next motif is developed ([F]) and taken up later as a third theme proper ([H] developed). The recapitulation begins at [I], and the theme is recapitulated in reverse order so that the first theme (from [L]) has the last word and can lead into the short coda. McEwen's counterpoint and instrumentation is, as usual, rather imaginative, although the formal proportions are a bit imbalanced due to the redefinition of the theme of the development as the third theme.

Written in 1911, McEwen's *Solway* Symphony is his most famous work. It did not receive its official première performance until much later, however, in 1922 at Bournemouth (a playthrough may have been given at the Royal Academy of Music), but it was the

first British symphony to be recorded by the then nascent HMV company. It is a full-size programme-symphony, inspired (see later Moonie's *Deeside* Symphony, pp. 413ff.) by the broad, turbulent isthmus called the Solway Firth, which McEwen had known since his childhood. It is carefully conceived in harmony (modal inflections), counterpoint, thematic development and instrumentation, each movement headed with a title and a motto.

The first movement is headed *Spring Tide* and carries the following motto:

Long golden sands edged with a silver streak,
The impetuous surge that races to the shore,
The full and steady motion of the flood –
When Sun and Moon combine to try the tide.

Ex. 9

Vla. solo con sord.

p quasi di lontano

Ex. 10

Clar. I in B \flat

p solo espress.

No special formal traits can be found in this movement, which would indeed relegate McEwen to the pre-Elgar generation, to that of German or Cliffe; however, the composer's advanced melodic invention, an inverted pedal in the beginning accompanying the long viola theme given above (resembling Bantock rather than Bruckner or Sibelius), allows him to hold his own. The movement's second theme resembles the second theme of the first movement of Havergal Brian's *Gothic* Symphony (see pp. 656ff.) and it is probable that Brian knew the McEwen work long before 1922.

The second movement, *Moonlight*,

The tired ocean crawls along the beach,
Sobbing a wordless sorrow to the moon.

is in a somewhat loose ternary form, characterized by a tireless motif and a strongly rhythmic counter-melody that creates a rather impressionistic feeling;

Ex. 14: Arthur Somervell, *Thalassa* Symphony in D, printed full score, reproduced from the MS score, p. 1.

I

Allegro molto immortal sea—
A World whereon to triumph and be free."

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the first movement of Arthur Somervell's *Thalassa* Symphony in D. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in Bb, Bassoon, Horns (1-2 and 3-4), Trumpets (1-2), Trombones (1-2 and Tubas), Timpani (D, C, A), Violins (1 and 2), Viola, Cello, and Bass. The tempo is marked 'Allegro molto' and the music is in D major. The score shows the beginning of the piece with various instrumental entries and dynamics like 'f' (forte). The title 'I' is centered at the top, and the lyrics 'immortal sea— A World whereon to triumph and be free.'" are written above the first few measures. The score is handwritten and appears to be a manuscript reproduction.

motto suggesting some aspect of the sea, the work is not overtly programmatic in content. The first movement is an *Allegro* headed ‘... immortal sea – / A World whereon to triumph and be free’. The movement opens *forte* (to close *ppp*) with an inspired woodwind unisono theme, representing what one critic called ‘the maturity of his style’ (see ex. 14). The slow movement is headed ‘Elegy. Killed in Action near the South Pole. March 28. 1912’ – obviously Somervell refers to Robert Falcon Scott and his famous Antarctic expedition.¹⁴ This opens with a lament on the cor anglais interrupted by fragments which grow into a funeral march. ‘A key change to the major alters the character of the music as the idea is conveyed of the double thread of individual tragedy and loss, which is inseparable.’¹⁵ Somervell also arranged the movement as a solo for piano or organ, both of which were widely played for many years.

The scherzo, ‘Magic casements looking on the foam / ... of faëry lands’, is a quick movement in 2/4, passing without delay to give space to the considerable final movement, an *Allegro* in sonata-rondo form (whose development is clearly definable from 23 [41] to [48] 1).

Ex. 15



The manuscript shows that considerable cuts were made to further consolidate the movement, although the symphony is indeed well-built, carefully instrumentated, and certainly worth reviving. The première performance was with the London Symphony Orchestra in 1913 in the shadow of Elgar’s Second Symphony, and was repeated shortly thereafter at the Royal College of Music. Unfortunately, the symphony was consequently regarded as a “Royal College of Music” symphony’ (see also William Wallace’s remarks on works associated with the College p. 12) and was thus not taken seriously by the public, whose tastes had changed with the first symphonies of Elgar and Vaughan Williams. And indeed, in comparison to Vaughan Williams’s *London* Symphony of 1914, Somervell’s *Thalassa* Symphony seems rather old-fashioned.

Worthy of mention in this context is an earlier Somervell Symphony (1907), also in D minor, which was discarded but then ‘recycled’. Its material was re-used in the Violin Sonata (from the symphony’s second movement), the Violin Concerto (from the third movement, here indeed incorporated nearly unchanged) and in the *Thalassa* Symphony (from the finale). Somervell obviously did not think much of the first movement, although it is carefully conceived and well instrumentated, with very concise thematic material:

14 Scott (born 6 June 1868) and two of his men are today known to have died on 29 March 1912.

15 Kenneth Shenton, ‘Sir Arthur Somervell’, in: *BM* 9 (1987), p. 51.

Ex. 16



Ex. 17



Ex. 18



The second and third movements of the ‘original’ D minor Symphony are in a rather raw state as far as instrumentation is concerned and certainly would have needed reworking for performance, although the formal conception as well as the thematic material is of high quality. The last movement was in fact hardly re-worked but rather simply transferred to the new *Thalassa* Symphony.

Henry Balfour Gardiner (London, 7 November 1877–Salisbury, 28 June 1950) started to learn to play the piano at the age of five. In the company of fellow students Norman O’Neill, Cyril Scott, Roger Quilter and Percy Grainger, Gardiner went to the Hochsches Konservatorium in Frankfurt am Main (which replaced Leipzig as the centre of foreign studies in music for a number of Britons, in turn to be replaced by Berlin when Schreker and Hindemith raised the Hochschule to prominence – although of course Berlin had always had a presence in the music world), where he studied with Iwan Knorr and took piano instruction from Lazzaro Uzielli, an Italian pupil of Clara Schumann’s. Unfortunately, over-practice of the piano led to partial paralysis of Gardiner’s hand muscles. His time in Frankfurt, which proved to be so very fruitful for the members of the ‘Frankfurt Group’ or ‘Gang’ (who, besides their clothing, were recognizable by their only common feature, ‘an excessive emotionality’¹⁶), brought him his first exposure to more recent music. This

16 Stephen Lloyd, *H. Balfour Gardiner*, Cambridge etc. 1984, p. 16. – Cyril Scott describes the influence of the Frankfurt group as follows: Beecham, Delius, Goossens, Smyth, Bax, Holbrooke, Holst and Vaughan Williams ‘at

included *Die Walküre*, which made ‘no appeal to him’;¹⁷ and although he himself was harmonically highly imaginative, he needed to hear it six times before he could make anything of the *Tristan und Isolde* prelude. But these initial problems did not hold him back, and he later heard all of Wagner’s operas, Tchaikovsky’s Sixth, and many other more recent compositions of French, German and Italian origin. Gardiner described the advent of his studies in Frankfurt thus:

‘One phase of my early attempts at composition consisted almost entirely of experiments in harmony, though at that time I was acquainted with nothing more modern than Schumann, excepting the *Tannhäuser* Overture and the Horn trio of Brahms. During my school-days at Charterhouse these experiments were continued with increasingly strange results, to the neglect of other elements of music; and thus I entered the Conservatorium at Frankfurt with an exuberant harmonic imagination, but with very little resource in other respects. I soon found that a harmonic scheme in which tonic and dominant had no place was of small use in solving the simple formal problems that were put before me; and I was compelled accordingly to descend to a lower and, indeed, to a primitive plane of musical thought in order to cope with them. Thus I acquired a second style – formal, practical, and less imaginative – which co-existed along with my more intense, natural, and original efforts; and it is on the basis of this second style that my musical development proceeded. Looking back on those bygone years, I cannot but feel that I paid a heavy price for the normal equipment of a composer in the loss of originality it entailed. Like all other students who undergo a conventional musical training instead of developing their style at every point on their own lines, I had to take the bad with the good; to learn to solve problems that would never have arisen if I had gone my own way; to utter things and acquire methods of utterance that were essentially alien to me: and I was thus left, as all apt students invariably are left, with a limited imagination, and burdened with a number of habits that had to be unlearned, and will still have to be unlearned till I come to my own again. While saying this, I wish to acknowledge to the full the efficient handling and sympathetic insight of my master, Professor Iwan Knorr, than whose teaching, on its own lines, I can conceive none better. Those who defend the musical institutions that bring composition “within reach of all” may say that I was losing myself in my own particular cul-de-sac, and might never have become a composer at all. Be it so. Let the strong overcome the difficulties they make for themselves: let the weaklings go to the wall. As things now are, all the weaklings are helped to compose: and compose they do, with lamentable results. I would have more danger, and no helping hand outstretched; and the man with the courage, skill, and endurance to face the danger and overcome it will produce finer and truer music than the man who is shown the broad and easy path that leads but to conventionality.’¹⁸

one time or another, had swum into the ken of the “Frankfurt Gang”.’ (John Bird, ‘My meetings with Cyril Scott’, in: *78RPM* 8, London 1969, p. 52.)

17 ‘H. Balfour Gardiner’, in: *MTLIII* (1912), p. 501.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 501–502.

Based on information he received from some of the ‘Gang’ members, Thomas Armstrong describes Knorr’s teaching as follows:

‘Knorr seems to have had the facility for combining the strictness of the German academic training with the aspirations of young and ardent composers. Though strict, he was broad-minded and sympathetic towards experiment. His training, however, remained severe and consciously devoted to technical matters. “Do not”, he used to say to his pupils, “compose with your heart’s blood the exercises that you do for me, or it will lead to suffering for us all”.’¹⁹

In 1895 Gardiner went to New College Oxford, but during vacation continued to study at Frankfurt. Gardiner did not find the atmosphere in Oxford stimulating, but rather academic, although it was there that he befriended Donald Francis Tovey, who graduated in 1898 and especially appreciated Gardiner’s ability in orchestration. After leaving Oxford, Gardiner went back to Frankfurt, and afterwards to Sondershausen Conservatorium, where he started studying conducting and had the opportunity to perform some of his large-scale works for the first time (the First Symphony, for example). After his return to England, he only once and for a short period took a profession, that of a junior music-master at Winchester College.

Gardiner in fact became highly important as a concert promoter and manager who strongly supported his friends, for example the choral conductor Charles Kennedy Scott, Warlock, Ireland and many others. As Thomas Armstrong stresses, Gardiner was above all

‘a very friendly man who really loved his friends. Moreover, he had the leisure and means to cultivate his friendships, and to keep them in constant repair. Also, and perhaps most important of all, he remained single, and therefore did not have to bother whether his wife liked his friends, or whether they liked her. He remained in close touch with all the members of the group until the end of his life, though in later years their meetings inevitably became less frequent. It was my good fortune to be present at some of the reunions of these cordial, individual, and uninhibited men; and in spite of the differences that were so marked, there was no mistaking the strength of the bond that united them. There were, in fact, underlying similarities of temperament and taste more fundamental than the superficial differences that were so apparent. Indeed, Percy Grainger warned me against the danger of regarding this group of young artists as a body of conformists: they were, in fact, individuals, united, as Grainger remarked, only by their hatred of Beethoven.’²⁰

The tastes of the individual members were as different as their characters, but they all liked Bach and Wagner, and detested Beethoven. In his several books, Cyril Scott emphasizes this situation (see also pp. 298ff.).

After the First World War, Gardiner felt, as did so many others, unable to carry on composing as he had done before (he told Thomas Armstrong that he thought that music

19 Thomas Armstrong, ‘The Frankfort Group’, 1958, in: *PRM* 4 85 (1959), p. 2.

20 *Ibid.*

ought to be an ‘intoxication – something that carried one wholly out of this world’²¹); he spent most of his energy either on concerts or on working on his friends’ behalf in other ways. In this connection Gardiner said:

‘We have in this country to-day a number of composers whose claim to be heard rests on the originality of their utterance and their quite remarkable freedom from foreign influences. Unfortunately, in spite of the goodwill of our most prominent conductors, opportunities for hearing these works are few; and my concerts were designed with a view to partially remedying this defect. They will be continued, I hope, as long as the need for them exists; but nobody would be more pleased than myself to see the need disappear, by the immediate and frequent performance of each good work as it is produced.’²²

In 1912, Gardiner’s concerts already featured, along with his own music, works by Bax, Bell, Delius, Elgar, Grainger, Harty, Holst, O’Neill, Scott, Stanford, Vaughan Williams, and others.

Due to his stringent self-criticism, Gardiner destroyed most of his early MS compositions. His symphonies (1900–01, first performed in Sondershausen in August 1901, and, in D, 1904–08, first played at a Promenade Concert on 27 August 1908 and quite favourably received,²³ but, if we are to believe the composer, largely conventional in form and harmonic content) were withdrawn and possibly destroyed by the composer. Among his published compositions, however, for example the anthem *Te Lucis Ante Terminum* and the choral orchestral *Philomena* and *April*, are works of considerable quality – Armstrong goes so far as to say that his music ‘always sounds well’.²⁴

Only an early sketch for Gardiner’s Second Symphony has survived,²⁵ and he had apparently originally planned to write a three-movement symphony, the first movement being an extended sonata movement, followed by an idyllic interlude and an English dance. A critic summarizes the music thus:

‘The work is in two divisions. After an introduction that avoids the suggestion of definite tonality, the first movement built on a short concise phrase cleverly and continually treated with glowing harmonic colour pursues a brisk, bright way leading naturally to a second subject, a broad well-drawn melody which is in sufficient contrast to vary the interest without changing the general mood. There is no episodal movement, no sidelight on either theme and no development in the ordinary sense of the word. The charm of the matter lies in the ever-varying harmonic treatment

21 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

22 ‘H. Balfour Gardiner’, in: *MTLIII* (1912), p. 502.

23 Stephen Lloyd, *H. Balfour Gardiner*, Cambridge etc. 1984, pp. 59–60. On p. 35 Lloyd writes, probably relying on a programme note by Rosa Newmarch: ‘While loosely following sonata form, the second subject was to return before the first in recapitulation, and this section would then conclude as it had begun. A slow idyllic interlude was to follow with a middle portion of contrasting faster music, and the whole work would end with an English dance.’

24 Thomas Armstrong, ‘The Frankfort Group’, 1958, in: *PRMA* 85 (1959), p. 10.

25 Reproduced in Stephen Lloyd, *H. Balfour Gardiner*. Cambridge etc. 1984, p. 35.

(...). The second part is not of so sustained an interest, the subdivision of the slow section into two distinct parts makes for patchiness. The first half is quite ordinary, for Mr Gardiner, but the last, a 6/8 movement in G minor, suggesting a folk-song if it is not one in actuality, seems to come logically into the general atmosphere induced by the first movement. With the aid of a very fine and effective rhythmic passage this merges into a brilliant finale which is not too long drawn-out. When the interest of thin thematic material is made dependent on harmonic colouring conciseness is a virtue and this Mr Gardiner's work decidedly possesses. Unquestionably it should be heard again.²⁶

Harry Assur Keyser (London, 1871–1962) studied at the Royal College of Music, where he doubtlessly wrote his First Symphony in A; this was incorporated into his overture *Primavera*, which ‘consists of the first movement of the symphony (with some revisions), an Intermezzo Scherzando (? the scherzo of the symphony) and the trio of the symphony.’²⁷ Of the symphony, only the first movement (incomplete) and the trio of the scherzo have survived – thus it is highly probable that this First Symphony was in fact revised and re-named *Primavera*, thus being an overture in two movements. Any slow or finale movement is missing, suggesting that Keyser probably never composed more than the two movements.

The revision of the first movement in *Primavera* is quite considerable; the end of the development, missing in the original version, has obviously been entirely rewritten. The movement is considerably extended: three themes are presented, developed and recapitulated (although the third sounds derived from the first and not necessarily distinctive enough for development; it ought thus perhaps be viewed as a transitional theme, marking the beginning of the development, [9], and the coda),

Ex. 19



Ex. 20



Ex. 21



26 *The Observer*, 30 August 1908. Quoted in Stephen Lloyd, *H. Balfour Gardiner*, Cambridge etc. 1984, p. 59.

27 Peter Horton to the author, 16 June 1998.

with a slow introduction (until [2]) and coda (from [19] 4).

The second movement is a comparatively long scherzo with trio (although the scherzo and trio have come down to us only in separate manuscripts). In the revised version the scherzo is in 2/4 and entitled *Intermezzo Scherzando*. It is an energetic, elegant and well-instrumentated movement, comparatively short (due to its tempo), lively and full of joyful atmosphere. The trio (used in both versions and very probably the best elaborated material of the symphony – one is very much reminded of Grace Williams as well as Norman Del Mar) offers numerous melodies. These are, however, mainly rather short-lived, to be replaced by other melodic elements.

Keyser's Second Symphony in B minor (1904-05) is in several sources quoted as carrying the rather dramatic subtitle *To be or not to be*. It is, however, 'only' the motto which is taken from *Hamlet* (Act III, scene i):

‘To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?

To die, – to sleep, –

No more; and, by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and those thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, – ‘tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die, – to sleep;
To sleep! Perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub.
For in that deep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause ...’

We immediately enter the matter in the first movement,

Ex. 22



with several secondary thoughts derived from this theme continuing the tension, leading ([3]) to the second theme,

Ex. 23



which has already been given in its general outline at ([2]) and which is also in part derived from the first subject and immediately leads into the development of the theme and its descendants (from [4]). The main theme is hardly recognizable any more; its derivations are developed, to be recapitulated only after a rather long, to some extent even episodic development incorporating two fugatos (from [6] and [8], respectively), in reversed order (from [10] 5, second theme, and 5 [12], first theme). These lead immediately into an extremely short coda. Formally rather unconventional, the movement works by its own inner logic and the permanent development of motifs and thematic elements.

Following the emotional turmoil of the first movement, the *Adagio*, in D^b major, offers a rather quiet, though expressive contrast, with a more animated C[#] minor middle section (from [15]). The return to the initial key ([18] 8) recapitulates the introductory mood, lyrical and a touch melancholic. The scherzo, in G minor with major trio twice as fast as the scherzo itself, stands in 2/4, with a precise, malicious wit, with *molto giocoso* more than once given as the performing prescription. Here, as in all other movements, we find inspired, careful instrumentation, together with a well-conceived formal concept.

The finale is conceived in a similar fashion to the first movement, a short introductory thought leading to the main thematic material ([26]),

Ex. 24

26 Clar. I, Vla.

mf cantabile

to be recapitulated later ([34] 17). A lyrical second theme ([28])

Ex. 25

Vlc., Fg.

dolce espressivo

is clearly derived from the first movement, but here already the thematic material is strongly developed; more themes follow, and the development is opened ([32]) with a fugue proper,

Ex. 26

32 Tempo 1o

Vlc. *p marcato*

which indeed is identical to most of the development, but this time extremely short (until [34]), recapitulating the diverse thematic material and simultaneously working it out. An

Andante Maestoso coda (from [36]) closes the effectful symphony, which would certainly be worth reviving.

Pianist and composer **Percy Sherwood** (Dresden, 23 May 1866–London, June 1939)²⁸ was the son of an English university lecturer in Dresden; his mother was a German singer. He studied with Felix Draeseke and Theodor Kirchner at the Dresden Conservatorium from 1885 to 1888. In 1889 he won the Mendelssohn Prize for a *Requiem* for soli, chorus and orchestra.²⁹ He stayed in Germany and in 1893 was appointed teacher at the Dresden Conservatorium, in 1911 professor, and additionally acquired a high reputation as a pianist in Germany. He subsequently returned to England in 1914.

Three of Sherwood's Symphonies have survived. Two others are, according to Richard Platt, lost.³⁰ He also composed many other substantial works, for example an overture to Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* (see Havergal Brian's Second Symphony, pp. 548ff.), a violin concerto, two cello concertos and piano concertos each, a concerto for violin and cello, seven string quartets, a viola sonata, a piano quintet, three violin sonatas, two cello sonatas, a sonata for two pianos and a sextet with piano and horn. Born in the same year as Busoni and Satie, his style is supposedly much more Brahmsian, though a thorough re-assessment of his music may reveal a much more individual composer.

Sherwood's First Symphony in C major was written in October and November 1887 and was apparently performed, although no performance date has come to light; in connection with this performance (or performances), Sherwood considerably reworked the score, including erasures and several cuts, especially in the first movement, but also in the third and fourth movements. The theme presented in the slow introduction of the first movement gains importance as the main theme of the movement, considerably reworked and with a different continuation.

Ex. 27

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is for Clarinet and Violin I (labeled 'Clar., Vln. I') and the bottom staff is for Cor. The tempo is 'Allegro molto'. The music is in C major and 2/4 time. The top staff begins with a quarter note C, followed by an eighth note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B. The bottom staff begins with a quarter note C, followed by an eighth note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B. The top staff has a triplet of eighth notes (G, A, B) and a quarter note C. The bottom staff has a quarter note C, followed by an eighth note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B. The top staff ends with a quarter note C and a quarter note G. The bottom staff ends with a quarter note C and a quarter note G. The score includes dynamic markings such as *sf* and *sf*.

28 'Obituary', *MT* LXXX/1157, July 1939, p. 548.

29 A copyist's full score of this work is to be found at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. This information was kindly supplied by Alan Howe.

30 Richard Platt, 'Sherwood, Percy', in: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edition ed. by Stanley Sadie, Vol. 23, London/New York 2001, p. 260.

At the end of the exposition another theme occurs.

Ex. 28



The development (from [G]) especially features the head of the theme, and the harmonic progressions lead all the way up to the theme being presented in G[♯] major (at [L]). There is hardly any recapitulation proper (from [P]); rather, the theme from the end of the exposition is recapitulated before (from [Q]) the coda begins. After the harmonic deviations of the first movement, the scherzo is essentially in C major, largely in a staccato crotchet movement; only the trio is more strongly melodically organized. The slow movement in A[♭] major offers a kind of complementary texture, with steadily transformed themes – it is a highly organized movement of continuous metamorphosis:

Ex. 29



The finale offers strong rhythmical features,

Ex. 30



once again proving the symphony to be a work full of energy and quite possibly worth reviving. The movement is in a kind of ternary form, the middle section (24 [F]–26 [L]) again in A[♭] major, ending with a fugato (from [H]) and a canon (from [I]), the theme of ex. 27 reappearing and gaining renewed importance, leading the work to a convincing close.

The Second Symphony in B minor was composed in November and December 1892. Its beginning may have been partly inspired by Wagner's *Rheingold*, and the first movement initially comes across as being perhaps somewhat too conservative, though the harmonic language is highly convincing. Sherwood explores thematic metamorphosis even further in his slow movement. In his scherzo, he visits keys such as G major (Trio I) and C major (Trio II); this latter trio somewhat resembles that of the First Symphony. Full of harmonic richness and marked by a tendency not to fulfil the expectations usually imposed on a finale

of a symphony, the last movement is a puzzling piece, outpacing any traditional form, with plenty of energy and full of rhythmic vigour, albeit also a more melodic secondary theme.

Sherwood's Third Symphony in E \flat major, consists of four movements, the first two and last two composed in 1905 and 1907 respectively. The first two movements were largely composed in Highcliffe-on-Sea, near Bournemouth, and the remaining two back in Dresden, two years later. This symphony takes the aforementioned tendency even further. Again a work with a strong rhythmical flavour, most of its thematic material has its origins in the first movement,

Ex. 31



especially the interval of the rising sixth, which will be used throughout. While his string writing may at times seem rather traditional, his thematic use of the lower brass is not. Sherwood's technique of thematic transformation largely abandons any development in its traditional meaning. The timpani give a kind of steady pulse to the *Andante un poco grave*,

Ex. 32



a movement built in a kind of scherzo form with the variants A–B–A'–A''–A'–A''–B'–A'. It is in this movement only (set largely in E \flat minor) that tam-tam, cymbals and bass drum are used – a rare gesture.

It must be borne in mind that two years passed before Sherwood wrote the last two movements of the symphony. A slow introduction, featuring the timpani, leads into the scherzo, which is altogether conservative in conception – after so adventurous a slow movement, one might have hoped for a kind of Brucknerian Ländler-Scherzo or at least something to grip the interest. The concept of the finale broadly follows the outline as described in the Second Symphony, but sadly, after two years, Sherwood seems to have been unable to recapture the mood of the first two movements; compared to the previous two, they are, in spite of several beautiful aspects, somewhat less inspired.

Compositionally speaking, **Algernon Bennett Langton Ashton** (Durham, 9 December 1859–London, 10 April 1937) is probably the third (counting Havergal Brian and Edward Elgar) strictly non-conformist composer of the era. Brian and Ashton indeed barely managed to win acceptance from British audiences. While Brian's work was revived during his lifetime, Ashton's music was not only forgotten, but lost to posterity; only the published works – largely chamber and piano music – may have survived. Ashton moved with his family to Leipzig at the age of three, where he somehow attracted the attention of Moscheles,

who advised his parents to send him to the Konservatorium. There he studied from 1874 to 1879 with E. F. Richter, Jadassohn, Reinecke and others, and left with the Helbig Prize for Composition. After a short visit to England, Ashton continued studying, this time in Frankfurt with Raff, for two years. It was then that he began writing a long line of strongly individual compositions, the numbered ones reaching 174, to be augmented by a number of concertos as well as symphonies and a 'last titanic chamber work'.³¹ In England, however, he was, apart from his piano professorship at the Royal College of Music from 1885 to 1910, mainly regarded as a joke, in part due to his hobbies, writing letters to the editor and tidying up neglected graves; he was ridiculed by the public. He died, 'hale and vigorous practically to the end',³² in 1937, three years after Elgar and one after Dieren. Harold Truscott, one of the most progressive minds among British authors on music (and a distinguished composer himself – see p. 527), describes Ashton as follows:

'Ashton, like Elgar and Havergal Brian, never had anything to do with English folk-song or the comparatively easy and ready-made English accent imparted to the music of the folk-song school, very often, be it noted, by the use of English folk-songs of foreign origin – many of the most beautiful of Essex folk-songs, for instance, are a legacy from the Dutch settlement on Canvey Island; such an English quality depends on the listener being familiar with certain tunes which they believe to be of English origin. But a genuine national accent accepts the genuine international accent and comes from that indefinable thing, the soul. And this is the particular quality which can be found in Ashton's music, not least in the magnificent series of eight piano sonatas which are the crown of his piano music. It is also what struck the Germans as outstandingly attractive and fascinating about his music. The point is that such a genuine native strain came first from this composer who has been persistently and determinedly cold-shouldered by the country he was the first in a very long time to make eloquent in music on her own account.'³³

'Again, the work of every really individual composer has an appearance which cannot be mistaken. By this I do not mean that the work can be assessed by eye, but that something of the composer's personality imparts itself to the appearance of the music, so that a glance at a page is enough for one to be aware, without doubt, of the authorship. With some composers one may suspect several possibilities; but with the front rank individuals there is no doubt.

Ashton's music has this marked individuality to the eye; and indeed his music is quite unmistakable; even the music of composers strongly influenced by him does not give the impression of *his* music. And his individuality is most obvious in his keyboard writing, which is literally the first genuine English piano style in the history of music.'³⁴

31 Harold Truscott, 'Algernon Ashton: 1859–1937', in: *MMR LXXXIX* (1959), p. 144. Truscott describes (p. 145) the inappropriate presentation of Ashton and his music in the successive editions of Grove's *Dictionary*.

32 Harold Truscott, 'Algernon Ashton: 1859–1937', in: *MMR LXXXIX* (1959), p. 144.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 147.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 148.

At another place Truscott describes Ashton's British accent as being 'as unmistakable as that of Elgar or Tovey, and as undefinable.'³⁵ In spite of Truscott's efforts, Ashton's music has remained unperformed until this very day.

Percy Pitt (London, 4 January 1869–London, 23 November 1932) was, next to Elgar, the only composer to be dealt with more extensively in the section on English music (1906) in Marliave's *Études musicales*.³⁶ Pitt's Symphony in D minor (1905-06), dedicated to Hans Richter, was premièred under the title of Sinfonietta (because it was only in three movements, then indeed quite atypical but finding a successor in Stanford's Seventh Symphony, 1911) and received its final title on the occasion of revisions for a (now) Royal Philharmonic Society concert in 1912. The work had been commissioned for the Birmingham Musical Festival of 1906 and was a complete success, receiving a performance shortly thereafter at the Queen's Hall. The piece, however, whose première performance was in Birmingham, suffered somewhat from being mistaken as a short, light-hearted work: it was some 40 minutes long.

'It was played as the last item in a programme, in which it was preceded by Holbrooke's *Bells* and Elgar's *Kingdom*, and the audience, already almost surfeited with high seriousness, expected something light and miniature. Its high and noble atmosphere, its musicianly skill, its rich and complex orchestration, were recognized by all, and for the first time the thematic material was felt to be almost too abundant; but all were not fresh enough to absorb such riches. To some it seemed more strenuous than spontaneous, and overcrowded almost to weariness. Perhaps the ear of the hearer was already weary; for to others it appeared vigorous and passionate, Miltonically condensed, and only too full and deep in meaning to be entirely received at one hearing.'³⁷

The third performance in 1912 confirmed the work's finer qualities, both with the critics and the audience.

'The qualities of the Symphony were its combination of noble spirit and technical skill; its deep thought and emotional profundity; its thematic abundance and high-piled orchestration. The defects of its qualities, which no creation is without, were that among the hastening themes and crowding climaxes a clear impression of the whole was not easily maintained, and that its very fullness tended to create some effect of monotony.'³⁸

Unfortunately, this work seems to be lost to us.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 145. Truscott, like so many others, writes 'English', regardless of the achievements of Scottish composers.

36 Joseph de Marliave, 'Musiciens anglais', in Joseph de Marliave, *Études Musicales*, Paris 1917, pp. 99–118.

37 Jacques Daniel Chamier, *Percy Pitt of Covent Garden and the B.B.C.*, London 1938, pp. 118–119.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

Little is currently known about the life and career of Scotsman **Charles O'Brien** (1882–1968). His Symphony in F minor is undated, but according to the Scottish Music Information Centre, it may date from 1922, which appears improbable considering the distinctly conservative construction and the even more conservative instrumentation. The second movement is a minuet with two trios – which is clear proof of O'Brien's retrospectiveness. Harmonically speaking, the work appears to have been composed before 1895; even the handwriting of the score would seem to suggest this (although it is doubtful that O'Brien tossed off a symphony at the age of 13). It seems highly unlikely that this symphony could have originated in the same year as Sorabji's First Choral Symphony (1922), or a year after Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony*, or even eight years after Dieren's Choral Symphony. The author rather assumes that this work was O'Brien's 'masterpiece' at the end of his studies: assuming that nothing had interrupted O'Brien's studies and that he had been a typical composition student, the work could have been composed in c. 1906. In every respect, this dating would be much more appropriate.

York Bowen's (London, 22 February 1884–London, 23 November 1961)³⁹ ambitions lay much more on large-scale works in the field of chamber and especially piano music. He was – incredibly, perhaps – highly successful by the very beginning of the century. Richter conducted his Symphonic Fantasia Op. 16 in 1906 in London and Manchester, Wood put on his symphonic poem *The Lament of Tasso* in 1903, Kreisler premièred the Suite in D minor in 1910, and Lionel Tertis the Viola Concerto in 1908 and later the two sonatas, the Fantasy and the Quartet. At least until 1958 Bowen was commissioned to write solo and chamber compositions. But Bowen was best known for his piano compositions, which rank with Ireland's, Scott's and Benjamin Dale's. While Henry Wood described Bowen, who only recently has been extensively revived, as 'a British composer who, I feel, has never taken the position he deserves',⁴⁰ it is only very recently that his orchestral as well as his chamber music has received a powerful revival. As a composer, Bowen is essentially a late Romantic, but unlike Bax, he was highly concerned with musical form and barely interested in programmatic music.

Bowen's first two symphonies were composed in 1902 and 1909–11, respectively. The First Symphony in G major Op. 4, written when Bowen was 18 years of age and a student at the Royal Academy of Music (where he was to remain for another three years), was given among others at Queen's Hall and in Eastbourne.⁴¹ The London performance was reviewed in *The Times* thus:

39 Clifford Bax writes that Bowen 'was so musical that he blew his nose upon preconceived notes'. (Clifford Bax, *Inland Fair*, London/Toronto ²1933, p. 34.)

40 Henry Wood, *My Life of Music*, London 1938, p. 170.

41 Monica Watson, *York Bowen – a centenary tribute*, London 1984, pp. 12 and 16.

‘Mr. York Bowen’s opening theme strikes one at first as almost jaunty enough for a Scherzo – but is treated with great skill and originality and its companion theme is of great beauty, so that the whole movement has a rare grace and interest.’⁴²

Ex. 33



Ex. 34



Bowen crossed out the movement-heading ‘Perseverance’ (which indeed would only in part have applied to the movement’s character), and for the two following movements, he seems never to have considered any kind of programmatic implication.

The work does indeed display the hallmarks of a skilled symphonist, for example careful conception, thematic development and instrumentation, and is certainly much better than any symphony by Norman Demuth – the finale’s exposition (also to be repeated) is far too long, however. The cantability and charm of the slow movement

Ex. 35



and the energy in the finale

Ex. 36



Ex. 37



42 *The Times*, 1912, quoted in Monica Watson, *York Bowen – a centenary tribute*, London 1984, p. 12.

represent only a few of Bowen's merits as an orchestral composer.

The Second Symphony in E minor Op. 31 was premièred on 1 February 1912 at the Queen's Hall under Landon Ronald and appreciated as being extraordinarily technically well-written. *The Times* devoted a whole column to analyzing it.⁴³ Although the work several times threatens to become too long, Bowen always manages to prevent this. Some critics claimed to detect hints of Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn and Schumann,⁴⁴ nowadays known to have been misjudgements. It is much more probable that the critics did not like the simplicity of the score; it was not harmonically or formally complex. In this regard, the symphony does seem rather old-fashioned, and somehow has even a feel of light music. The second movement is very atmospheric; the third is a rather joyous scherzo reminiscent of Reznicek's *Donna Diana* operatic overture (1894, rev. 1908 and 1933) which is nowadays similarly dismissed as outdated. The finale is again very energetic, tense, and later dramatic, but in no other way exceptional – by comparison, the First Symphony, a student work, is rather more successful, although Bowen's compositional techniques are even more sophisticated in the later work. Perhaps the accusations of outdatedness cowed him from writing another symphony until some forty years later: the Third Symphony did not take shape until 1951–54, premièred by Vilem Tausky.⁴⁵ Another symphony was never finished.

Neither Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, Percy Grainger nor Norman Demuth (see pp. 382ff., 556ff. and 677ff.) expressed an opinion on the orchestral composer **Cyril Meir Scott** (Oxton, Cheshire, 27 September 1879–Eastbourne, 31 December 1970). Similar to Sorabji's œuvre, Scott's focal point was almost exclusively piano music.⁴⁶ At the same time, it has been stressed elsewhere that Scott had a 'natural instinct for the orchestra',⁴⁷ which, along with his harmonic wealth of ideas, was one of his most essential qualities. Scott was given the monikers 'an English Grieg'⁴⁸ and 'an English Debussy',⁴⁹ although he had studied with the

43 *The Times*, quoted in Monica Watson, *York Bowen – a centenary tribute*, London 1984, p. 19.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 19.

45 Some sources give two symphonies, dated 1951 and 1954, respectively. The author has not been able to document this.

46 Eric Blom, *Music in England*, Harmondsworth/New York ³1945, p. 203 writes: 'Actually Scott has been greatly neglected here in recent years'.

47 Alfred Louis Bacharach (ed.), *British Music of Our Time*, Harmondsworth/New York 1946, p. 189.

48 Eric Blom, *Music in England*, Harmondsworth/New York ³1945, p. 204.

49 This connotation was also certified more rarely Arnold Bax or even John Ireland. Debussy could see 'no similarity at all' in the actual fact itself 'whilst showing the greatest sympathy for Scott's music' (Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, *Cyril Scott – Composer, Poet and Philosopher*, London ³1921, p. 33.) Scott said himself after he had met Debussy: 'Though we had a few things in common, (...) there were huge areas where our works pointed in totally different directions' (John Bird, 'My meetings with Cyril Scott', in: *78RPM* 8 (1969), p. 52) – he felt Debussy's music 'always a little too précieux' (Eaglefield-Hull, *Cyril Scott – Composer, Poet and Philosopher*, London ³1921, p. 33). Andrew de Ternant recalls that Debussy knew much foreign music: 'No French musician had a more complete knowledge of published foreign modern musical scores, and especially of works he never had an opportunity of hearing publicly performed. He seemed to be as much an omnivorous reader of modern scores as the leisured woman is of new



Illustration 31. Cyril Scott, c1901, photograph.

other members of the ‘Frankfurt Gang’ – for example Grainger, O’Neill and Gardiner (see pp. 284ff.) – in Germany, where he became acquainted with Ernest Bloch, a composer of considerable popularity in Great Britain.

Scott initially seems to have been overestimated as a composer in various respects (conversely, he was later commonly underestimated⁵⁰). Although several of his piano works may hold their own in comparison to Debussy or Scriabin (others, like many of Ireland’s works, have recently been described as rather eclectic⁵¹), the contention that he was atonal at a time when the word didn’t even exist yet⁵² is very probably an exaggeration. Sadly, Scott lacked an interpreter capable of promoting his music, as Harriet Cohen did for Bax or Beecham for Delius, or, in earlier times, Richter for Elgar. As history has often proved, the promotion by a famous musician is critical for making music known to the ‘ordinary listener’. It is only just recently that John Ogdon’s performances of Scott’s piano concertos were released on CD. Still, a thorough revival of his music is currently imminent.

Scott had clear ideas about the terms ‘Classicism’, ‘Romanticism’ and ‘Futurism’, on which he wrote:

‘No composer of the first rank has ever adhered to traditions; he has always overstepped them, and hence every masterpiece is the result of romanticism. Indeed, what pedants call classicism is nothing but that transformation *apparently* brought about when the dust of years settles on what once was a *romantic* masterpiece.’⁵³

By this Scott means that ‘classicism’, that is the blind following of tradition without the intent of conquering it and ‘futurism’, that is so-called avant-garde art trumpeted as original but in fact remaining on a shallow level, are identical. The ‘Romanticist’, on the other hand, was ‘the only man who starts out with a perfect freedom of choice, to follow or to leave the

novels from the circulating libraries. His acquaintance with the scores of British, American, and even Dutch composers was astonishing. I have heard him ‘hum’ melodies from Mackenzie’s *Colomba* and *The Rose of Sharon* with as much freshness as anyone who had attended a performance the night before. No British musician except their composers had a more complete knowledge of two rarely-performed works – Parry’s oratorio *Saul*, and Stanford’s opera *The Canterbury Pilgrims*. He knew all the Gilbert-Sullivan operas, but had witnessed a performance of only one, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, when he was a boy on a visit to relatives in London.’ (Andrew de Ternant, ‘Cyril Scott and Debussy’, in: *MT* LXV, 1924, p. 448.)

50 Hugh Ottaway, ‘Cyril Scott’, in: *MO* 73/867 (1949), p. 143: ‘As an innovator Cyril Scott lacks the freshness and subtlety of Debussy; his harmonic ‘sensation’ is often rather lavish, even crude, by comparison and tends to stifle his lyrical gift. His music moves most freely, most convincingly, when he is least concerned with effect and nuance and is prepared to acknowledge certain facets of his Romantic heritage, as in the last movement of the Piano Concerto.’

51 Cf. Diana Swann, ‘Cyril Scott (1879–1970)’, in: *bms news* 71 (1996), p. 254 and Malte Krasting, ‘Hörbare Zuneigung’, review of Ireland piano music, in: *Fono Forum* 6/98 (1998), p. 69.

52 Roger Holdin, ‘The Place of Cyril Scott in Modern Music’, in: *MM* XII/6 (1932), pp. 137–138. ‘Cyril Scott has, in the opinion of W. H. Hadow, “listened too readily to the twin sirens of atonality and metaphysics.”’ (John Foulds, *Music Today*, London 1934, p. 277.)

53 Cyril Scott, *The philosophy of modernism (in its connection with music)*, London 1917, pp. 2–3.

road whenever he thinks fit'.⁵⁴ (This terminology may recall Foulds' *Pasquinades Symphoniques*, see pp. 770ff.) At the same time, it had to be considered that composers were frequently transferring from other arts. Eaglefield-Hull comments: 'Some composers, like Debussy, create a new harmonic system; others, like Scriabin, invent a new way of using harmony; others (less successful), like Rimmington and Edison, are seeking closer analogies between sound and colour. Mysticism has laid its hold on music as well as on painting and literature. D'Ergo, the Belgian theorist, calls Acoustic Science to the help of music, just as Seurat and Signac have utilised the theories of scientific chromaticism in their pictures.'⁵⁵ Scott despised technical questions, however, since in his view, music was 'entirely a thing of the spirit'.⁵⁶ 'In these days of analytical science and material aims, it is refreshing to have to do with so ideal an art, one which resists a surgeonlike dissection just as much as it does a solution by chemical process.'⁵⁷

His penchants were also in accordance with these theories. He refused Mozart and Beethoven,⁵⁸ loved Bach and other Baroque-era masters as well as Romantics (Chopin and Wagner, Schubert and Schumann less so). Beethoven, as Scott maintained, 'was no harmonist'; even Bizet ranked higher in his estimation, and he attributed more progressivity in influence to the Russians than to Brahms, yet denying them 'subtle touches'.⁵⁹ He admired Stravinsky more than Scriabin, who died 'whilst still a mannerist. The result was monotony. Had he lived, he would perhaps have got beyond mannerism.'⁶⁰ Since Debussy was too perfumed for him, he turned to Richard Strauss. Meeting Scott in 1924 after a long interval, Balfour Gardiner wrote: 'I found him very young & boyish, & just the same, in every way, as he was years ago.'⁶¹ Scott felt himself to be no more than only approximately as modern as Goossens or the most recent Percy Grainger,⁶² and greatly admired both of them.

Cyril Scott had arrived in Frankfurt in 1891, at the age of twelve (when Grainger arrived one year later, he was even only ten years of age). Scott's First Symphony in G major (1899), first performed in 1900 in Darmstadt and conducted by Willem de Haan (by procurement of Stefan George, to whom it is dedicated), was received 'with mingled applause and hisses'⁶³ ('I was not in the least discouraged but on the whole inclined to be flattered'⁶⁴) and greatly esteemed by Percy Grainger and Josef Holbrooke, but nonetheless was 'relegated

54 *Ibid.*, p. 6.

55 Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, *Cyril Scott – Composer, Poet and Philosopher*, London ³1921, p. 4.

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Ibid.*

58 Scott dared to say in Berlin: 'I don't care for Beethoven.' Quoted from Cyril Scott, *My years of indiscretion*, London 1924, p. 44.

59 Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, *Cyril Scott – Composer, Poet and Philosopher*, London ³1921, p. 32; *ibid.*: 'Wagner he finds all-satisfying; and entirely monumental in his great operas.'

60 *Ibid.*, p. 34.

61 Stephen Lloyd, *H. Balfour Gardiner*, Cambridge etc. 1984, p. 158.

62 'Cadwal', 'Cyril Scott and *The Alchemist*', in: *MM* II/11, London 1922, p. 331.

63 Cyril Scott, *Bone of Contention. Life Story and Confessions*, London 1969, p. 76.

64 *Ibid.*

to oblivion'.⁶⁵ The full score of the First Symphony was recently rediscovered at the Percy Grainger Museum in Melbourne; two missing pages were reconstructed for performance by Leslie De'Ath. The symphony is on a most ambitious scale, and certainly better crafted and deeper than some contemporaneous works. In the first movement, opening *Allegro frivolo*, one finds hints at composers such as Parry and Bantock, but also a strong vein (in some moments he seems to foreshadow Poulenc). The second movement is in ternary form, with woodwind carrying most of the musical substance. In a similar vein follows the scherzo, with two trios. On his realisation of the movement for performance in connection with the present recording, Leslie De'Ath writes:

I have tried to complete this movement on the premise that the more there is of Scott, and the less of me, the better. Thus I have used both Scott's content and his orchestration whenever possible. The intended structure, based on internal evidence, appears to be an ABACABA rondo. My reconstruction of the missing main theme at the outset of the movement is based upon an extant passage in the interior that almost certainly functioned as the main recurring theme of the movement.⁶⁶

The Finale is a set of eleven variations (see Stanford's Seventh Symphony of 1911), the last one a fugue. Lewis Foreman writes: 'Scott was certainly trying to demonstrate to his German professors that he knew "how it should be done"; indeed, in the end perhaps he rather overdid it!'⁶⁷

The Second Symphony in A minor (1901-02) had its première performance on 25 August 1903 under Henry Wood at a Promenade concert 'where it was extremely well received, though (for reasons difficult to divine) it has not been given again, in spite of many requests in the papers for further hearings of it.'⁶⁸ It was, following suggestions from Scott's circle of friends,⁶⁹ re-shaped into *Three Symphonic Dances* and in this form was first performed in Birmingham, conducted by the composer.⁷⁰ When it was revised, it became hardly more than three dances. In the 'Gavotte', frequent metre changes predominate; the sonata form is still faintly recognizable (recapitulation from [L]), but the exposition and development were obviously drastically whittled down. The second movement, 'Eastern Dances', is now longer than the first movement, and was obviously revised to a much lesser extent, but the form is rather amorphous, akin to a beautiful landscape-painting inspired by Delius. The last movement, 'English Dance', was very

65 Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, *Cyril Scott – Composer, Poet and Philosopher*, London ³1921, p. 39.

66 Leslie De'Ath, CD liner notes for the recording of Scott's First Symphony, Colchester 2008, p. 10.

67 Lewis Foreman, *ibid.*

68 Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, *Cyril Scott – Composer, Poet and Philosopher*, London ³1921, p. 21.

69 The publisher Robin Legge to Roger Quilter, 31 August 1903: 'I don't agree that C. S.'s Symph. is great [...]. I am quite sure he will have to modify his idea of flow for flow's sake in instrumental music.' (Stephen Lloyd, *H. Balfour Gardiner*, Cambridge etc. 1984, p. 39.)

70 This symphony was the first one in a long time to be performed at a promenade concert. Holbrooke created one symphony in 1900 (*Les Hommages* – also, and mainly as labelled a suite), but did not compose another until 1925 – the last-named seasons were that most intense concerning renewal of the British symphony culture.

probably the symphony's finale, but in this incarnation the recapitulation has been dramatically shortened. Its main feature is obviously the brilliant counterpoint, which impressively showcases Scott's early mastery.

Apart from his *Irish* Symphony, Op. 7 (1904), the Irishman **Herbert Hamilton Harty** (Hillsborough, Down, 4 December 1879–Brighton, 19 February 1941) composed a violin and a piano concerto, the tone poems *The Children of Lir* (1938–39) and *With the Wild Geese* (1909), Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale* (1907, for his wife, the singer Agnes Nicholls), and, with Elgar's aid, the cantata *The Mystic Trumpeter* (1913) on a text by Walt Whitman that was also used by Gustav Holst. Mainly, however, Harty was of enormous importance as a conductor, particularly of the Hallé Orchestra (to which he was recommended by Albert Coates and Thomas Beecham) and the London Symphony Orchestra – he conducted the British first performances of Mahler's Ninth Symphony (1930) and the premières of Constant Lambert's *The Rio Grande* (1929) and Walton's First Symphony (1934 and 1935). At the same time, he had a stubborn conservative streak as well; when he was supposed to conduct Prokofiev's *Scythian Suite* (composed in 1919), he said: 'They want modern music – they shall have it'⁷¹ – and drove the performance in a most ferocious fashion, at top speed, *fortissimo* (he tended to be a fast conductor anyhow, but this was extreme). Having learned much from Michele Esposito (but never studying with him formally), he admired Berlioz more than Wagner (his advocacy on Berlioz's behalf helped to spark a kind of Berlioz Renaissance). He conducted Bach and Mozart in a most classical manner, but was not afraid to arrange orchestral suites from some of Handel's orchestral music. Other antipathies he confessed to in 1920 were Brahms and Franck. This does not mean that he gave bad performances of their music; on the contrary, he obviously took even more care with their preparation than with his favourites. In 1924, however, the year of the second revision of the *Irish* Symphony, he wrote: 'It seems that the race of musical giants finished with Wagner and Brahms.'⁷² In a paper read before the Manchester Organists' Association, Harty put forth four 'laws' to define 'real music':

1. Music must be beautiful in shape.
2. Melody must be the first reason for its existence.
3. What appeals only to the brain cannot live.
4. It is the emotional quality of music which gives it value, and the nobler the emotion aroused, the greater the music.'⁷³

In accord with these tenets, his Symphony (whose première performance was conducted by Harty himself, conducting for the first time in his life) is indeed 'youthful'⁷⁴ and 'melodious'

71 John Russell, 'Hamilton Harty', in: *M&L* XXII (1941), p. 219.

72 Hamilton Harty, 'Modern composers and modern composition', in: *MTLXV* (1924), p. 329.

73 *Ibid.*, p. 328.

74 David Greer, 'Hamilton Harty Manuscripts', in: *MR* 47 (1987), p. 242.



Illustration 32. Hamilton Harty, photograph.

(thus described by Holbrooke⁷⁵), but lacking the depth of thought that Harty reaches in *The Children of Lir*.

‘The *Irish* Symphony re-opens an old problem, and leaves it as far from solution as before. – Can symphonic music be made out of folk-tunes? The answer that Dvořák succeeded is incomplete. His tunes happened to be ideal ones – good, bold bits of melody that lent themselves to “snatchy” treatment; Dvořák set about his work with inspired skill, and his *New World* Symphony stands alone. The trouble with folk-tunes is that they insist on statement rather than reference. The composer finds he is arranging them for orchestra and weaving a rhapsody round them. While he is pulled one way by his tunes he is pulled another way by his symphonising, and his yielding first one way then the other gives an indeterminate style to his writing. That Mr. Harty has not kept entirely free of this fault from beginning to end is the most that can be said against his *Irish* Symphony, a work of great significance and beauty.’⁷⁶

The symphony won the *Feis Ceoil* prize in Dublin in 1904, two years after Michele Esposito had submitted his own *Irish* Symphony (see pp. 268ff.) to the same competition, and was revised at least twice, for performances in Leeds in 1916 and Manchester in 1924.⁷⁷ Frank Howes contributed a thorough analysis, comparable to some of the programme-notes that at that time were contributed to the works in performance, back in 1925. Further assessments were supplied much later by David Greer and Jeremy Dibble.⁷⁸ Harty gives extensive notes in the printed score:

‘This work is an attempt to produce a Symphony in the Irish idiom, and it has for poetical basis scenes and moods, intimately connected with the North of Ireland countryside to which the composer belongs. The themes have therefore been given a characteristically Irish turn; often they are based upon traditional melodies.’

This is akin to Moonie’s comments on his *Deeside* Symphony somewhat later (see pp. 413ff.). Harty continues:

‘Though the composer does not desire that his music shall be looked on as entirely “programme music,” each movement has for general poetic basis some particular scene or mood, and it is hoped that when the work is performed, the programme will contain these brief explanatory notes.

I. Allegro molto. “On the shores of Lough Neagh.”

The music seeks to recapture the atmosphere of youthful days spent near Lough

75 Holbrooke described Bridge and Vaughan Williams as melodists but considered Goossens and Coleridge-Taylor harmonists.

76 William McNaught, ‘Hamilton Harty’s “Irish Symphony”’, in: *MT* LXVI (1925), p. 255.

77 Apart from a revised ending, the differences between the 1915 and 1924 versions are matters of detail rather than of overall conception. (Cf. David Greer, ‘Hamilton Harty Manuscripts’, in: *MR* 47 (1987), p. 242. On p. 244 Greer lists errors common to the 1924 MS and the 1927 printed versions of the *Irish* Symphony.)

78 Frank Howes, ‘A note on Harty’s *Irish* Symphony’, in: *MT* LXVI (1925), pp. 223–224. David Greer (ed.), *Hamilton Harty. His Life and Music*, Belfast 1979, pp. 93–96. Jeremy Dibble, *Hamilton Harty. Musical Polymath*, Woodbridge/Rochester 2013, pp. 45–49.

Neagh, and the old legends and songs associated with them in the mind of the composer.

II. *Vivace ma non troppo presto*. “The Fair-Day.”

Horses and cattle – noise and dust – swearing, bargaining men. A recruiting sergeant with his gay ribbons, and the primitive village band. In the market place, old women selling ginger bread and “yellow-boy” and sweet fizzy drinks. A battered merry go-around.

III. *Lento*. “In the Antrim Hills.”

This movement was suggested by a scene in a lonely farmhouse where a wake was being held. The music is in the shape of a wistful lament, and one of the principal themes is based on the tune “jemmy moveela sthor,”⁷⁹ of which the words begin: –

“You maidens, now pity the sorrowful moan I make;
I am a young girl in grief for my darling’s sake;
My true love’s absence in sorrow I grieve full sore,
And each day I lament for my jemmy moveela sthor.”

IV. *Con molto brio*. “The 12th of July.”

The 12th of July is the great Protestant festival of the North of Ireland, and on this day the countryside is full of noise of drum and five bands playing such tunes as “The Boyne Water,” of which considerable use is made in this movement. The general gaiety and excitement of the music is interrupted by reminiscences of the lament heard in the preceding movement. The composer wishes to illustrate the impression left on his mind by once seeing a funeral procession making its slow way through the crowded streets on a certain “12th of July” in a North of Ireland village.’

Elsewhere Harty wrote:

‘Since I was a boy at Hillsborough (...) I always had the idea of writing something in which I would try to get “flavour” of village-life there, and the legends associated with the district and province. Although I have not explained it in words, the *Irish Symphony* is really an autobiography, and I have no doubt that others used to the country will recognise many of the allusions.’⁸⁰

Harty thus clearly describes the allure of local flavour, which had inspired Stanford earlier: particularly in the melodics, rhythmic and harmony, the powerful influence of folk music can be detected (the work had been commissioned as ‘a symphony based on Irish airs’⁸¹), due to the use of folksongs like *Avenging and Bright*, *The Croppy Boy*, *The Girl I Left Behind Me* (on which Holbrooke wrote orchestral variations in 1900), *The Blackberry Blossom*, *Jimín Mo Mhíle Stór* und *Boyne Water*.⁸² The fanfare at the beginning of the symphony is reminiscent

79 *Jimín Mo Mhíle Stór* (*Little Jimín*).

80 Quoted in an obituary note, here quoted from Philip Hammond, ‘Dublin and London’, in David Greer (ed.), *Hamilton Harty. His Life and Music*, Belfast 1979, p. 28.

81 David Greer, sleeve notes to the recording of Harty’s *Irish Symphony*, London 1981, p. 4.

82 Samuel Langford, critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, wrote on the first performance of the revised work in Manchester in 1924: ‘Whether he should have the order of merit as a composer or as the expert arranger of national melody. As an arrangement of melodies his symphony is an undoubted triumph. The scherzo [*The Fair*

of Bantock's *Hebridean* Symphony (see pp. 517f.), but Harty's composition is far more conventionally conceived and points rather to Stanford's and Dvořák's influence.

Frank Howes comments on Harty's programmatic remarks as follows:

'The animation of this work makes it very pleasant to listen to, but the discrepancy between Mr. Harty's energy as musician and dreaminess as *littérateur* is curious. We know too little about the psychology of inspiration to account for it, but it certainly suggests that some aspects of a man's emotional nature find more ready expression in one medium, others in another. We know from experience that the artist shows one kind of qualities in his behaviour and another in his art. We now find that if he practises two arts he exhibits different qualities in each. Perhaps in the interpretation of other men's works Mr. Harty shows these qualities more evenly intermingled. If this "Irish" Symphony, with its orthodox form and folk-tune themes, has not a first-class symphonic interest, it has revealed an interesting bit of musical psychology much more clearly than many new works that are more original in purely musical respects.'⁸³

The instrumentation of the score is nonetheless rather progressive (the extensive use of the xylophone in the scherzo is only one example) and the harmony is strong, although the melodics are often in the foreground (not in the manner of Brahms, to be sure), forming a real counterpart to Elgar despite its 'folksy' quality. The use of the brass instruments is strongly Elgarian, sometimes even rather *nobilmente*, but the 'Irish turn' (to quote Howes) adds an entirely individual colour. The second of the two main themes of the first movement

Ex. 38

Vlc., Cb.

pizz.
pp misterioso

Ex. 39

Lento e molto tranquillo

Clar.
mf molto cantabile

Fg.
p espressivo

Day is so instantaneously effective that one must foresee for it frequent performance as a separate piece.' (Quoted from Michael Kennedy, *The Hallé Tradition*, Manchester 1960, p. 253.)

83 Frank Howes, 'A note on Harty's *Irish* Symphony', in: *MT* LXVI (1925), p. 224.

has a rather complex contrapuntal structure from the very beginning, and the two main themes in the scherzo are even more strongly in the Irish vein.

Ex. 40

Ex. 41

The lament's theme (Howes stresses that Harty's description of a 'wistful lament' is by no means appropriate – the movement is in fact rather dramatic and energetic)

Ex. 42

as well as the main theme of the last movement,

Ex. 43

The musical score for Ex. 43 consists of three staves of music in G major. The first staff is marked 'Cor ingl.' and 'ff', with dynamics 'mf' and 'sf' and the instruction 'gay and insouciant'. The second staff has a triplet and 'cresc.'. The third staff has 'ff' and 'sf' dynamics and another triplet.

whose spirit has in more recent times received a rather frightening dimension, displays the close connection of Harty's invention and Irish folk material. Formally, no movement is unique in construction, but rather predictable, with the exception of the lament.

David Greer stresses the special qualities and difficulties of the finale:

'The finale is the most problematical movement of the symphony. Its title "The 12th of July" refers of course to the Protestant festival celebrating the Battle of the Boyne, hence the appropriateness of the main theme "The Boyne Water", which is played to this day by the flute bands in the processions of the Orangemen. That the festive atmosphere is splendidly evoked goes without saying. Harty did however give himself a difficult task in attempting a symphonic finale for a work whose previous movements have been so individually colourful and contrasted and it is evident from the more extensive nature of the revisions to this movement that he found it the most difficult part of the symphony to get right. We might think of the problem as that of the movement's having sufficient weight to be the culmination of the symphony but also a sufficient identity with the other movements to integrate the whole work.

He achieved the weight by writing another sonata-type movement with original secondary material and by a big coda: and he achieved the integration, perhaps less successfully, by introducing into the movement music from the scherzo and the slow movement. Indeed in the 1924 version the symphony actually finishes with a third and majestic reappearance of theme III [ex. 42], where in the 1915 version it finished with a *vivace* coda growing out of II (a) [ex. 40]. One feels that in the 1924 version he puts too much weight on that tender slow melody and that the coda is the one place where the 1915 version is preferable. For the rest of the movement however, and indeed the other movements too, a comparison of the two versions gives a fascinating glimpse of a fine craftsman at work, pointing the melodies with more piquant ornamentation or phrasing, making small cuts to tighten the structure, clarifying the textures with more effective scorings or accompaniment figurations and, perhaps most frequently of all, simply enriching the scoring so

that the piece would communicate more easily to a big audience in a big hall: one might almost think of the conductor in him taking over now.⁸⁴

William Havergal Brian (Dresden, Staffordshire, 29 January 1876–Shoreham-by-Sea, 28 November 1972) (see also pp. 548ff., 656ff., 690ff. and 765ff.) was a close friend of Josef Holbrooke's (see pp. 570ff., 614ff., 735f. and 752ff.) and Granville Bantock's (see pp. 510ff. and 598ff.). Brian, who indeed wrote thirty-three symphonies (of which only one is partially lost), composed twenty of these at more than eighty years of age. Apart from listening to performances and training as an organist, he was entirely self-taught. (He did, however, have the luck to regularly attend Hans Richter's concerts in the Midlands; consequently, he became a fervent promoter of Elgar, who said to him when they met at last: 'Your music is original. Keep on writing.'⁸⁵ The interest however was clearly not sufficiently reciprocal for Elgar to support Brian's music.). Given his oeuvre of five operas, his enormous oratorio *Prometheus Unbound* (which took him six years to compose and whose score is now lost), his Fifth Symphony, a violin concerto and numerous minor compositions, his neglect is shocking. Malcolm MacDonald describes Brian's effect thus:

I am often asked "What is it that attracts you so much to Brian's music?", and my answer, however I phrase it, really always boils down to this: Brian makes me *think*. He shakes me up, he forces me to reassess all my preconceptions about the art of music in general and the art of the symphony in particular, and in seeking to understand him I have not always arrived at final conclusions or answers – rightly, for he distrusted them all – but I have learned a gigantic amount: and this always over and above the fact that I love the sounds his music makes. There are only three other 20th-century composers whose work affects me to a comparable extent – Ferruccio Busoni, Arnold Schönberg, and Edgard Varèse. Brian did not, like Schönberg or Varèse, effect a profound revolution in the fundamental language of music; nor was he, like Busoni, a multi-faceted magician – creator, teacher, virtuoso, with a clear vision of music's future aesthetic aims. But just as surely as these three he made the transition from a late-Romantic to a truly 20th-century sensibility; and like them, he did this partly by drawing upon the objectivity and contrapuntal strength of the Baroque, not for purposes of an epigonic "neo-classicism" but for the renewal of the traditions of musical dynamism and dialectic.⁸⁶

Early on, in 1907-08, he composed *A Fantastic Symphony*, for a long time entitled Symphony No. 1 (the numbering of Brian's symphonies was changed only in 1967). The score was extensively revised in 1915 (possibly prompted by the development of British symphonic composition, mainly by Elgar, but also by Ashton and Davies, just after its

84 David Greer (ed.), *Hamilton Harty. His Life and Music*. Belfast 1979, pp. 95–96.

85 Kenneth Eastaugh, 'The score for Mr. Music', in: *Daily Mirror* 20257 (11 February 1969), p. 9.

86 Malcolm MacDonald, *The Symphonies of Havergal Brian*, Vol. III, London/New York 1983, p. 284.



Illustration 33. Havergal Brian, 1907, photograph.

composition⁸⁷) and the movements were made to be published separately, but only two movements have in fact survived and been published in this revised version: *Festal Dance* and *Fantastic Variations on an Old Rhyme (Three Blind Mice)*. There is a bit of disagreement concerning the original number and order of movements: while Kenneth Eastaugh, not without intrinsic reason, assumes that four movements existed and that the *Festal Dance* was in fact the scherzo,⁸⁸ a letter by Brian to the critic Herbert Thompson would suggest a three-movement conception, in which the middle movement was the ‘Scherzo – “The Bogey Man”’ and the last was the ‘Dance of the Farmer’s Wife’.⁸⁹ MacDonald does not discuss what the ‘Scherzo’ music could have been like – so perhaps the surviving *Festal Dance* combines elements of both movements. *Festal Dance* (in which the piano takes on a prominent role) was premièred by Thomas Beecham in June 1915 at the Royal Albert Hall.

The Variations were so successful that even Donald Francis Tovey performed them, writing about them:

I hope that performances of such works as this will draw attention to a composer who has achieved things on a vast scale which may have to wait as long for recognition as usual. This composer will achieve more; but even for the recognition of his smaller works he is being made to wait longer than is good for any country whose musical reputation is worth praying for.⁹⁰

A performance in 1921 in Brighton, conducted by Henry Lyell-Taylor, received the following review in the *Brighton Herald*, 30 April 1921:

‘The theme is *Three Blind Mice* – that much emerged from the amazing welter of strange sound. They were very active mice, here, there, and everywhere. They were scampering all over the orchestra, shouting in the brass, squealing in the wood, scratching on the strings. You could “hear” how they ran: it was the maddest of scampers at times. Sometimes the music seemed rather descriptive of the emotions the mice went through when the farmer’s wife was engaged in her cruel operation of cutting off their tails with a carving knife. As a suggestion of musical pain it was unsurpassable. One thing was certain: “You never did hear such a thing in your life,” as this. One had, of course, to acknowledge the extreme cleverness with which the composer has handled the variations, and the great knowledge that he

87 A line can be drawn connecting Elgar and Brian who, on 16 June 1915 (published in Lewis Foreman (ed.), *From Parry to Britten. British Music in Letters 1900–1945*, London 1987, p. 74), wrote in a letter to Granville Bantock of his high estimation of César Franck’s Symphony (see also p. 211).

88 Kenneth Eastaugh, *Havergal Brian – the making of a composer*, London 1976, p. 107.

89 Cf. Malcolm MacDonald, ‘Havergal Brian’s Letter to Herbert Thompson: some implications’, 1988. Republished in Jürgen Schaarwächter (ed.), *HB: Aspects of Havergal Brian*, Aldershot etc. 1997, pp. 127–130.

90 Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, vol. VI, London etc. 1939, p. 96. The entire article by Bantock was published in the *Havergal Brian Society Newsletter* 46 (1983), pp. 3–7 and republished in Jürgen Schaarwächter (ed.), *HB: Aspects of Havergal Brian*, Aldershot etc. 1997, pp. 318–333.

possesses of orchestral effects.”⁹¹

And Hamilton Law’s programme note for the 1923 Bournemouth performance read thus:

‘This composition, which was written at Hartshill, Staffordshire, in 1908, is to-day receiving its actual first performance in the form that it was originally devised. Certainly it was given several years ago in Brighton under the direction of Mr Lyell-Taylor, and with such extraordinary success that it was put into the programme five times in the one week. But on that occasion a condensed version of the composition was used. This afternoon, on the other hand, a return is made to the first version as it originally was constructed by the composer. While it is being played through even the veriest tyro will perceive the immense technical difficulties with which the instrumentalists are confronted; the inability of any but the most expert orchestral players to contend with such demands upon their skill must necessarily circumscribe performances of the work to a somewhat limited area, as, outside of the London and leading provincial orchestras, there would be few musical organisations sufficiently dexterous to present Mr Havergal Brian’s variations with much hope of success.

The first few bars of the work will make the nature of the “old rhyme” perfectly obvious. It is, however, a sequence of notes which is to be met with very frequently: indeed, Sir Charles Stanford once consolingly remarked to the writer of this note – who had himself perpetrated this “motive” in a composition which that incomparable teacher was inspecting – that “almost every composition introduced the idea of *Three Blind Mice* somewhere or other.”

Ex. 44

The musical score for 'Thema' is in 2/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 90. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the Oboe (Ob.) playing a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *espress.* and *mp*, and the Clarinet I (Clar. I, Fg.) playing a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *mp*. The Arches play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes (G2, A2, B2) marked *ff*. The second system shows the Oboe playing a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *mp*, and the Clarinet I playing a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *mf*. The Arches play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes (G2, A2, B2) marked *pp*. The third system shows the Oboe playing a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *p*, and the Clarinet I playing a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *pp*. The Arches play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes (G2, A2, B2) marked *pp*.

The composer of these Variations has not overlooked the absurd comicality of this Old English Rhyme – wherein the mice chase the farmer’s wife! In his musical elaboration of all this he reverses the process and insists that the farmer’s wife shall chase the mice.

91 ‘Henry Lyell-Taylor’, in: *Brighton Herald*, 30 April 1921. Quoted in Lewis Foreman, *Havergal Brian and the performance of his orchestral music. A History and Sourcebook*, London 1976, p. 40.

This perverted version of the rhyme he treats fantastically and symphonically; by “symphonically” is meant a continuous development of the theme, not, as in so many variations, a series of distinct and self-contained sections.

The first portion of the score for the most part represents the gradually accelerated chasing of the mice by the farmer’s wife, but after passing by an *Allegro molto* and a big climax (*Lento*) there comes a section marked, *Con moto e espressione*, where the chase is interrupted. The farmer’s wife forgets the mice, and falls into a reverie, dreaming of someone she loves.

Ex. 45

9
Con moto e espressione (♩ = 80)

The score is for a section titled "Con moto e espressione" with a tempo marking of "♩ = 80". It features a variety of instruments including woodwinds, brass, strings, harp, and percussion. The woodwinds and brass parts are marked with dynamics like *mp* and *pp*. The strings play a sustained, expressive accompaniment, with the violins marked *mf espr. molto*. The harp part is characterized by frequent glissando markings. The section is divided into two parts, "a 1" and "a 2", with a repeat sign at the end.

But later on a return to *Allegro vivace*, with a holding-note in the horns and taps on the side-drum, and the reverie is broken – the chase resumed.

Ex. 47

Allegro

Allegro

25 **Lento**

A *Chorale Finale* [sic] follows, representing the expressions of regret and contrition poured out by the farmer's wife in that she resorted to such extremities as cutting off the victims' tails with a carving knife.⁹²

Doubtlessly Brian shows in both pieces his cleverness in instrumentation and melodic and thematic invention – although both are rather atypical of symphonic conception – even

92 Hamilton Law, Programme note for the 1923 Bournemouth performance of Brian's *Fantastic Variations*. Quoted *ibid.*, pp. 45–47.

for Brian, and thus the revisions Brian undertook can be assumed to be quite considerable.

The *Festal Dance* is in fact a scherzo,

Ex. 48



with a *Grazioso* middle section (the middle section of this being a *Misterioso* section in turn)

Ex. 49



that is led back to the scherzo by an *Allegro Molto* section. Brian's fugal writing, which can be found here, is extremely rare in his entire output; Malcolm MacDonald remarks that the next orchestral fugal writing would not appear until the 16th Symphony (1960), some fifty years later.⁹³ Highly important are the percussion effects, which stress, even more than the remaining instrumentation, the programmatic aspects – the rather ecstatic 'Dance of the Farmer's Wife'!

In 1907 the *Musical League* appeared on the scene. Elgar, Delius, Mackenzie, Percy Pitt, Norman O'Neill, Granville Bantock, Henry Wood, Adolph Brodsky and William McNaught all belonged to it, and despite its fleeting existence (fading by 1909 due to lack of funding), it managed to promote McEwen, Gardiner, Holbrooke, Scott, Nicholl, Bell, F. Austin, Bridge, Bax, Vaughan Williams, Brian, Grainger and Smyth.⁹⁴ Another of the composers promoted by the *Musical League* was **Robert Ernest Bryson** (Liverpool, 30 March 1867–St. Briavels, Gloucestershire, 20 April 1942), a Liverpool cotton merchant who only later came to composition. Given that even Brian, Cliffe and Ashton were overshadowed by Elgar, it is not entirely surprising that this Scotsman has been entirely forgotten both as a composer and a symphonist. His Second Symphony (1928), supposedly published by Stainer & Bell, is now unknown at this firm, and also Breitkopf & Härtel, who published the score of No. 1, was unaware of its existence. At least in the latter case, a copy of the printed score has survived at the British Library.

The only known performance of the First Symphony in D (1908) was on 1 February 1912 in Bournemouth under John Lyon, but the score had already been published in 1909,

93 Malcolm MacDonald, *The Symphonies of Havergal Brian*, vol. 2, London/New York 1991, p. 66.

94 Percy Young, *Elgar O.M.*, London/Glasgow 1955, pp. 142–143.

so earlier performances are very probable. The opening slow introductory movement is from the beginning stunning and arouses the listener's interest with its careful workmanship, unconventional conception and melodic invention.

Ex. 50



The complex development (from 2 [9] to [28]) is also rather unconventional in conception, but equally convincing in elaboration; with this composition, Bryson may well have influenced Bantock (see pp. 510ff.), who further developed the symphonic concept into a different, programmatic direction.

The second movement is a scherzo with two trios, the first characterized by duplets and tying-overs, the second by the rhythm ♩♩; the third movement is a rather short slow movement structured by a clarinet solo (see ex. 51). In the finale the development of the material is not restricted to the formally conceived 'development' as such, and the recapitulation in fact does not repeat the expositional material literally but rather in a transformed state. It is indeed baffling that this composition, and with it its composer, has been entirely forgotten, apart perhaps from the difficulty arising from the inaccessibility of the orchestral material after the closing down of Breitkopf & Härtel London in c. 1914-17.⁹⁵

Frederic Austin (London, 30 August 1872–London, 10 April 1952)⁹⁶ was the brother of Ernest Austin (1874–1947), who assumedly also wrote a symphony, and the father of Richard Austin, who became quite well known as a singer. He studied music with his mother and his uncle, Dr. W. H. Hunt. Subsequently he pursued a career as an organist, baritone singer, artistic director of the British National Opera Company and Professor of Singing at the Royal Academy of Music. Among his better-known compositions were his arrangement of *The Beggar's Opera*, an overture *Richard II* and an orchestral suite *Palsgaard*. A work consisting of four linked movements, Austin's (only) Symphony in E major (1911-12), which was presented in one of Balfour Gardiner's concerts, bore a small resemblance to Parry's Fifth Symphony (also 1912). In Austin's work, however, the single sections of single movements are dispensed with, and the

'structural method very largely used is that of continuous development from a germinal idea, designed in its variations and extensions to have the effect of more or less unbroken subject-matter, diversified, but related. Other types of working are used from time to time, and the last movement, where the subjects of the first receive their

95 The German company was unable to give more detailed information.

96 Cf. also Martin Lee-Browne, 'Frederic Austin, "a most versatile musician"', in: *British Music* 26 (2004), pp. 15–38.

Ex. 51

The musical score for Ex. 51 is presented in a multi-staff format. It begins with a section marker '16' and a 'rall.' instruction. The score includes several systems of staves, with dynamic markings such as *mp*, *p*, *f*, *pp*, and *ppp*, and performance instructions like *dim.*, *cresc.*, *trem.*, *pizz.*, and *arco*. The notation features various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The piece concludes with a final *ppp* dynamic marking and a *rall.* instruction.

completest and plainest statement, is built up more clearly in the usual symphonic manner.

An Introduction, commencing in C major, based upon the following

Ex. 52

is twice used in amplified versions later on.

The movement that succeeds, springs from (a) and its corollary (b), used in working, largely independently of one another:

Ex. 53

After an unmistakable climax upon a pedal E, formed from (b) of ex. 53, the oboe enters with a new type of matter, softly accompanied by strings, over the still sounding pedal note:

Ex. 54

When this comes to an end, a feint of further development of ex. 53 is made, merely providing however, a working-up to the repetition on an enlarged scale of the introduction. This dies away to a single horn tone, displaced in its turn by the entry of the clarinet, and after some fifty bars of prelude matter derived from ex. 55 and 56 – woodwind and muted strings – we enter upon the second movement.

This has for its main subject-matter two themes, a clarinet “call”

Ex. 55

The musical notation for Ex. 55 is a single staff for the clarinet, marked 'Wildly'. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is characterized by rapid sixteenth-note passages and a dynamic range indicated by hairpins. The notation includes various accidentals and phrasing slurs.

and:

Ex. 56

The musical notation for Ex. 56 is a multi-staff arrangement. The top staff is for the Oboe (Ob.) and the bottom staff is for the strings (Archi), marked 'con sordino' and 'pp'. The strings play a sustained chord of E-flat, while the oboe plays a melodic line. The notation includes various chordal textures and phrasing slurs.

A beginning is made with ex. 56 (related to ex. 53) which ultimately breaks into a stretch of melody, soon after which the clarinet call ex. 55 comes into evidence: this, with attendant matter, is eventually worked up to a passionate climax, from thence falling down to a murmured pedal-note, over which pass reminiscent phrases of themes foregoing.

At the end of this, a sudden modulation is made to a sustained chord of E \flat , held *pp* by the strings. The slow movement that then enters is based upon a broad theme, which, repeated in its earlier phrases from time to time, and turning off occasionally into by-paths of somewhat lighter matter, is extended until it reaches a final climax. From this point, a return is made to the tranquillity of the beginning, from which a long *crescendo* passage of preparation for the last movement ultimately sets in – at the height of which bells are used – plunging ultimately from the key of E \flat into that of E. We now have, as before said, a more definite and straightforward version of the thematic matter of the first movement, differing entirely, however, in its mood and resultant material. The second theme (ex. 56) broadens into a march subject of considerable length, which leads into the peroration of the whole. Here the Introduction is again heard, and some of the main subjects of the symphony are passed in review and combined.⁹⁷

In other programme notes, Austin lamented what he felt to be the contemporary ‘comparative neglect of the symphony’, stating that ‘The charge that most modern composers would bring against it would perhaps be its lack of flexibility, its cumbersome and tautological structure (...) the more intellectually daring composers seem to have felt that the only way of insisting upon the real nature and origin of music was to break away

97 Frederic Austin, Programme note to the 13 November 1913 performance of the Symphony in E major. Private collection of Lewis Foreman, who kindly supplied a photocopy.

from a form that increasingly became the property of the professor (...). Thus was born the symphonic poem (...).⁹⁸ The form of the symphony would change and develop, but it would also absorb programmatic elements, which would ensure its future. Austin's symphony exemplified this approach. He continued in another programme note: 'The formal scheme differs considerably from that usually employed, recapitulations and the usual sections of statement and development being dispensed with. A structural method very largely used is that of a continuous development from a germinal idea.'⁹⁹

Before Elgar became the new and internationally recognized focus of attention, Thomas F. Dunhill stresses that Brahms, Wagner, Dvořák and Strauss dominated the musical situation in Great Britain. Strauss had – thanks to Thomas Beecham – become an institution in the UK early on and came regularly to England starting in around 1903. His influence was strongest between 1904 and 1914, amongst others on Bantock, Holbrooke and others, but purportedly not on Elgar¹⁰⁰ (a questionable assertion given the proximity of *Falstaff* and *Don Quixote*). Finally, as a consequence of Albert Coates's influence, the Russians (Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Scriabin, Rakhmaninov, Medtner, Borodin) made an impact as well.

The influence of Brahms, which is not limited in its reach to Stanford and Parry, is described by Adolf Weißmann in his inimitable way: 'In England, where the old-established Mendelssohnian proliferates further in the peaceful Charles Villiers Stanford, the gradually entering Brahmsian culture has as a by no means alone-standing fruit settled the appearance of Edward Elgar.'¹⁰¹ And Colin Wilson wrote: 'The Brahmsian melancholy is the Elgarian melancholy.'¹⁰² Brahms's Third Symphony, which Elgar admired with some reservations and conducted (as well as giving a most perceptive lecture on the work in 1901), is, as Michael Kennedy puts it,

'Elgarian in its enigmatic mood (hence its appeal to him, perhaps) and has the close thematic relationships that are the distinguishing feature of Elgar's treatment of symphonic form. Also there is a suggestion of flattery by imitation on Elgar's part in the finale of his First Symphony where the second subject of the finale

Ex. 57

The musical score for Ex. 57 consists of two staves. The upper staff is for Violin I (Vla., Vlc. I) and the lower staff is for Violin II (Vlc. II) and Cello (col. Cb.). The Violin I part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *cantabile* marking. It features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure, followed by a half note, and then a triplet of eighth notes in the second measure. The Violin II part provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4.

98 Frederic Austin, Concert Programme notes, Queen's Hall 18 March 1913.

99 Frederic Austin, Concert Programme notes, Queen's Hall 20 November 1913. Quoted from Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Music in England 1885-1920 as recounted in Hazell's Annual*, London 1994, p. 14.

100 Ernest Newman, 'Strauß in England', in: *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna) 21460 (8 June 1924), pp. 12–13.

101 Adolf Weißmann, *Die Musik in der Weltkrise*, Berlin/Leipzig 1925, p. 120.

102 Colin Wilson, *Brandy of the Damned*, London 1964, p. 138.

behaves in an identical manner to its exact counterpart in the finale of Brahms's symphony. Both have a bass moving in crotchets beneath a theme in triplets on cellos, repeated an octave higher by the first violins.¹⁰³

Somewhat more complicated was the positioning of Elgar in connection to the so-called Royal College of Music School. John Francis Porte writes: 'The creative spirit of Stanford in its maturity has much that is akin to Elgar. There is the same loftiness of purpose, the deep sense of the beautiful, the desire for self-expression, the aspect of strength of character and the peculiar tenacity and patience of true genius.'¹⁰⁴ And Edmund Rubbra wrote: 'With regard to Elgar, his [Vaughan Williams's] nearness, both in essential aim and in point of time, to Stanford and Parry, prevented him, even had he wished it, from being the leader of a nationalist school.'¹⁰⁵ While Parry and Stanford took a relatively long time to find their own voice, Edward Elgar, who did not study at any of the British conservatoires, had a much easier time of blazing new trails; still, his 'independence' remained in several aspects strongly rooted in late-Romantic principles, especially in the early years. Though only five years younger than Stanford, he achieved much more, and in numerous fields. It must be said that Elgar's success was a starting point for many of the younger generation.¹⁰⁶ Other composers, however, left the symphony alone or retreated from it for a long time in response to Elgar's success.¹⁰⁷

Apart from a few violin lessons as a boy from Adolph Pollitzer, **Edward William Elgar** (Broadheath, Hereford & Worcester, 2 June 1857–Worcester, 23 February 1934) had no regular musical training, and that is very probably why his music is so extraordinary and so very different from that of most of his contemporaries. In 1882 Elgar became conductor of the Worcester Instrumental Society, and three years later succeeded his father as organist of St. George's, Worcester. Among his favourite composers were Schubert, Mendelssohn and Schumann, to which he had the closest affinity – he was not overly fond of Baroque or Tudor music, nor folk music, and by virtue of these dislikes was as much a cosmopolitan as for example Havergal Brian.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, like Brian, Elgar also very much enjoyed music for brass band. He greatly admired John Philip Sousa, who toured Europe with his band from 1900.

Elgar's first attempts in symphonic form date back to 1878, when he 'ruled a score for the same instruments and with the same number of bars as Mozart's G minor Symphony, and in that framework' he 'wrote a symphony, following as far as possible

103 Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, p. 9.

104 John Francis Porte, *Sir Charles V. Stanford, Mus.Doc., M.A., D.C.L.*, London/New York 1921, p. 3.

105 Edmund Rubbra, 'The later Vaughan Williams', in: *Mc&L XVIII*, Oxford 1937, p. 1.

106 Cf. Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, pp. 63–64.

107 E.g. Howells, Gardiner, McEwen, Somervell, O'Neill, Carse, Scott, Tovey, Pitt, Walford Davies and Bowen, and even Stanford and Parry.

108 Cf. William Henry Reed, *Elgar as I knew him*, 1936, Oxford etc. ²1989, pp. 83–87.

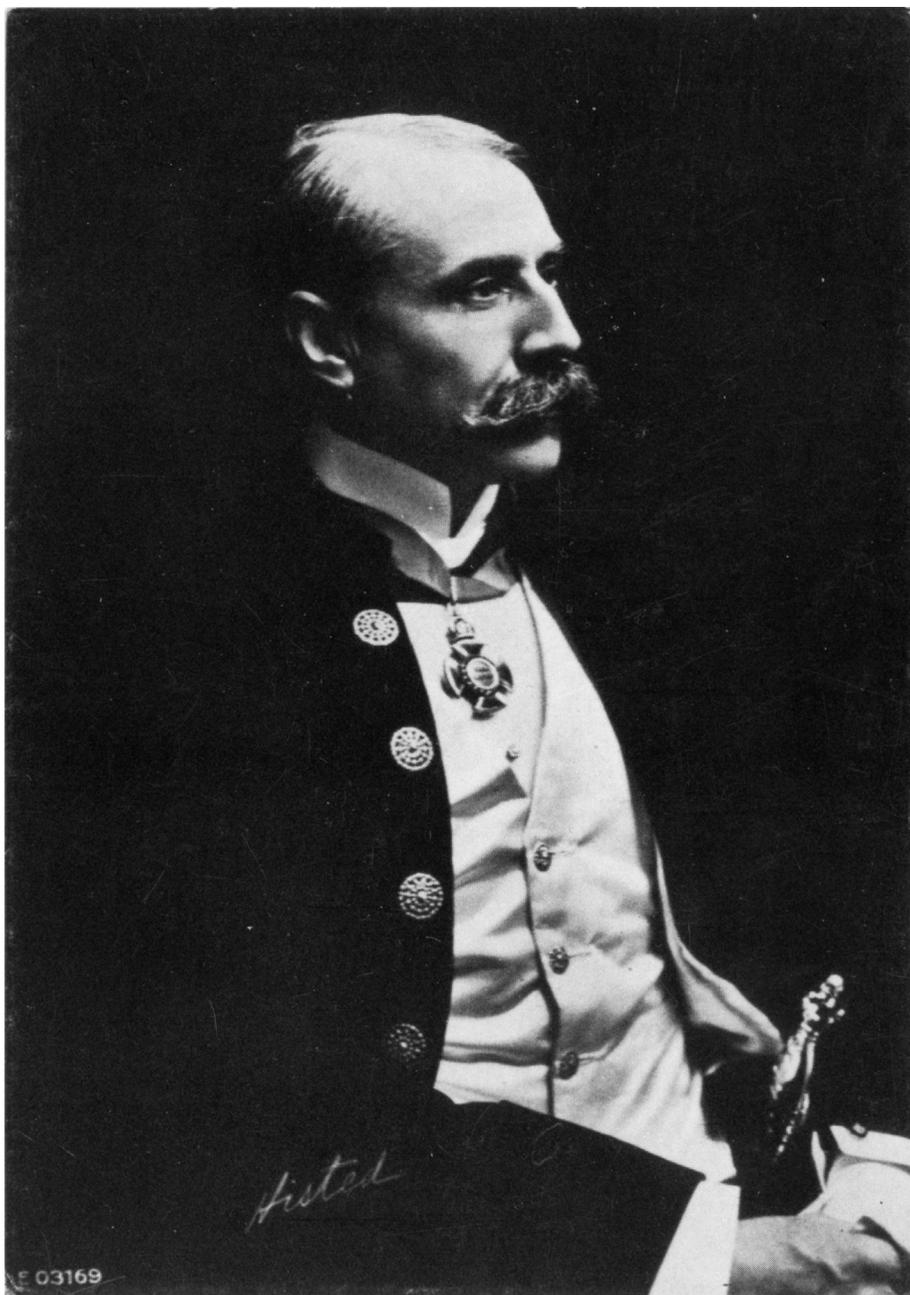


Illustration 34. Edward Elgar, 1911, photograph by Histed.

the same outline in the themes and the same modulation.¹⁰⁹ He would later recall that he had learned more from this attempt than from anything else. The effort was never finished,¹¹⁰ however, nor was it ever intended as a fully-developed composition.¹¹¹ In 1893 he composed *The Black Knight*,¹¹² according to a number of sources a choral symphony, but in fact a cantata, as can be read from the MS score. From 1898 he had plans for a symphony on the subject of General Gordon.¹¹³ In 1901 he considered (perhaps still with the Gordon project in mind) writing a 'Festival' Symphony for the Three Choirs Festival in Worcester (see Bantock's Festival Symphony *Christus*, which was dedicated to Elgar, see pp. 598ff.), and he mentioned additional projects in 1903 and 1905. His first finished symphony, however, did not materialize until he was fifty-one (by comparison, Beethoven finished his first symphony by age thirty, Brahms and Bruckner at forty-three, and Franck at sixty-six).

Elgar's first real success, doubtlessly bolstered by Hans Richter's advocacy, but probably also helped by a number of happy coincidences as well, was his Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36 (1899), which was quickly followed by *The Dream of Gerontius* (1900). But even more important than the Richter performances in England was Richard Strauss's lavish praise of *The Dream of Gerontius* at the 1902 Düsseldorf Music Festival. Elgar once asked John Ireland: "Young man, are you endeavouring to become a composer?" On my timidly assenting, he replied, "For God's sake leave it alone. Look at me! No one in England took any notice of my music until a German said it was good".¹¹⁴ In 1904 Richard Peyton offered £10,000 to the University of Birmingham for the establishment of a chair of music, 'the only condition being that it should in the first instance be offered to and accepted by Sir Edward Elgar, Mus.Doc., LL.D.'¹¹⁵ This is how Elgar became a University Professor, and in his lectures he indeed showed analytical skill.¹¹⁶ Elgar was knighted in the same year, and

109 Rudolph de Cordova, 'Illustrated Interviews. No. LXXXI. – Dr. Edward Elgar', in: *The Strand Magazine* 27/161 (May 1904), p. 539.

110 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: a creative life*, Oxford etc. 1987, pp. 81–82.

111 Cf. Michael Gassmann, *Edward Elgar und die deutsche symphonische Tradition. Studien zu Einfluß und Eigenständigkeit*, Hildesheim etc. 2002, pp. 46–69.

112 Elgar's earlier compositions, though some of them were highly esteemed at choral festivals, continued the tradition of the Royal College/Royal Academy of Music choral cantatas; this tradition was largely overcome for the first time by *The Dream of Gerontius*.

113 On this matter cf. Basil Maine, *Elgar – his life and works*, Vol. 2, London 1933, p. 124 or Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, pp. 50–51. The symphony was supposed to 'reflect the extraordinary career and character of General Gordon, "his military achievements, his unbounded energy, his self-sacrifice, his resolution, his deep religious fervour"' (Kennedy, p. 51). Perhaps *Falstaff* was eventually to take up these earlier considerations of a (though altogether much different) 'character portrait' on a large scale.

114 John Ireland in Ralph Vaughan Williams et al., 'Elgar Today', in: *MT* XCVIII (1957), p. 302. It is striking how important praise from continental Europe was for British self-perception (Bernard Shore considers Elgar's first real approach to the form of the symphony to have taken place as a consequence of this approval – cf. Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. 1949, p. 258).

115 Jerrold Northrop Moore, 'Elgar as a University Professor', in: *MT* CI (1960), p. 631.

116 Cf. Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and other Lectures*, London 1968.

several other honours followed. Eventually George Dyson compared Elgar's importance for the British oratorio with that of Puccini for Italian opera,¹¹⁷ and Clement Antrobus Harris wrote in 1919: 'Of the two greatest composers living, one, Sir Edward Elgar, is an Englishman, the other being Richard Strauss.'¹¹⁸

Only Edward Dent broke the wave of praise with the following comment in Adler's *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*: 'For English ears Elgar's music is far too sensitive and not entirely free from vulgarity'¹¹⁹ – one of many distinctly sharp judgments on British composers in his contribution to the monumental historical work that even today can only be questioned in details. Dent's comment caused considerable annoyance – in March 1931 a manifesto against Dent's iniquity appeared, signed, among others, by Leslie Heward, Hamilton Harty, John Ireland, Ernest John Moeran, Landon Ronald, William Walton, Peter Warlock and George Bernard Shaw.¹²⁰ In *Musical Opinion*¹²¹ Havergal Brian reacted with sarcasm to the manifesto and put things into perspective: the earlier condemnation of the older composers Mackenzie, Parry and Stanford¹²² by precisely those who now rallied to Elgar's defence had been equally unjustified and unwavering praise of *all* of Elgar's works might surely be exaggerated. Mosco Carner pointed out that several compositions suffered from 'the essentially rhapsodic nature of Elgar's conception', caused by his proximity to Schumann and Brahms.¹²³ It should not be forgotten how strong not only Brahms's, but also César Franck's influence was on Elgar, a fact stressed polemically by Cecil Gray,¹²⁴ but which has

117 William Henry Hadow, *Music*, London etc. 91949, p. 157.

118 Clement Antrobus Harris, *The Story of British Music*, London/New York 1919, p. 209.

119 Guido Adler (ed.), *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, Second edition 1929, Vol. 2, Tutzing third edition 1961, p. 1047. George Dyson expressed himself similarly in Ralph Vaughan Williams et al., 'Elgar Today', in: *MT* XCVIII (1957), p. 305, or Donald Mitchell, 'Some Thoughts on Elgar (1857–1934)', in: *M&L* XXXVIII (1957), pp. 117. Reprinted in Christopher Redwood (ed.), *The Elgar Companion*. Ashbourne 1982, pp. 283 and 287–288; and Walter Hussey dealt extensively with Elgar's 'emotionalism' ('Emotionalism in the music of Elgar', in: *MTLXXII* (1931), pp. 211–212), in the same volume of the *Musical Times* in which Dent's 'injustice' was protested, yet valued this 'emotionalism' indeed as something entirely positive (which was not to be excluded from Dent's dictum as well).

120 Emile Cammaerts et al., 'Sir Edward Elgar. Musicians' protest against Prof. Dent's alleged injustice', in: *MTLXXII* (1931), pp. 326–328.

121 Havergal Brian, 'The Elgar Manifesto', reprinted in Malcolm MacDonald (ed.), *Havergal Brian on Music I*. London 1986, pp. 70–72.

122 It is interesting to see that not only in music, but also in arts there was a considerable aesthetic change that took place around 1912/13. The Royal Academy memorial exhibition of the works of Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836–1912) caused judgements similar to those on the Parry-Stanford generation. The critic of the *Athenaeum*, who had little positive to say about the exhibition, wrote: '(...) perhaps no collection of the works of a recently deceased artist could throw into stronger relief the change of outlook which art criticism has undergone in the last twenty years.' (*The Athenaeum* 4446, 1 January 1913, p. 50.)

123 Mosco Carner, *Of men and music*, London 1945, p. 156. Hubert Foss writes in 1933: 'Brahms may have been the climax [of the classical school of composers], but Elgar was the pinnacle.' (Hubert Foss, *Music in My Time*, London 1933, p. 80.)

124 'When Elgar has rendered unto César the things that are César's and unto Brahms that are Brahms's little remains.' Quoted from Neville Cardus, 'The English and Music', in Neville Cardus, *Talking of Music*, London/Glasgow 1957, p. 255.

until the present day been to a large extent denied.¹²⁵ Frederick Delius wrote in 1908 to Granville Bantock on the First Symphony:

‘I heard Elgar’s Symphony in London – It starts off with a theme out of the *Parcival* Prelude – a little altered – The slow movement is a theme out of Verdi’s *Requiem* – a little altered – The rest is Mendelssohn & Brahms – thick & without the slightest orchestral charm – gray – and they all shout “Masterwork”. – The only thing to be said in its favour is that it is better manufactured than the rest of the English composers’ compositions – But it is a work *dead born*’.¹²⁶

With the word ‘gray’ Delius takes up one of the two most essential points of criticism, which Everett Helm presents at length: that of over-instrumentation.

‘When most of the instruments play most of the time they lose their individual tone colours and the total sound becomes conglomerate. The woodwinds in particular lose their freshness through constant doubling of the strings. And the constant use of the brass results in generally over-loud dynamics. Much of the orchestration is highly effective in itself – on this point there can be little dispute. But one wishes that Elgar had grasped one fundamental principle – namely, that rests can often be more effective than “effects”, and that keeping the orchestral colours separate produces a more brilliant tonal *palette* than constant mixing’.¹²⁷

On the other hand, Elgar consciously used ‘diffusing’ techniques, such as in the last appearance of the motto-theme in the first movement of the First Symphony or in the opening of the Second Symphony. He described it thus:

‘I have employed the *last desks* of the strings to get a soft diffused sound: the listener need not be bothered to know *where* it comes from – the effect is of course widely different from that obtained from the *first desk soli*: in the latter case you perceive what is there – in the former you don’t perceive that something is not there – which is what I want’.¹²⁸

Similar reproaches were made later and partially with similar authorization, to the music of Rubbra and Tippett. The criticism is not apt for all of Elgar’s works. Being a special artistic device, such ‘diffusing techniques’ are not used in the *Gerontius* prelude, the Cello Concerto, *Cockaigne* or *In the South*, which all exhibit clearer instrumentation than the Second Symphony, the Violin Concerto or *Falstaff*. Vaughan Williams reports meeting Elgar at a rehearsal of Parry’s Symphonic Variations, and at a moment where textbooks might speak of bad orchestration, both agreed it wasn’t at all – Elgar said: ‘Of course it’s not bad

125 Cf. e.g. Peter Pirie, ‘World’s End’, in: *MR* 18 (1957), p. 100.

126 Frederick Delius to Granville Bantock, 27 December 1908. Quoted from Lionel Carley (ed.), *Delius – A Life in Letters*, Vol. I, London 1983, p. 377.

127 Everett Helm, ‘The Elgar Case: Ruminations pro and contra’, in: *MR* 18 (1957), p. 103.

128 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Spirit of England. Edward Elgar in his World*, London 1984, p. 90.

orchestration – this music could be scored in no other way.¹²⁹ One could say the same thing about Elgar.¹³⁰

According to Helm, Elgar makes a second essential mistake: too much movement in individual instruments.

‘There are many passages in which the instruments rush about in semiquavers, demisemiquavers and hemidemisemiquavers with no apparent purpose. One has the impression of motion for motion’s sake – of extraordinary hustling and bustling that leads nowhere. (...) The chromatic runs in the first movement of the first Symphony (from [42] to [47]) seem quite meaningless. In the following “scherzo”, however, the activity is controlled and motivated – this movement “comes off”.’¹³¹

Again, this is obviously a device to interlock motives, themes and larger musical entities.

In the eventual effect, Elgar’s orchestration (just as for example Havergal Brian’s) was a distinct step forward in comparison to, say, Parry’s or Cowen’s – Parry’s orchestration is described as ‘dull’ by Percy Young (an ardent admirer of Elgar’s).¹³²

Another device, the *Nobilmente*, was used as a performing prescription in some of Elgar’s compositions, but was often mistaken as a tempo marking. This *Nobilmente* has been made a special feature of Elgar’s, transferred upon him and his life as well as on many works where the contents (and performing prescriptions) say something entirely different, in part to evade Elgar’s emotional aspects, energy and passion. Robert Hoare Hull wrote on the First Symphony:

‘A strong architectural sense ensures homogeneity, and a profusion of detail is not allowed to obscure the main purpose of the structure. The *Nobilmente* passages in the first movement have been characterized by some critics as grandiose. Admittedly a striving towards conscious dignity is liable to betray Elgar into pomposity, but these occasions belong more to his style patriotic music, and the Symphony largely escapes this tendency. So much is assured by the ordered restraint with which the material is set forth. Where the Symphony is most brilliant it is often most thoughtful.’¹³³

129 Ralph Vaughan Williams in Ralph Vaughan Williams et al., ‘Elgar Today’, in: *MT* XCVIII (1957), p. 302.

130 Percy Young, *Elgar O. M.*, London/Glasgow 1955, p. 333 stresses a number of special devices of orchestration in the First Symphony.

131 Everett Helm, ‘The Elgar Case: Ruminations pro and contra’, in: *MR* 18 (1957), p. 103. Similar complaints were made about early Richard Strauss.

132 Percy Young, *Elgar O. M.*, London/Glasgow 1955, p. 327. Ibid.: ‘Against the British school of the late nineteenth century stood formidable foreign competition. To succeed in the open market the British composer must appear as an equal in the company of Schumann, Liszt, Franck, Brahms, Bruckner, Dvořák, Tchaikovsky, Mahler and Sibelius – to mention only the greatest. He must, moreover, furnish an independent point of view – failure in this respect having already caused the extinction of so many native hopes. Yet he must be sufficiently aware of the emotional impulses of the time and of the guiding principles of musical appreciation to be able to establish contact with his prospective audience.’ A comparison of Elgar’s and Parry’s orchestrations of Parry’s *Jerusalem* may reveal a more ‘showy’ approach on Elgar’s part, but in the event, Parry’s version is more noble in tone and, to refer to Stanford (and his pupil Dent), free from ‘vulgarity’.

133 Robert Hoare (or Robin) Hull, ‘Sir Edward Elgar’, in: *The English Review* 52 (1931), p. 228.

A special compositional device mentioned earlier is the use of motto-themes (we will find this term more often in the following chapters), which link the movements and allow all of the thematic material be derived from one essential germ, which brings us closer to Sibelius's techniques (see pp. 447ff.).

Elgar's complexity was comparatively new in British symphonism, and many a critic complained accordingly about the comparable length of his symphonies. Comparisons of performance durations show, however, that Elgar needed no more than 46 minutes for No. 1 (in comparison, Henry Wood's took 50 minutes 15 seconds, and Thomas Beecham's, in an extremely pared-down version, 38 minutes), 51 minutes for No. 2 (by contrast, Hamilton Harty's lasted 59 minutes 45 seconds).¹³⁴ Walford Davies touched upon the topic in 1911 when, in a letter to Elgar about the symphonies, he wrote of their 'ceaselessness' and 'the mere aural fatigue which naturally results.'¹³⁵

On 3 December 1908 Elgar's First Symphony in A^b major Op. 55 was presented to the public (Hans Richter, the dedicatee, conducted the Hallé Orchestra). His Violin Concerto in B minor Op. 61 followed in 1910, and on 24 May 1911 (with Elgar himself conducting the London Symphony Orchestra), the Second Symphony in E^b major Op. 63¹³⁶ made its debut – works that along with the First Symphony were already hailed in 1913 as a 'symphonic trilogy'¹³⁷, and of which Elgar himself said: 'I have written out my soul in the Concerto, Sym II & the Ode & you know it (...) – in these three works have *shewn* myself.'¹³⁸ The works were already highly respected in France by 1913. Now Anthony Payne's elaboration of Symphony No. 3 has followed, and these four works indeed form a tetrad of orchestral compositions of 'symphonic' conception, much more so, for example, than the more intimately conceived Cello Concerto; a fifth work that may be added to the quartet is the (unfinished) Piano Concerto (begun in 1913), 'realized' by Robert Walker from original sketches, drafts and recordings. The piece is some 50 minutes long.¹³⁹ Elgar's symphonism has been written about extensively by numerous authors, whose contributions are cited here.¹⁴⁰

134 Cf. David Cox, 'Edward Elgar (1857–1934)', in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*, Vol. 2, Harmondsworth etc. 1977, p. 15.

135 Henry Walford Davies to Edward Elgar, 6 October 1911. Quoted in Diana McVeagh, *Edward Elgar. His Life and Music*, London 1955, p. 167.

136 The piano reductions of Elgar's two symphonies were arranged by Karg-Elert, who had been hand-picked for the task by the composer himself.

137 Richard Alexander Streatfield, *Musiciens Anglais Contemporains*, Paris 1913, p. 17.

138 Edward Elgar to Alice Stuart-Wortley, 29 August 1912. Quoted in Edward Elgar, *The Windflower Letters. Correspondence with Alice Caroline Stuart Wortley and her Family*, Oxford etc. 1989, p. 107. The Ode mentioned is *The Music Makers* Op. 69.

139 According to a BBC documentary, Walker's 'realization' proved difficult for the audience, ostensibly due to insufficient coherence, and so a 'condensed' version was prepared.

140 Some of the more extended studies include, among many others, 'Sir Edward Elgar's Symphony', in: *MT XLIX* (1908), pp. 778–780; Ernest Newman, 'Elgar's Second Symphony', in: *The New Music Review and Church Music Review* 10 (1911), pp. 536–542; W. Wells-Harrison, 'The Elgar Symphonies', in: *The Music Student* VIII/12

Several opinions have been expressed on the ‘contents’ of the First Symphony. Elgar said in one of his Birmingham lectures:

‘I hold that the symphony without a programme is the highest development of art (...). It seems to me that because the greatest genius of our days, Richard Strauss, recognises the symphonic poem as a fit vehicle for his splendid achievements, some writers are inclined to be positive that the symphony is dead. Perhaps the form *is* somewhat battered by the ill-usage of some of its admirers, although some modern symphonies still testify to its vitality; but when the looked-for genius comes, it may be absolutely revived. (...) Just as in our day what has been called “Suburban Gothic” from its mere imitation and boldness gives us only a dismal amusement, so the symphony became the prey of the would-be sayer of wise things and fell into the same sort of suspicion.’¹⁴¹

In another lecture, on Brahms’s Third Symphony, he said:

‘The form of the symphony was strictly orthodox, and it was a piece of absolute music. There was no clue as to what it meant but, as Sir Hubert Parry said, it was a piece of music which called up certain sets of emotions in each individual hearer. That was the height of music (...).’¹⁴²

His praise of the absolute symphony seems, however, somewhat disingenuous; a ‘poetic idea’ (Richard Strauss) had in fact been a driving force behind most symphonies since Beethoven. This was also true for many of Elgar’s more ‘symphonic’ works (such as the Second Symphony and the Violin Concerto). Elgar wrote to Ernest Newman:

‘As to the “intention”: I have no tangible poetic or other basis: I feel that unless a man sets out to depict or illustrate some definite thing, all music – absolute music I think it is called – must be (even if he does not know it himself) a reflex, or picture, or elucidation of his own life, or, at the least, the music is necessarily coloured by the life.’¹⁴³

(1916), pp. 351–353; William Edmondstone Duncan, ‘Ultra-modernism in Music. A Treatise on the Latter-Day Revolution in Musical Art’, in: *O&C* XXIV/278 (1916), pp. 51–56; Daniel Gregory Mason, ‘A Study of Elgar’, in: *MQ* III (1917), pp. 300–303; Frank Henry Shera, *Elgar: Instrumental Works*. London etc. 1931, pp. 29–45 and 57–75; Basil Maine, *Elgar – his life and works*, Vol. 2, London 1933, pp. 124–140 and 155–173; Donald Francis Tovey, ‘Elgar: LVI. Symphony in E flat, No. 2, Op. 63’, in Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, Vol. 2, London etc. 1935, pp. 114–121; Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. 1949, pp. 263–282; Diana McVeagh, *Edward Elgar. His Life and Music*, London 1955, pp. 161–167; Percy Young, *Elgar O. M.* London/Glasgow 1955, pp. 326–337; Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*. London 1970, pp. 50–64; Ian Parrott, *Elgar*, London/New York 1971, e.g. pp. 68–73; Mikael Garnaes, ‘Elgar’s First Symphony’, in: *BM* 7 (1985), pp. 38–47; Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: a creative life*, Oxford etc. ²1987.

141 Edward Elgar, University of Birmingham lecture of 13 December 1902. Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and other Lectures*, London 1968, p. 148.

142 Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and other Lectures*, London 1968, p. 98.

143 Edward Elgar to Ernest Newman, 4 November 1908. Quoted in Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: a creative life*, Oxford etc. ²1987, p. 537.

More information is furnished by Colles, who a month after the production of the First Symphony referred to the difficulty for the listener when Elgar used certain themes that for him were ‘connected with sundry ideas – for the most part moral qualities, such as aspiration, courage, love, and hatred (...) without reference to the musical context.’¹⁴⁴ Elgar hinted at some extra-musical ideas in a letter to Neville Cardus. ‘You do not see that the fierce quasi-military themes are dismissed with scant courtesy; critics invariably seem to see that a theme grows, but it appears to be a difficulty to grasp the fact that the coarser themes are well quashed!’¹⁴⁵ Elgar told Ernest Newman that this was *not* the General Charles Gordon Symphony, and to Henry Walford Davies he was even more explicit: ‘There is no programme beyond a wide experience of human life with a great charity (love) and a *massive* hope in the future.’¹⁴⁶ So it is reasonable to regard the central theme of the work as a symbol of moral and spiritual virtues.

In the period following the Manchester première (Artur Nikisch called the work ‘Brahms’s Fifth’¹⁴⁷), the symphony was given in Vienna, Leipzig, Berlin, Budapest, Toronto, Bonn, Boston, Sydney, St. Petersburg and New York. Still, one cannot necessarily be certain that it was performed in its entirety – in 1909 Havergal Brian reported that Thomas Beecham had cut it down for a performance in Hanley to about 38 minutes (a practice that was perfectly natural at the time). Concerning its essence, however, Hamilton Harty held an opinion quite similar to Beecham’s, writing:

‘There is a certain religious essence in it which no other music but Elgar’s seems to possess. There are those who contend that his message is of too intimate a nature for the size of his canvases – and certainly we sometimes have the impression that the prevailing characteristic I have pointed out is insisted upon at too great length, as some have found in his Symphonies, when it seems that much could have been said in a shorter and more concise way.’¹⁴⁸

The symphony actually came to be thought of as the first British symphony ever composed;¹⁴⁹ it somehow left all of the continental influences behind and found a truly distinctive language for itself (and its composer) for the first time in British symphonism.

When composing the symphony (mainly from 1907 to 1908, but beginning in 1904¹⁵⁰), Elgar wrote to August Jaeger:

144 Henry Cope Colles, *Essays and lectures*, Oxford etc. 1947, p. 78.

145 Quoted by Cardus in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 2 March 1934. Cf. Diana McVeagh, *Edward Elgar. His Life and Music*, London 1955, p. 162.

146 Quoted in Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, p. 53.

147 Quoted in Daniel Gregory Mason, ‘A Study of Elgar’, in: *MQ* III (1917), p. 295.

148 Hamilton Harty, *Modern composers and modern composition*, in: *MT* LXV (1924), pp. 330–331. Similarly speaks Henry Cope Colles in 1924 in ‘Brahms and Elgar’, in Henry Cope Colles, *Essays and Lectures*. London etc. 1945, ²1947, p. 80 of the ‘moments where the rhapsodic impulse carries the composer away from his plan, and he comes back to it with something of a wrench and a twist’.

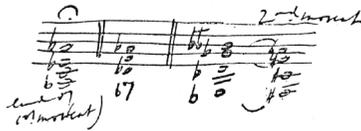
149 Neville Cardus, 1945, quoted in Simon Mundy, *Elgar – his life and times*, Speldhurst 1980, p. 76.

150 Cf. Robert Anderson, *Elgar in manuscript*, London 1990, p. 97.

‘The first movement is in “form” 1st and 2nd. principal themes with much episodic matter but I have – (without definite intention to be peculiar but a natural feeling) – thrown over all key relationship as formerly practised.¹⁵¹ the movement has its 2nd. theme on its 2nd presentation in A^b & as I said, the movement ends in that key. You will find many subtle *enharmonic* relationships I think & the widest *looking* divergencies are often closest relationships

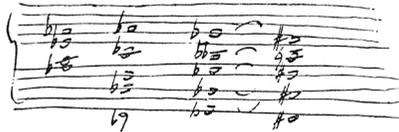
e.g.

Ex. 58



or (if you play it)

Ex. 59



This is a sort of *plagal* (?) relationship of which I appear to be fond (although I didn't know it) – most folks run through *dominant* modulations – if that expression is allowable [–] & I think some of my twists are defensible on *sub-dominant* grounds. All this is beside the point because I *feel* & don't invent – I can't even invent an explanation (...).¹⁵²

Ian Parrott finds a strange coincidence between a phrase from *Parsifal* and the penultimate phrase of the melodically prolific central theme of the symphony:¹⁵³

Ex. 60: Edward Elgar: central theme of the First Symphony, penultimate phrase



151 Original footnote: 'I am not silly enough to think (or wish) that I have *invented* anything: see Beethoven's Quartets *passim*.'

152 Edward Elgar to August Jaeger, 19 September 1908. Quoted from Jerrold Northrop Moore (ed.), *Elgar and his Publishers*, Vol. 2, Oxford etc. 1987, p. 710.

153 Ian Parrott, *Elgar*, London/New York 1971, p. 69. Kennedy stresses that one cannot call the theme a 'motto-theme, but it is an *idée fixe*', which returns in the symphony's last movement (Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, p. 54). This central theme already occurs identically in the closing notes of the Variations on an Original Theme. When W. H. Reed pointed out this coincidence, Elgar had to admit that he had not realized it. (Cf. Gerald Northrop Moore, *Spirit of England. Edward Elgar in his World*, London 1984, p. 87.)

Ex. 61: Richard Wagner: *Parsifal*, 'Liebesmahl', end of first phrase

After its first quiet statement, it is repeated *fortissimo* by the full orchestra. After having subsided back gently, it abruptly switches to D minor, an extraordinary choice of key for the first *Allegro* of a Symphony in A^b.¹⁵⁴ 'The *idée fixe* has been a 50-bar prelude to a movement that is probably Elgar's finest symphonic structure and one that never for a moment deserves any adjective such as complacent or comfortable, for the music is constantly disturbed, restless and volatile in mood.'¹⁵⁵ A change from 2/2 to 6/4 brings a slackening of impulse and an expressive new theme for strings. The combination of duple and triple time is a feature of this second subject, which is not a single theme but a group of four themes.¹⁵⁶ This second subject group is hardly established before the tumultuousness returns, the music striding and leaping along in fifths, with characteristic brass fanfares, the whole passage culminating in the emphatic statement (horn parts marked *tutta forza*) at [17].

The return of the central theme, now in C major ([18]), almost tentative now on muted horns, opens the long and complex development. In it we find episodes specified by Elgar to 'be played in a veiled and remote manner'. Harps, solo violin, solo cello and woodwind create this atmosphere, and the central theme is hinted at, its calming influence again rejected in favour of a restless agitation which alternates with a caressing development of second-subject material. At [32] the recapitulation begins, treated freely and with many modifications, the movement eventually ending with 'one of the most exquisite things, not only in this symphony, but in modern music.'¹⁵⁷ While the clarinet holds the C, reached in the original key of A^b major, the muted strings, high and tenuous, in the remote key of A minor, 'like voices from another world, gently breathe the "phrase of pity." It is magical. With fine dignity of pace they reach the tone C, whereupon we are again quietly but conclusively brought back to A^b, and with a single plucked bass note, the chord of the clarinets sinks to silence.

154 Adrian Boult was told that this juxtaposition of keys resulted from a bet placed with Elgar that he could not compose a symphony in two keys at once. Cf. Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*. London 1970, p. 54. Ian Parrott on the other hand maintains that Elgar had read in a textbook that such a juxtaposition of keys was 'not to be endured' and, provoked by such pedantry, had decided to use this 'faux pas' in his symphony. (Ian Parrott, *Elgar*, London/New York 1971, p. 69.)

155 Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, p. 54.

156 Cf. Basil Maine, *Elgar – his life and works*, Vol. 2, London 1933, p. 126.

157 Daniel Gregory Mason, 'A Study of Elgar', in: *MQ* III (1917), p. 301.

Ex. 62: End of first movement

The image shows a musical score for the end of the first movement. It consists of two staves: a treble staff on top and a bass staff on the bottom. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a variety of note values, including quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, along with rests. There are dynamic markings such as 'ppp' (pianissimo) and a section marked with a '6' above the staff. The score concludes with a final cadence.

158

A scherzo full of restless, highly strenuous energy follows as second movement, chiefly in F# minor, with short phrases scurrying about and rhythmic figures leaping in woodwind and strings. The second subject is march-like in character but is never given a chance to settle into a broad tune. The trio section, alternating between B \flat major and G minor, is ‘yet another evocation of childhood memories, airily and delicately scored for strings and woodwind. It was this enchanting episode that Elgar asked orchestras to play “like something you hear down by the river”.’¹⁵⁹ The scherzo is repeated from [71], but the most interesting aspect is that the scherzo and the following slow movement are thematically linked, whereby a double interlocking structure is created, and the first and last movements are linked by the central theme. Psychologically this part of the symphony represents the widening of the emotional horizon, a spiritual depth that is the basis for the final, qualified optimism.¹⁶⁰ (It should again be kept in mind that this was not a new technique at all in British symphonism, as numerous authors imply. Very novel indeed, however, are the technical means themselves.)

The transition consists of a theme from the trio combined with the main theme of the scherzo, followed by a new reprise of the trio ([77]); here the character of the scherzo’s music influences the trio, which begins with a burst of energy but soon falls back to its pastoral mood. Now the theme of the trio displays a typical Elgarian ‘nobilmente’ intensification, with rising sequences in the violins and a sonorous counter-melody in horns and cellos between [80] & [81]. After the music has calmed down, an attempt by the main scherzo theme to become energetic again fails as the transition is reached, whereupon the gradual augmentation of the theme is as follows:

- [82] theme in semiquavers
- [84] theme in quaver triplets
- [86] theme in quavers
- [87] theme in crotchets,

and at [89], the beginning of the theme is rhythmically changed. At the same time, the

158 *Ibid.*

159 Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, p. 55.

160 Mikael Garneas, ‘Elgar’s First Symphony’, in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 42.

rhythmical forward drive is lessened by the use of held notes (an element from the trio).¹⁶¹

Mikael Garnaes describes the slow movement, a relative in substance to the scherzo, though quieting down to a ‘sadness of self-acquaintance no longer to be postponed’,¹⁶² ‘like seeing the main scherzo theme through a microscope – an instrument that Elgar delighted in using – and discovering a world of which one has had only subconscious knowledge.’¹⁶³ The movement, developing from the deeply depressive or disillusioned to (what Mason interprets as) ‘religious consolation’,¹⁶⁴ and what is described by Maine as ‘that philosophic calm which can contain disillusion without turning it into discord’,¹⁶⁵ has features of a sonata form (first subject in D major, second subject in A) with recapitulation (from [100]) and coda (from [104]). But a continued metamorphosis of the main theme takes place simultaneously. The central theme of the symphony is incorporated at [104],¹⁶⁶ linking the inner and outer movements.

‘There is a moment of singular beauty when, after the second subject has been played by violins, the lower strings take it while the violins and harp make above it such a sense of movement that the tune seems to have taken wings.’ Elgar loved this effect, achieved by the use of accompanying string triplets, and used it often. It ends, unusually, with a new theme ‘that has the quality of benediction in it (and is like the music to which Magdalene asks and Christ bestows forgiveness in *The Apostles*). This is the only part of the Symphony for which there is evidence that it might have been written earlier’,¹⁶⁷ namely in 1904. On the sketch there is a quotation from Hamlet, ‘the rest is silence’.¹⁶⁸

In the last movement the progress back from darkness to light is impressively conclusive. After the mysterious beginning of the Lento section, there comes a flash (first violins and violas) and immediately the orchestra is filled with a new and confident energy. The D minor tonality, which before was expressive of a restless striving, now steadily pulses with fine, controlled vigour. Out of this a song emerges, a beautiful phrase which has been compared to a theme in the last movement of Brahms’s Third Symphony – the second subject of the movement. The soft, *staccato* entry of the march theme, through modulations leading to a climax, complete the exposition. Compared with that of the first movement, the development is average in length. ‘It includes a striking example of Elgar’s unerring judgment of orchestral tone: the march phrase is played antiphonally by woodwind and strings, the answering phrases being upheld by the horns and accented by the lower

161 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 42–43. The section [77]–[81] is analyzed by Garnaes (pp. 44–45) as Wagner-revived “bar”-form, coupled with Adorno’s “Erfüllung” idea.

162 Daniel Gregory Mason, ‘A Study of Elgar’, in: *MQ* III (1917), p. 302.

163 Mikael Garnaes, ‘Elgar’s First Symphony’, in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 43.

164 Daniel Gregory Mason, ‘A Study of Elgar’, in: *MQ* III (1917), p. 302.

165 Basil Maine, *Elgar – his life and works*, Vol. 2, London 1933, p. 134.

166 Cf. Gregory Murray, ‘Edward Elgar’, in: *The Downside Review* LIII=new series XXXIV (1935), p. 30; Murray finds fault with the analyses of Shera and Maine. Cf. also Mikael Garnaes, ‘Elgar’s First Symphony’, in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 43.

167 Diana McVeagh, *Edward Elgar. His Life and Music*, London 1955, p. 163.

168 Diana McVeigh, *Elgar the Music Maker*, Woodbridge 2007, p. 123. The sketch is dated Sunday 21 August 1904.

brass. The entry of the motto-theme in the minor with the march theme as a bass is another impressive incident.¹⁶⁹ Finally the music escapes from D minor and moves towards A \flat at the beginning of the recapitulation. 'It is as if the magnetic force of that motto-theme had been drawing the music into its tonality all along and at last had proved irresistible. But it is an indirect process. It is the intervention of the march-theme in F minor that finally establishes the A \flat tonality. Even this theme which had seemed so essentially of D minor, is magnetised and changed. So much so that it is chiefly through its influence that the movement is carried to its climax.'¹⁷⁰ Then, in the coda, the central theme arrives in an orchestral apotheosis. It is no longer an opposing force. 'The heroic theme, which perhaps carried with it at first a faint echo of the opening of *Parsifal*, is now discovered to be essentially Elgarian. What was the source of the symphony has now become its fulfilment.'¹⁷¹

The Second Symphony was composed from autumn 1909 to 16 March 1911 in Venice, Careggi north of Florence and Tintagel (but pre-conceived in part from as early as 1903-04);¹⁷² David Cox reports that Elgar had as inspiration for the slow movement and the following scherzo originally the contrast of the interior of the Basilica di San Marco with the lively sunlit Piazza outside.¹⁷³ The work has a more energetic atmosphere than the First (in fact even stronger than that of the Third Symphony – one must not be misled by the performing prescription *Allegro vivace e nobilmente* of the first movement), which makes it somewhat difficult to perform (Elgar wrote '(...) the thing is tremendous in energy'¹⁷⁴). For this reason, it has been compared to Brahms's Third Symphony: both works are 'expressive of an inner conflict and a spiritual strength'.¹⁷⁵

The symphony is headed by a motto from Shelley's *Invocation*:

'Rarely, rarely, comest thou,
Spirit of Delight.'

169 Basil Maine, *Elgar – his life and works*, Vol. 2, London 1933, p. 138.

170 *Ibid.*, p. 139.

171 *Ibid.*, p. 140.

172 Concerning the composition of the symphony cf. also Christopher Kent, 'A View of Elgar's Methods of Composition through the Sketches of the Symphony no. 2 in E \flat (op. 63)', in: *PRMA* 103 (1977), pp. 41–60.

173 David Cox, 'Edward Elgar (1857–1934)', in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*, Vol. 2, Harmondsworth etc. 1977, p. 25. This was at least Elgar's sentiment at the time, but Kennedy assumes that he may not 'have pursued the idea very far.' (Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, p. 62.)

174 Edward Elgar to Alice Stuart-Wortley, 29 January 1911. Quoted from Simon Mundy, *Elgar – his life and times*, Speldhurst 1980, p. 81. Unofficially, the symphony seems to have been dedicated to Alice Stuart-Wortley (cf. Christopher Kent, *A View of Elgar's Methods of Composition through the Sketches of the Symphony no. 2 in E \flat (op. 63)*, in: *PRMA* 103, 1977, p. 41).

175 Basil Maine, *Elgar – his life and works*, Vol. 2, London 1933, p. 172. Maine compares Elgar's Second in the same sentence to Beethoven's Fifth. One frequently encounters the description 'jocundity and sweetness', which are the best words to describe 'the main qualities' of Elgar's Second (Ernest Newman, *Elgar's Second Symphony*, in: *The New Music Review and Church Music Review* 10, 1911, p. 542) – though this feeling is mainly evoked by the common misreading of the score.

There have been attempts to interpret Elgar's intention in close connection with the poem,¹⁷⁶ but this facile comparison certainly does not do justice to the composer, who intended the music to 'be the frank expression of music bubbling from the spring within him.'¹⁷⁷ 'To get near the mood of the Symphony the whole of Shelley's poem may be read, but the music does not illustrate the whole of the poem, neither does the poem entirely elucidate the music!'¹⁷⁸

Perhaps to divert public attention from the personal character of the music, Elgar dedicated the symphony to the memory of King Edward VII, and it was assumed that the slow movement was an elegy to the dead monarch. In fact, some of the movement was sketched in 1904 shortly after the sudden death of his Liverpool friend Alfred Rodewald,

'an event that shattered Elgar. No doubt as the music matured it acquired other associations, but to hear in it only a loyal lament for the demise of Edwardian splendour is to mis-interpret an autobiographical document which reflects the nature of its creator in all its complexity and contradictions. It is interesting to notice that an anonymous critic who attended one of its early performances detected "pessimism and rebellion".'¹⁷⁹

Bernard Shore, not knowing of this biographical detail, describes the movement as *not* being

'a personal lament; and at the same time it is anything but empty ceremony. No monarch ever received a tribute more beautiful, more splendid or more genuine in feeling than this. It is music that leaves us with the sense of having been present at the passing of a great figure, who had much in common with us and meant much to us.'¹⁸⁰

Diana McVeagh, like many others, considers the Second Symphony, except for the slow movement, formally superior (or rather, more correct in conception) to the First: 'It is more soundly constructed and more consistently inspired, and it scores heavily over the first in the superiority of its final movement. The restless stream of the first Symphony is in the second not only a wider but a deeper flow.'¹⁸¹ 'Yet', Gregory Murray considers, 'there are heights in the earlier work to which it never rises. (...) The one is the necessary complement to the other (...). Either symphony alone would give an incomplete picture of Elgar.'¹⁸² One might even add that now the Third Symphony having been elaborated from the sketches all three symphonies complement each other.

A 'motto-theme' leading through the whole work is the second theme in the first

176 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: a creative life*, Oxford etc. 21987, p. 601.

177 Edward Elgar to Alfred Littleton, 13 April 1911. Quoted in Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: A Creative Life*, Oxford etc. 21987, p. 601.

178 *Ibid.*. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 599.

179 Michael Kennedy, *Elgar Orchestral Music*, London 1970, p. 58.

180 Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. 1949, p. 272.

181 Diana McVeagh, *Edward Elgar. His Life and Music*, London 1955, p. 167.

182 Gregory Murray, 'Edward Elgar', in: *The Downside Review* LIII=new series XXXIV (1935), p. 33.

movement, to reappear in the slow and the final movements¹⁸³:

Ex. 63



Important in this work (as in the Violin Concerto) is the brevity of the themes and their sequential treatment, which causes a fast, breathtaking development of the thematic material. The second thematic group is already leaving the tonic base,

Ex. 64



and the development reaches keys as remote as E major. The approach to the recapitulation is by way of part of the first subject, which, when it arrives, is compensatingly shortened.

‘Elgar often makes a nice point by slightly altering his recapitulations, sometimes changing the order of the themes, so that *Froissart* and *Cockaigne* exchange a quiet lead into the development for a showy ending. Also in this way is brought about a magical moment in the first movement of the Violin Concerto, when the wistful second subject is insinuated into the seventh bar of the recapitulation, touching and transforming part of the first subject with its own exquisite sadness.’¹⁸⁴

Like a funeral march, the slow movement, in elegiac mood, begins in C minor, but as always in Elgar, an intensification of thematic material takes place up to a climax in F major. Its first theme, like the D^b major theme in the slow movement of the Violin Concerto,¹⁸⁵ is one of the rare instances in Elgar’s music where the harmony commands the melody:

Ex. 65

Larghetto $\text{♩} = 60$

Archi

pp

183 Cf. Donald Francis Tovey, ‘Elgar: LVI. Symphony in E flat, No. 2, Op. 63’, in Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, Vol. 2, London etc. 1935, pp. 114–115. A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire. Vol. III Part B: The European Symphony from ca. 1800 to ca. 1930: Great Britain, Russia, France*, ed. Brian Hart, Bloomington/Indianapolis 2008, pp. 222–4 gives an extensive survey of the admitted extra-musical features that may have influenced the composition of the symphony.

184 Diana McVeagh, *Edward Elgar. His Life and Music*, London 1955, p. 165.

185 Cf. *ibid.*

The rondo scherzo is somewhat bizarre in thematic material and instrumentation, ‘full of quips and surprises’,¹⁸⁶

Ex. 66



with quieter trios. Percy Young points out that at least once or twice (in the appearances of the episodic theme in C minor, its development and dissolution) the movement puts us in mind of *Falstaff* and especially of Elgar’s quoted commentary on that work: ‘Sir John Falstaff,’ he concludes his analytical Essay, ‘might well have said, as we may well say now, “we play fools with the time, and the spirits of the Wise sit in the clouds and mock us.”’¹⁸⁷ Elgar’s often quite complex harmonic procedures often make it difficult to predict where the music will go:

Ex. 67

The final movement, opening *Moderato e maestoso*, reaches the sonata movement form at its purest in this work. The second theme is presented on the dominant indeed, and a fugato on the second theme is included (from 4 [140] – even this is recapitulated properly). A third theme (from [142]) had originally been inspired by Hans Richter’s personality and friendship (in sketch book no. II the subject is annotated, ‘Hans himself!’),

Ex. 68

Nobilmente

186 Ernest Newman, ‘Elgar’s Second Symphony’, in: *The New Music Review and Church Music Review* 10 (1911), p. 540.

187 Quoted from Percy Young, *Elgar O. M.* London/Glasgow 1955, p. 337.

and the quiet section of the development had been the starting point for Elgar's inspiration for the movement.¹⁸⁸ A comparatively short development is followed (from [157]) by a brilliant recapitulation and coda. The Symphony ends in

'a dying fall which contrasts it sharply with the cumulative eloquence of the end of the First Symphony, but is not in itself a reason for supposing (as some critics have done) that the end of the E^b is weaker than that of the A^b Symphony. It is all a question of purpose and plan. After the surging emotion of the first movement and the galvanic energy of the third, an impressive oration at the end of the E^b Symphony would have unbalanced the work and made it too strenuous an experience. As it is, the subdued ending (broken by a single poignant, discordant outburst) with its undercurrent of melancholy, brings a sense of reconciliation. The spirit of delight has visited us and has fled. How rare and elusive a spirit! To end upon a note of quiet, passive resignation is the nobler way.'¹⁸⁹

John Barbirolli loved that ending so much that he wished it to be the last thing he would conduct before death.¹⁹⁰

On the occasion of Elgar's 75th birthday in 1932, the B.B.C. put on great festivities in December of that year. The party planners had thought up a special surprise as a present: they approached the composer with the commission of a Third Symphony, to be premièred, if possible, in 1934.¹⁹¹ A year earlier a number of friends and admirers, among them Reed, Vaughan Williams, Sumsion and Morris, had asked Elgar to write the symphony as well as the third part of the 'Apostles' trilogy.¹⁹² Shaw (who had launched the commission) joked in June 1932 that the work (which would have received the opus number 88¹⁹³) could be called the 'Financial Symphony'.¹⁹⁴ Since his wife's death in 1920, Elgar had hardly completed any other composition; instead, he had basically made plans, which in the event did not materialize – Caroline Alice Elgar had been a caring assistant and copyist, and many a correction can be traced to her suggestion¹⁹⁵ (similar to Adeline Vaughan Williams, who

188 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Spirit of England. Edward Elgar in his World*, London 1984, pp. 95–96.

189 Basil Maine, *Elgar – his life and works*, Vol. 2, London 1933, pp. 167–171.

190 I am most grateful to Lionel Pike for mentioning this to me in correspondence in 2010.

191 On 10 June 1932, the Third Symphony finds mention in Elgar's correspondence with his publishers for the first time (Jerrold Northrop Moore (ed.), *Elgar and his Publishers*, Vol. II, Oxford etc. 1987, p. 897). Landon Ronald approached the B.B.C., and the official note that the symphony had been commissioned, was broadcast on 14 December 1932 on the radio (p. 901). Elgar writes on 11 May 1933 in a letter: 'I hope to send portions of the full score &ccc very shortly' (p. 910), and in mid-August of 1933, he was already considering whether Adrian Boult, the Director of Music at the B.B.C., might not broadcast the work already before the first concert performance (p. 916).

192 Ralph Vaughan Williams et al. to Edward Elgar, c. 9 September 1931. Quoted in Jerrold Northrop Moore (ed.), *Edward Elgar. Letters of a Lifetime*, Oxford etc. 1990, p. 440.

193 The opera *The Spanish Lady* would have become Op. 89, the Piano Concerto Op. 90 – had Elgar been able to complete the works.

194 Cf. Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar*, Oxford etc. ²1987, p. 796.

195 Gregory Murray, 'Edward Elgar', in: *The Downside Review* LIII (1935), pp. 19–20.

exerted a rather considerable influence on her husband up to 1951 – despite having lain seriously ill for a long time). Elgar was, in spite of his since 1930 seriously weakened health, pronouncedly confident concerning the possibility of completing the symphony. In as early as 1933 he divulged the following information for the première performance programme of the May Festival of 1934:

‘Symphony in C minor

- I. Allegro
- II. Allegretto
- III. Adagio
- IV. Allegro

Now the trouble is that I have not decided finally the positions of II & III that is to say III might follow I.’¹⁹⁶

Had the work been completed in time, it would have been premièred in the same year as Vaughan Williams’s Fourth Symphony, a work that according to contemporaneous statements shows a return ‘to the world of action – and a violent world (...). It belongs to an unlovable age, which it interprets and criticizes implacably.’¹⁹⁷ Elgar’s health, however, deteriorated rapidly in September 1933 – he died on 23 February 1934. Very much to the indignation of many a colleague,¹⁹⁸ William Henry Reed, estate executive and close friend of Elgar’s, published most of the rough drafts for the Third Symphony.¹⁹⁹ These drafts have – following the careful preparatory research by Christopher Kent and Robert Anderson²⁰⁰ – since received a performable elaboration by Anthony Payne.²⁰¹ The mood of both the First

196 Edward Elgar an Owen Mase, 27 April 1933. Quoted from Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar*, Oxford etc. ²1987, p. 811.

197 Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. 1949, p. 285.

198 Basil Maine, who had visited Elgar on 30 July 1933 and played from the rough drafts to Elgar, objected to the publication of the drafts on the grounds that Elgar had extemporated quite a bit and that an appropriate picture of the symphony was simply not obtainable from the rough drafts (cf. for instance *Basil Maine on Music*, London 1945, pp. 31 and 33) – especially since Elgar himself had been insecure in places as well. ‘In the process of bringing forth a new conception every creative artist waits for that final moment of crisis which determines the greatness or the ordinariness of the achievement. If the work is to be great, in that moment there comes the flash which lights up all the previous processes of thought, gives them unity, and orders their final relationship. It is my conviction that, in this last adventure, Elgar was still waiting for that final moment. The last revealing light had not yet broken upon his mind. Or, if it had, it broke when he lacked the physical strength to set down the signs.’ (Basil Maine, *The Best of Me*, London 1937, p. 198). According to Maine, Elgar would have gladly destroyed the rough drafts.

199 This supplement with the facsimiles of Elgar’s autograph rough drafts appeared as a reprint in *The Listener* XIV/346, Supplement 24 (1935) and was reprinted in W. H. Reed, *Elgar as I knew him*, London 1936, pp. 170–223.

200 Christopher Kent, *Edward Elgar: a composer at work. A study of his creative processes as seen through his sketches and proof corrections*, Ph.D. dissertation London, King’s College 1978, vol. 1, pp. 196–216. Christopher Kent, ‘Elgar’s Third Symphony. The sketches reconsidered’, in: *MT CXXIII* (1982), pp. 532–537. Robert Anderson, *Elgar in manuscript*, London 1990, pp. 175–185, 193 and 198–199.

201 A huge advantage in ‘elaborating’ the symphony was in part afforded by ‘Elgar’s self-tuition from text-books [that] helped to establish musical thought-processes and working habits which changed very little throughout his life.’ (Christopher Kent, *Edward Elgar: a composer at work. A study of his creative processes as seen through his sketches and proof corrections*, Ph.D. dissertation London, King’s College 1978, vol. 1, p. 217.) Payne has dealt extensively with the

and the Third Symphonies are quite similar; Donald Mitchell writes:

‘What he wrote of his first Symphony – “a massive hope in the future” – holds true of much of his assertive music, but here and there, fleetingly, when the hope breaks down, one glimpses a massive if deeply buried anxiety. (I sense it again in that oddly sinister tableau, “The Wagon Passes”, from the “Nursery Suite”.)’²⁰²

Anthony Payne has in fact taken up the mood of *The Wagon Passes* to complete the finale of the Third Symphony.

The material that Elgar expected to use for the Third Symphony was in part several years old and was to be found, as for example the main theme of the scherzo,

Ex. 69

The musical score for Ex. 69 is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It is marked 'Adagio'. The first staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes the marking 'espress.' above the staff. The second staff includes a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. The third and fourth staves feature triplet markings (3) and end with 'etc.'.

in many a form and key in his sketch books. They also included sketches for the oratorio *The Last Judgement*, a song *Callicles* to Matthew Arnold’s *Empedocles on Etna*, the Piano Concerto and a projected opera entitled *Arden* as well as music he had borrowed from *King Arthur* (1923) – very little music was really composed from scratch.²⁰³ In the second half of 1933, Elgar collected all these fragments (sometimes twenty or thirty connected bars), even a fully scored beginning of the symphony itself. Reed, who supported Elgar actively at work on the symphony, had this to say:

‘He gradually had a clear vision of the whole Symphony forming in his mind. He would write a portion of the Finale, or the middle section of the second movement,

status of the sketches and his techniques of elaboration in his *Elgar’s Third Symphony. The Story of the Reconstruction*, London/Boston 1998.

202 Donald Mitchell, ‘Some Thoughts on Elgar (1857–1934)’, in: *Mc&L* XXXVIII (1957), pp. 121. Reprinted in Christopher Redwood (ed.), *The Elgar Companion*, Ashbourne 1982, p. 287.

203 Christopher Kent, ‘Elgar’s Third Symphony. The sketches reconsidered’, in: *MT* CXXIII (1982), pp. 532–537.

and then work at the development of the first movement. It did not seem at all odd to him to begin things in the middle, or to switch off suddenly from one movement to another. It was evident that he had the whole conception in his head in a more or less nebulous condition. He told me that it was not going to be cast in the same form as the two earlier symphonies, but that it was to be simpler in construction and design.²⁰⁴

He was aware that he wanted – as Schubert had in his great C major Symphony – to repeat the exposition of the first movement, and at the same time, he did not want the first movement (in contrast to that of the Second Symphony) to have a slow introduction. About the key of the scherzo or the end of the symphony, however, Elgar was not yet certain, and died without resolving the issues.

For a BBC broadcast in 1968 Roger Fiske revisited the sketches, realizing that there was more than what Reed had published more than thirty years previously. Eventually, however, it was Christopher Kent's research on the sketches that was doubtlessly the real source for Anthony Payne's elaboration – both the research on the sketches and the elaboration have been documented extensively.²⁰⁵ Here we may present a few special features of the original sketches to show that Elgar had not lost any of his imagination, though he had by that point had difficulty in concentrating and elaborating his thoughts in written form.

The whole exposition and nearly the entire recapitulation of the first movement exist in short score, and its beginning even in a full score version shows a strong sense of harmonic thought, modelled by open fifths in contrary motion:

204 William Reed, 'Elgar's Third Symphony', in: *The Listener* XIV/346, Supplement 24 (1935), pp. I–V.

205 Christopher Kent, 'Elgar's Third Symphony. The sketches reconsidered', in: *MT* CXXIII (1982), pp. 532–537. Anthony Payne, *Elgar's Third Symphony. The Story of the Reconstruction*, London/Boston 1998. Payne had begun studying the sketches as early as the 1970s, and working them out into something performable from 1993.

Ex. 70. All sketches are in the British Library, Add. Mss. 47907A and 56101, but most of

SYM: III.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a symphony, labeled "SYM: III." at the top. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Piccolo, Flutes I and II, Oboes I and II, English Horn, Clarinets I and II, Clarinet Bassoon, Fagots I and II, Contra Fagotto, Corsi I, II, III, and IV, Trombe I and II, Tromboni I, II, and III, and Tubi, and Tamburi. The second system includes parts for Arpa, Violini I and II, Viola, Violoncelli, and C. Basi. The score is heavily annotated with handwritten notes and markings, including "ritardando", "molto", and "moderato". A large vertical line is drawn through the score, and there are various scribbles and corrections throughout.

them have been published several times.

SYM: III 2

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a symphony, titled "SYM: III" and marked with a large "2" in the upper right corner. The score is written on multiple staves, each labeled with an instrument or section. The instruments listed from top to bottom are: Piccolo, Flauti (I and II), Oboi (I and II), Cor Anglais, Clarinetto in Bb (I and II), Clarinetto Basso in Bb, Fagotti (I and II), Contrabasso, Trombe in C (I, II, III, IV), Tromboni in Bb (I and II), Timpani, Arpa, Violini I, Violini II, Viola, Violoncelli, and C. Basso. The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamics. There are some handwritten annotations and corrections throughout the score, particularly in the lower right area where "in 4" and "124" are written. The paper shows signs of age and wear.

Numerous minor, often tiny sketches offered material from which the development and the end of the movement had to be elaborated; but the hugest task was that of orchestration. Departing from the few fully orchestrated pages of score which had survived from Elgar's own hand, Payne exclusively uses procedures found in other Elgar works as well; it may be said, however, that he takes the liberty of employing somewhat too much percussion. Payne himself discusses the question of his use of the tam-tam at length.²⁰⁶

Elgar intimated to Reed that the second movement was to be 'of light character with contrasts, but not quick' (rather the reverse of the middle movement of the 'uncomposed' Piano Concerto); Reed later described it as 'a slow-moving kind of scherzo'.²⁰⁷ Payne assumes that Elgar had in mind a rondo-like movement 'nearer to a Brahmsian intermezzo than a genuine scherzo in the Beethoven mould'.²⁰⁸

Ex. 71

The image shows a handwritten musical score for three systems of staves. The first system is labeled 'Scherzo' and 'SYAT'. It features a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat and a 3/4 time signature. Below it are two bass clef staves. The first bass staff has a 'Piano' dynamic marking and contains rhythmic notation with vertical lines. The second bass staff contains rhythmic notation with vertical lines and some notes. The second system is labeled 'cres' and contains rhythmic notation with vertical lines and some notes. The third system is labeled 'fll' and contains rhythmic notation with vertical lines and some notes. The score is heavily annotated with handwritten notes and markings.

206 Anthony Payne, *Elgar's Third Symphony. The Story of the Reconstruction*, London/Boston 1998, pp. 63–64.

207 William Henry Reed, *Elgar as I knew him*, Oxford etc. 1989, p. 171.

208 Anthony Payne, *Elgar's Third Symphony. The Story of the Reconstruction*, London/Boston 1998, p. 65.



The third and fourth movements posed even more problems: the substance of the sketches steadily decreased. However, even in skeletal form, they were sufficient for Payne, a distinguished composer himself, to elaborate both movements. Payne presents, in connection with his own use of the tam-tam, a quotation from a letter from Elgar to Ernest Newman, in which he described the F^\sharp in the third bar of the slow movement as opening ‘vast bronze doors into something strangely unfamiliar’.²⁰⁹

Ex. 72

A handwritten musical score for three staves. The top staff contains tempo markings: *Sym. I And.*, *II Adagio (color?)*, *III Adagio*, and *IV Fando*. The middle staff is marked *III Adagio* and includes performance instructions such as *for*, *end*, and *Violando esp.*. The bottom staff is marked *end* and includes *Violando esp.* and *Finis*. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings, with some notes marked with F^\sharp .

209 Quoted from Anthony Payne, *Elgar's Third Symphony. The Story of the Reconstruction*, London/Boston 1998, p. 63.

Ex. 73

Adagio solenne ♩ = 56

Cor ingl., Clar., Cor, Vln.

Tam-tam

rit.

a tempo

Vla. solo

Cor, Fg., Tb., Vla., Vlc., Cb.

f

p

pp

pp

f

pp

pp

Regarding the movement's codetta, Reed was uncertain whether it belonged to this movement or to the finale, recalling:

‘[Elgar’s] last terrible illness began, and so there was no more writing or playing, until one day, not very long before he left us, he wrote in pencil as he lay in bed ... probably the very last notes he put on paper, and which he kept by him to show me on my next visit to his bedside. He would not say whether it was the end of the slow-movement Adagio, or the end of the Symphony. All he said (with tears streaming down his cheeks) was – “Billy, this is the end”’.²¹⁰

Ex. 74

*cumulative
cresc.*

cresc.

ff

210 William Henry Reed, *Elgar as I knew him*, Oxford etc. 21989, p. 179.

On musical grounds, it seems apparent that it was in fact intended for the slow movement, 'for it is unlikely that Elgar would have concluded an entire symphony in C minor with a half-close on the dominant',²¹¹ but Anthony Payne found a different, more complex solution.²¹²

As for the finale's destination, even less information was given, and Elgar's friends were unable to supply any clues. At least the beginning is sufficiently clear:

Ex. 75

The image shows five staves of handwritten musical notation. The top staff is labeled "Movement 1" and has "SYN. SYN." written above it. The first staff shows a melodic line in C minor. The second staff shows a piano accompaniment with a "Mesto" marking. The third staff is labeled "begin" and shows a piano accompaniment in 4/4 time. The fourth and fifth staves show further piano accompaniment. The sketches are heavily annotated with handwritten notes and markings.

211 Christopher Kent, 'Elgar's Third Symphony. The sketches reconsidered', in: *MT CXXIII* (1982), p. 536.

212 Anthony Payne, *Elgar's Third Symphony. The Story of the Reconstruction*, London/Boston 1998, p. 87.

Ex. 76

SYM. III

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a symphony, titled "SYM. III". The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves for different instruments. The instruments listed on the left side of the score are: Flauto (Flute), I. and II.; Oboi (Oboe), I. and II.; Corni (Horn), I. and II.; Clarinetto in B (Clarinet in B), I. and II.; Clarinetto Basso in B (Bass Clarinet in B); Fagotti (Bassoon), I. and II.; Contrabbasso (Double Bass); Corni in F (Horn in F), III. and IV.; Trombe in C (Trumpet in C), I., II., and III.; Tromboni (Trombone), I., II., and III.; Tubi (Tuba); Timpani; Arpa (Harp); Violini I (Violin I); Violini II (Violin II); Viola; Violoncelli (Violoncello); and C. Bassi (Cello/Bass). The notation is handwritten and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is written on a series of horizontal staves, with the instrument names listed on the left side of each staff. The overall appearance is that of a working draft or a composer's sketch.

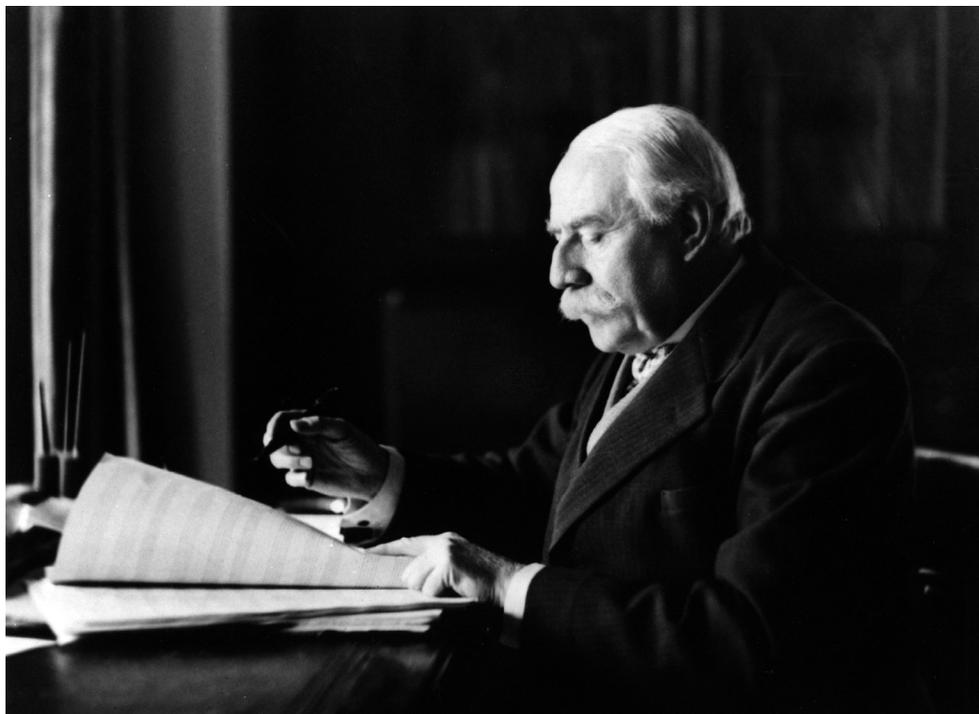


Illustration 35. Edward Elgar, 1933, photograph by Herbert Lambert. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

At a time to which he hardly belonged any more, in which he, like Strauss or Sibelius, would be described as ‘stylistic surplus’ (see p. 273), Elgar once more exalted his ideal of the symphony with his Third Symphony; he had described Brahms’s Third Symphony as ‘the height of music’²¹³, and Shaw had declared Elgar ‘the English successor to Beethoven’.²¹⁴ At its première performance in 1998, Elgar’s Third in Payne’s elaboration received international acclaim (although it must be stressed that much of the international press knew nothing about the work or its composer, and was therefore unable to give an appropriate assessment²¹⁵), the London critics were full of unanimous praise (perhaps to some extent because it was a new work by one of the few British composers well-established on the international concert platform).

213 John Francis Porte, *Sir Edward Elgar, O.M., Mus.Duc., LL.D., M.A.*, London/New York 1921, p. viii.

214 John Francis Porte, *Elgar and his music*, London etc. 1933, p. 1.

215 Cf. e.g. Wolfgang Sandner, ‘Die Lüftung eines englischen Geheimnisses. Vollendung nach vierundsechzig Jahren: Der Komponist Anthony Payne rekonstruiert aus Skizzen die dritte Symphonie von Edward Elgar’, in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 58/11D (10 March 1998), p. P1.

Elgar did not, unlike Stanford or Parry, have a direct influence on subsequent generations. Since he himself had enjoyed no controlled compositional instruction, he never became a composition teacher at any of the schools of music except the University of Birmingham, where he was required to give lectures rather than teach composition. If at all, then ‘in Bliss and Walton one can occasionally catch the intonations of Elgar’s voice’²¹⁶ – especially with regard to the feel of English *nobilmente*. However ignorant he may have been with regard to pre-Elgarian British music, Arthur Elson wrote in 1905: ‘England’s composers to-day are far more original than for many years, and it seems certain that some among these younger men will continue the work so nobly begun by Elgar, and add new lustre to English music.’²¹⁷

216 Frank Howes, *The English Musical Renaissance*, London 1966, p. 26.

217 Arthur Elson, *Modern Composers of Europe*, Boston 1907, p. 223.

Part II

Uniqueness in diversity

6. Traditional form and expansion of the ‘academically feasible’

Montague Phillips p. 357 – Donald Francis Tovey p. 358 – Frank H. Tapp p. 362 – William Baines p. 363 – Fritz Hart p. 366 – Hamish MacCunn p. 368 – Cyril Rootham p. 368 – Thomas Dunhill p. 369 – Rutland Boughton p. 370 – Reginald Owen Morris p. 372 – Anthony Burgess p. 375 – George Dyson p. 376 – Craig Sellar Lang p. 377 – Gordon Jacob p. 378 – Ruth Gipps p. 381 – Norman Demuth p. 382 – William Henry Bell p. 384 – Adam Carse p. 395 – Godfrey Sampson p. 399 – Eric Fenby p. 400 – Gerald Finzi p. 400 – Edric Cundell p. 401 – Christopher Edmunds p. 401 – Alexander Brent-Smith p. 403 – Ralph W. Wood p. 404 – Percy Whitlock p. 404 – Maurice Blower p. 405 – Richard Hall p. 406 – Hubert Clifford p. 407 – William Beaton Moonie p. 411 – William Wordsworth p. 415 – Cecil Armstrong Gibbs p. 417 – Edmund Rubbra p. 422 – Christian Darnton p. 431 – Norman Del Mar p. 435 – George Lloyd p. 436 – Edgar L. Bainton p. 440 – Stanley Bate p. 442 – Edmund Rubbra p. 453 – Ralph Vaughan Williams p. 455 – Michael Tippett p. 460 – Arnold Bax p. 463

‘Symphony: An orchestral work, the length of which is often in inverse ratio to the number of ideas it contains. Symphonies of British manufacture are seldom published.’¹

‘I have said that after 1914–1918, art went back to where it had been, as if nothing had happened – and in a sense nothing had happened. It would be more accurate, however, to say that it recoiled and went backwards, ending up in the good old 1890s.’²

‘I have spoken of the young English school – what does it mean? I confess I do not know; and yet it is for that school that I stand here, and for which in a certain measure I plead. I know that in the best sense it means something original and something alive. It wishes for life, but it desires no annihilation of existing perfect things. It is opposed to

1 Frederic Hymen Cowen, *Music as she is wrote*, London 1915, p. 54.

2 Cecil Gray, Notebook 8, in Pauline Gray, *Cecil Gray – his life and Notebooks*, London 1989, p. 155.

mere imitation, and mere “Capellmeister” music. We had too much imitation of other men’s work and I understand it is against this mere imitation that the young men cry out so violently. (...) Besides the men who stood still we also see groups of people who have endeavoured to gather together into one focus the canons of art and found a school. I need only refer to the Caracci and the disastrous result of their attempt to found an eclectic school. We have seen eclectic composers in our own day, who have poured out works – symphonies, concertos, oratorios – which apparently contained work equal to the best of their contemporaries or their predecessors. These works failed and must always fail. The art that stands still is dead; the art that moves, or I would say progresses, is alive. That brings us to the consideration of what is progress and what is mere movement.³

Those are the words of Edward Elgar, the ‘Grand Master’ of British music, at the beginning of the twentieth century. The artistic danger he describes is in fact also mirrored by Peter Pears approximately thirty years later, in a letter to Benjamin Britten, on the situation of British music as represented at the 1937 Salzburg Festival, when Delius, Elgar and also Bax were regarded as the most essential representatives of the ‘English school’:

‘The Boughton, Bax, Delius and Elgar sounded all really very much alike in essence – I suppose in being English – but there wasn’t enough variety – The “espressivo” of one was all too like the “espressivo” of another – There was not enough *life* – and that, the Almighty be praised, is *what you* have, Benjie.⁴

Pears (and Britten) was by no means alone in this opinion. On the contrary, the prejudice that British music radiates boredom has remained largely intact until the present day, and Britain’s cognomen as the ‘land without music’ has been unduly perpetuated.⁵ William Palmer wrote in the year of the *Festival of Britain* 1951 that everything struck him as old hat – whereas truly new music might pose apparently unsolvable mysteries that would, however, gradually reveal themselves to him. It might thus have seemed logical to him that an overdependence on tradition might harm the quality and originality of music.⁶ In this vein, Cyril Scott wrote:

‘As a synonym for decadence is decay, or ruin; he who reverences the old is in truth the decadent and not he who favours the new. In our own country young composers are cropping up in profusion. Much of this work may be ugly, but it is not neutral, and every trace of that sickly academic element once so characteristic of English musicians has vanished.⁷

3 Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and other Lectures*, London 1968, pp. 37–39.

4 Peter Pears to Benjamin Britten, 27 August 1937, Donald Mitchell (ed.), *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters and Diaries of Benjamin Britten 1913–1976*, Vol. I, London 1991, p. 508. Pears refers to Delius’s *Two Aquarelles*, a concert piece by Elgar unspecified in the *Salzburger Volksblatt*, and the first performance of Britten’s *Bridge Variations*, performed by the Boyd Neel String Orchestra. The Bax and Boughton are not mentioned in the review quoted above.

5 Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, ‘Chasing a myth and a legend: “The British Musical renaissance” in a “Land without music”’, in *MT* 149/1904 (2008), pp. 53–60.

6 William Palmer, ‘On Listening to Modern Music’, in Ralph Hill (ed.), *Music*, Harmondsworth 1951, pp. 97–98.

7 Quoted from ‘Cadwal’, ‘Cyril Scott And “The Alchemist”’, in: *MM* II/11 (1922), p. 331.

a) Traditionalists. Works by teachers and pupils

The further development or variation of the traditional form of the symphony as developed in the nineteenth century needed time to unfold in the twentieth century; Bruckner, Mahler, Strauss and Sibelius mark some of the most essential new tendencies (we shall see to what extent the innovations launched by Strauss, Mahler, Sibelius and Hindemith⁸ took root – Bruckner's influence became striking only after World War II). The formal linking to Beethoven and Brahms contained dangers, particularly for composition teachers (various authors point to the strong proximity of Vaughan Williams to Brahms and Beethoven; Lutz-Werner Hesse, on the other hand, defends Vaughan Williams against this charge, pointing out that there are no sonata forms to be found in his symphonies); in Scott's view, espousing 'old-fashioned' approaches and saying nothing new was tantamount to decadence. Indeed, every country with a history of symphonism had a number of composers whose works (or at least some of them) clung to old ways and were seemingly immune to inspiration by new ideas. George Dyson wrote:

'Many more names, old and young, native and foreign, might claim a place in our chronicle. A great deal of highly significant music is written by men who cannot or will not compete in terms of novelty, and some of these may yet outlast the innovators. Music in the long run stands or falls, not by its immediate striking power, but by its permanent qualities of depth and sincerity. Yet the story of our time is one of great changes, and it is from this angle that contemporary eyes must read it.'⁹

This statement confirms the aesthetic position that has been slowly developing in German musicology – that the discipline should no longer be exclusively devoted to the 'masters' and their 'masterworks', but also incorporate the linking elements, bypaths and even the aspects that bind music to the larger social context.

The orchestral works of **Montague Fawcett Phillips** (Tottenham, 13 November 1885–Esher, 4 January 1969) were long forgotten and have only been revived since 2004. Phillips's musical education started as an especially gifted chorister at St. Botolph's Church, Bishopsgate, taking his first church service as an organist at the age of twelve. He had already occupied several organists' posts when he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Organist at only nineteen. He studied composition with Frederick Corder and John Blackwood McEwen at the Royal Academy of Music where he won various scholarships and prizes. After the First World War he became professor of composition there himself. It was between 1908 and 1911 that Phillips wrote his Symphony in C minor, which was premièred at an all-Phillips concert at Queen's Hall on 17 May 1912 with the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the composer. It was a great success, but the score was lost in Germany on the outbreak

8 The name Hindemith stands for the innovations which found circulation through the ideas of neo-classicism.

9 William Henry Hadow, *Music*, London etc. 1949, p. 178.

of the First World War (as was Vaughan Williams's *London Symphony*, see pp. 532ff.). Phillips reconstructed revised movements from the original surviving scherzo and slow movement parts (also the parts of the outer movements have survived), which became two separate orchestral miniatures: *A Spring Rondo* and *A Summer Nocturne* (somehow one is reminded of the movements of Havergal Brian's *Fantastic Symphony*, see pp. 310ff., and the revisions Cyril Scott applied to his Second Symphony, see pp. 302f.). That he discarded the entire symphony may well have been caused by the strong competition around the beginning of the First World War, notably Elgar's two symphonies. *A Spring Rondo* is a fine light-weight scherzo, vividly orchestrated, the slower trio consisting of a 'slightly exotic section in which at one point the theme is heard on the solo violin'.¹⁰ The main theme of the *Summer Nocturne* (which in several respects has a strong Elgarian feel) had already been foreshadowed in the first movement of the symphony.

The name **Donald Francis Tovey** (Eton, 17 July 1875–Edinburgh, 10 July 1940) has already been mentioned in connection with Algernon Ashton and Elgar, quintessential British composers who did not draw from pastoral or folk-song-like aspects of British culture. Tovey became for many years the most important professor of music in Scotland (the Chair of Music in Glasgow was not established until 1928). Tovey was appointed to the Reid professorship of Music in Edinburgh in July 1914, and held in the highest esteem by his students, among them William Wordsworth, Erik Chisholm, Cedric Thorpe Davie, William Beaton Moonie and Bernard Stevens. Others saw in Tovey a highly educated personality; Joachim attributed to him a greater knowledge of music 'than anyone now living'.¹¹ Aware that knowledge of music can only be obtained by hearing it, Tovey founded the Reid Orchestra in 1917. The ensemble grew to be a prolific body and premièred Ethel Smyth's *The Prison* in 1931, in 1934 Schoenberg's Cello Concerto after Monn and in 1935 Tovey's Cello Concerto (the latter two works featured Pablo Casals as soloist), thus continuing what Erik Chisholm had started with his Society for the Propagation of Contemporary Music. In later years, Tovey became famous for his aphorisms, which were well-loved though by no means always appropriate.¹² For example, George Barnes informed Henry Walford Davies in 1938 that Tovey was about to give a broadcast talk on 'the absoluteness of programme music and the descriptiveness of absolute music (though not under this title, of course)'.¹³ Tovey supposedly hardly ever stopped talking about music (Kaikhosru Sorabji called him the 'prince of pedants'¹⁴), pausing only to discuss detective novels as learnedly as he did

10 Lewis Foreman, CD liner notes to *A Spring Rondo* and *A Summer Nocturne*, Watford 2004, p. 5.

11 Arthur Henry Fox Strangways, 'Donald Francis Tovey', in: *MeL* XXI (1940), p. 305.

12 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 306-307.

13 B.B.C. Internal Circulation Memo by George Barnes to Henry Walford Davies, 4 August 1939. BBC Written Archives Centre, Davies file.

14 Kaikhosru Sorabji to Erik Chisholm, 13 November 1930. Collection Dr. Morag Chisholm.



Illustration 36. Donald Francis Tovey, 1913, photograph. BuschBrothersArchive in the Max-Reger-Institut, Karlsruhe; reproduced by kind permission.

music; many of his colleagues recognized him as one of the first real British musicologists.¹⁵ Tovey helped Vaughan Williams with the *Sea Symphony*,¹⁶ and on 11 December 1913 his own Symphony in D major Op. 32 was premièred by Fritz Busch in Aachen (subsequent to a performance of his Piano Concerto there, with Tovey playing the solo part).¹⁷ Tovey had already been quite successful with his chamber music on the continent, so there was considerable interest in his orchestral music. There had been some worry as to whether the symphony would be ready in time, in part because Tovey had been ill for a while. By mid-November the finale was still missing, but upon his arrival in Germany in November, Tovey worked on the last movement day and night. The composition was well received, which served to rehabilitate Tovey after a series of Chelsea Town Hall concerts had collapsed and a tour through Holland had been cancelled. In 1923 Tovey revised the score, which was obviously performed frequently during his lifetime.

Tovey's symphony is perfect in construction and instrumentation, and the thematic material and development are quite interesting as well. Both main themes of the first movement

Ex. 1

Allegro maestoso



Ex. 2: 10 [7]



are augmented by secondary ideas derived from the main themes,

Ex. 3



the development (from [9] 2) is carefully prepared and complex in the working out, and all material is now used motivically.

The second movement (scherzo) shows us the importance of scale extracts as motivic

15 Cf. Jerrold Northrop Moore (ed.), *Edward Elgar. Letters of a Lifetime*, Oxford etc. 1990, p. 459.

16 Cf. Arthur Henry Fox Strangways, 'Donald Francis Tovey', in: *MeL* XXI (1940), p. 310.

17 In the same concert Max Reger's motet, *Ach, Herr, strafe mich nicht* Op. 110 no. 2, was premièred.

therein, (with a suggestion of repeating Exposition)? The comparably short development proper then starts at [8], the recapitulation at 10 [12], the coda, mainly derived from the first theme, and perhaps goes on somewhat too long.

The symphony has received mixed reviews to the present day; many complain of a lack of coherence and imagination, or of the influence of too many other composers. The first commercial recording of the symphony now allows one to judge for oneself.

As a composer, **Frank H. Tapp** (1883–1953) is among the least well-known of his contemporaries; he was mainly recognized as the director of the Pump Room concerts at Bath, 1910–1919 and composer of light music. His symphony *The Tempest*, after Shakespeare, was composed in 1913 and performed in Bournemouth on 17 December 1914 under Tapp himself.¹⁸ Apparently only the first and third movements have survived. The first movement, an elaborate sonata movement with a slow introduction, is sub-titled ‘Caliban’, and the third, ‘Ariel and Caliban’, is the scherzo. The music is modelled on Elgar to a considerable degree; the extensive first movement development (from [10] 3 to [37] 9) in fact consists of even more episodes than would be found in Elgar. The slow introduction of the first movement shows real, deep feeling, and the thematic material (the second theme is in part derived from the first one)

Ex. 9



Ex. 10



is derived from it. The development of the thematic material displays high skill; counterpoint is used in exactly the right measure. After the huge development, the original themes are not recapitulated in their original form, but the thematic material is derived directly from the first theme (and even this kind of recapitulation was apparently regarded as optional). To give the movement even more unity, the slow introduction is taken up again for a short moment just before the coda's beginning.

The scherzo is airy, breezy, as would be expected from Ariel, and the harmonic plan is characterized by huge changes, the key signatures ranging from one sharp via four, then five, then one sharp, then five flats, one sharp, five flats and one sharp to four sharps. The thematic material is again derived in part from the first movement's main theme, and the

18 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British composers*, London 1995, p. 115.

second five flat section (from 4 [23] to [30] or [30] 9) seems to constitute the comparatively short trio (with the special feature of the celesta and increased use of *legato*). The scherzo section is very vivacious and multifaceted.

William Baines (Horbury, Yorkshire, 26 March 1899–York, 6 November 1922) died young, as did William Hurlstone (1876–1906), W. Denis Browne (1888–1915), Australian Frederick Septimus Kelly (1881–1916), George Butterworth (1885–1916), Ernest Farrar (1885–1918) and Walter Leigh (1905–1942) – but as many authors say, Baines was one of the 'most modern' composers of his generation in spite of his youth and coming from a generation that included Walton, Tippett, Jacob, etc. His teacher in Leeds had been Albert Jowett, who supported, to the best of his ability, young Baines's talents; his most essential supporter, however, was Frederick Dawson. Baines, like his father, had to earn his living (as a cinema pianist), and was soon advertised as a child prodigy of British music. In 1917 he wrote his Symphony in C minor Op. 10, which speaks with a language of exceptional maturity for someone so young. Baines had already conceived the beginning of a Symphony in C major in around 1915; the piece remained in piano score, however. One year later, Baines was recruited for war service during an influenza epidemic, which undermined his already fragile health; he never recovered entirely. Arthur Eaglefield-Hull used Schumann's pronouncement on Chopin – 'Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!'¹⁹ – to describe Baines in 1920. Rutland Boughton was full of the praise for Baines's piano works²⁰ and counted him among the great British piano composers, Scott, Sorabji, Bowen and Ireland.

Baines's C minor Symphony does not stand out for harmonic inventiveness, but the formal talents and the capacities in orchestrational respects²¹ are so outstanding that Baines's decision to withdraw the work is puzzling. Roger Carpenter sees here the influence of the early Sibelius, whose later maturity could already be seen in *Kullervo*, and in the sometimes 'elusive quality of innocence' of the 'sinewy textures and brass-encrusted climaxes'²² that Baines exhibited: similarities to Bruckner seem obvious, although Carpenter holds it for improbable that Baines knew Bruckner's music. Baines's instrumentation is translucent and of exceptional delicacy (Carpenter mentions Holst's then still un-performed *Planets* and Janáček's contemporaneously composed *Taras Bulba*), although the traditional symphony orchestra of the nineteenth century is merely expanded by a second set of timpani, cornets (in addition to the trumpets – one finds something similar in Great Britain only in Brian's *Gothic* Symphony; Robert Keys attributes Baines's exceptional use of the cornets for melody formation to his intimate knowledge of their use in the cinema orchestra) and an organ (the

19 Robert Schumann, 'Ein Opus II', in: *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 33 (1831), col. 806. – Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, 'Hats off, Gentlemen, a Genius!', in: *The British Music Bulletin* 2/3 (1920), pp. 52–55.

20 Rutland Boughton, 'A Musical Impressionist', in: *MT* LXVII (1926), pp. 212–214.

21 Peter Pirie, 'Baines, William', in: *Grove* 6 vol. 2, London etc. 1980, p. 39.

22 Roger Carpenter, *Goodnight to Flamboro'. The Life and Music of William Baines*, Bristol 1977, p. 85, Upminster ²1999, p. 63.

latter is used only for a short passage in the slow movement, again reminding Carpenter of *Taras Bulba*). That the four horns are barely employed in more than two parts helps to increase their sound in the *tutti*, and also impedes unnecessary voice duplication that could otherwise easily occur by the not altogether rare use of the entire orchestra.

There is an immediate air of spaciousness and expectancy about the opening bars of the symphony, with a bare fifth of C-G held *pianissimo* by the two timpanists against throbbing *pizzicato* basses, an effect reminiscent of the start of Havergal Brian's E minor Symphony, although, unlike the *Adagio Solenne* of the latter, Baines's tempo is *Quickly, with resolution & boldness* (most of the early performing directions in English are sometimes couched in almost Graingeresque language). The first subject enters softly on the strings: it is a simple tritonic motif, which in its basic form is confined within the initial span of a fifth and which embodies the harmonic germ of the entire work.

Ex. 11



With the pedal fifth running on for 23 bars, the F# pulling against G 'is joined by a D \flat in contention with the C, establishing at the outset an enharmonic pattern of a perfect fourth fitted glove-like inside a perfect fifth – with other words, two interlocked tritones –, which is at the core of Baines' harmonic thinking and destined within three years to be refined into the bitonal tracteries of [the piano piece] *Goodnight to Flamboro*'.²³

In formal terms, the movement strongly corresponds to the classical concept; Baines even repeats the exposition. The following slow movement also distinguishes itself mainly by careful construction, although the instrumentation shows amazing skill, for example in the organ part (the entire organ part of the whole symphony is reprinted here):

Ex. 12

23 *Ibid.*, pp. 85–86/64.

A musical score for measures 28-31. The top staff is in treble clef and contains dense chordal textures with some melodic lines. The middle staff is in bass clef and contains similar chordal textures. The bottom staff is in bass clef and features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4.

The great popularity of Brucknerian scherzi in Great Britain (later, for example, in Robert Simpson) is a remarkable quality of British music in general. Baines's contribution to the genre, the third movement of his symphony, is also to be seen in this tradition (Baines's own personality actually comes up short, being replaced by a strong pressing forward), although the atmosphere of *Mercury* from *The Planets* also significantly determines the movement.

Ex. 13

A musical score for Violin (Vln.) in 3/4 time, marked *mp*. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with two triplet markings over the first two measures.

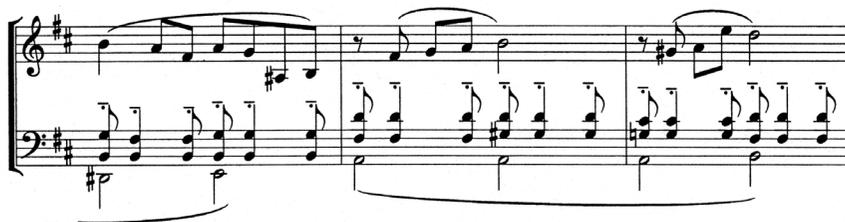
Passing from G major to E \flat , the trio begins softly in long notes on clarinets, bass clarinet, violas and cellos, but soon succumbs to the relentless drive of the scherzo material. A brief attempt to restore the gentler mood of the trio is undermined by the timpani and lower strings quietly turning out the scherzo rhythm, and the recapitulation 'achieves a surging climax with the whole orchestra in full cry, only to fade quickly away to two crisp *sforzando* chords.'²⁴

Had Baines been interested in revising the work at some point, the extensive final movement of the symphony probably would have been shortened considerably – but he would probably have kept the internal proportions of the ternary form intact. The movement is undoubtedly constructed carefully, but nonetheless remains nothing more than a conservative sonata principal movement in which, however, the precise instrumentation, for instance in the introduction of the secondary theme, shows to best advantage.

Ex. 14

A musical score for three instruments: Cornet, Cor con sord., and Bass Clar. in 3/4 time. The Cornet part is marked *mp* and features a melodic line. The Cor con sord. part is marked *pp* and features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The Bass Clar. part is also marked *pp* and features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4.

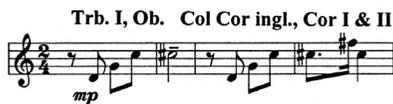
24 *Ibid.*, p. 88/66.



(...) the scoring is limpid,' writes Peter Pirie, 'the music both wildly imaginative and genuinely majestic; there is a sense of development, movement and shape of a scale one would never have suspected from the piano music. (...) One must be prepared for occasional naivety, but these things are inextricably mixed with sheer constructional ability and creative fire. This is the voice of a major figure in youth, and needs no excuse.'²⁵ To this pronouncement, however, Roger Carpenter adds, in view of the fact that Baines withdrew the symphony: 'To acclaim the symphony as a masterpiece would scarcely be fair to him, but it remains an achievement of unique stature, even without allowing for the composer's age and opportunities.'²⁶

Stephen Banfield counts Baines, Brian, Bridge, Goossens, Sorabji, Foulds, Dieren and Holst's friend at the Royal College of Music **Fritz Bennicke Hart** (Brockley, Kent, 11 February 1874–Honolulu, 9 July 1949) among the composers who, each in his own way, turned away from Romanticism, and 'who all shared either an innate or a developed impulse towards modernism and away from Romantic formulae, and whose reputation never fully emerged from the shadows, or suffered a terminal overshadowing in their own lifetime'.²⁷ Hart, mainly known as a composer of vocal music, lived in Melbourne from 1908 to 1935. He then relocated to Hawaii, where he remained until his death (Hart's estate is to be found in Australia). Hart's Symphony, Op. 107, composed in Australia, demonstrates the best qualities of the Royal College of Music and has been called 'a landmark in Australian music':²⁸ instrumentation (ex. 15) and construction (although rather free) are perfect, and even if the movements are somewhat on the long side, one cannot speak of extremes. Harmony of fourths (see also pp. 421 and 759) can be found here too, in particular in the first movement the subject is strongly informed by the interval of a fourth:

Ex. 16



25 Peter Pirie, 'William Baines', in: *Mc&M* 21/3 (1972), pp. 39–40.

26 Roger Carpenter, *Goodnight to Flamboro'. The Life and Music of William Baines*, Bristol 1977, p. 89, Upminster ²1999, p. 67.

27 Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility and English Song*, Cambridge etc. ²1988, p. 340.

28 Rhoderick McNeill, *The Australian Symphony from Federation to 1960*, Farnham/Burlington 2014, p. 91.

Ex. 15: Fritz Hart, Symphony, Op. 107, MS full score, p. 12. State Library of Victoria, Melbourne; reproduced by kind permission.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for a full orchestra. The staves are arranged vertically and labeled on the left as follows: Fl., Pic., Ob., Cor. A., Bass. Ob., Clar., Viol., Vla., Cello, Dopp. Bass., Trup., Tromb., and Tuba. The notation is dense and handwritten, featuring various musical symbols such as notes, rests, beams, and dynamic markings. A large, sweeping slur is visible at the top of the page, extending across several staves. The paper shows signs of age and use, with some ink bleed-through and slight discoloration.

Hamish MacCunn (Greenock, 22 March 1868–London, 2 August 1916) was one of the first holders of a scholarship at the Royal College of Music and studied, among others, with Stanford and Parry before himself becoming a lecturer at the Royal Academy of Music and later at the Guildhall School of Music. For financial reasons he turned more and more to conducting (he conducted the first performance of *Tristan und Isolde* sung in English). As a composer, he was well-known especially for his operas, the tone poem *Land of the Mountain and Flood*, Op. 3 (1887) and the cantatas *Lord Ullin's Daughter* (1888), *The Moss Rose* (1885) and *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1888); he supposedly also composed a symphony, but this seems to have been lost (Holbrooke mentions it in the appendix of his book *Contemporary British Composers*, but not in its main body, which probably means that the composition had not yet been completed or may even only have been sketched at that point²⁹).

Cyril Bradley Rootham (Bristol, 5 October 1875–Cambridge, 18 March 1938) studied with Parratt and Stanford (among others) at St. John's College, Cambridge and at the Royal College of Music. It was already in Cambridge that he came to know Vaughan Williams, whose *The Poisoned Kiss* he premièred in 1936. Rootham became a university lecturer at Cambridge (among his pupils were Christian Darnton, Arthur Bliss, Arnold Cooke, Cecil Armstrong Gibbs, Basil Maine, Bernard Stevens, Percy Young, and Patrick Hadley, who completed the score of Rootham's Second Symphony) and director of the Cambridge University Musical Society, but never attained the professorate that during his time was held by Stanford, then Charles Wood and finally Edward Dent (with whom he had prepared the first English performance of Mozart's *Zauberflöte* in 1911). Rootham wanted his music to be taken seriously, without, however, understanding himself as an advocate of the *élite*; in fact, he often said: 'My music is like tomatoes, an acquired taste.'³⁰ 'His outlook is rather that music is our most complete medium of expression, and therefore deserves every man's whole-hearted devotion.'³¹ Hence, it comes as no surprise that Rootham never completely broke with tradition; his songs, chamber, choral and orchestral music all reflect the musical tradition with which he had grown up, that of Stanford, Mackenzie, Wood, Parry and others. His orchestral harmonies are not necessarily interesting, in spite of occasional bitonality and unexpected turns, and in his symphonies in particular, he often tends to repeat himself. His instrumentation largely follows guidelines set by Rimsky-Korsakov, who Rootham revered highly. This explains the use of various instruments that do not serve Rootham well in terms of originality, in particular the *expected* use of certain instruments or groups of instruments, with the

29 Josef Holbrooke, *Contemporary British Composers*, London 1925, p. 321; not pp. 285–288. – John Purser mentioned in a conversation with the author on 24 February 1998 that MacCunn had expressed his dislike of symphonies, among others to George Bernard Shaw. Cf. also Jennifer L. Oates, *Hamish MacCunn (1868-1916): A Musical Life*, Farnham/Burlington 2013.

30 Kenneth Shenton, 'Cyril Bradley Rootham', in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 35.

31 C. M. Crabtree, 'Introductions: XXI. Cyril Bradley Rootham', in: *MB* VI/9, London 1924, p. 268.

consequence that boredom sets in rather quickly. At best, the work gives the impression of being 'carefully' instrumentated. For woodwind players, Rootham sometimes wrote in a pronouncedly difficult manner, although it 'never fails to arouse the enthusiasm of orchestral players'.³²

The constructive elements are a little too obvious in the four-movement First Symphony in C minor (1931-32), in many respects comparable to Hamilton Harty's *An Irish Symphony* (1904, rev. 1915 and 1924). The work is dedicated to Rootham's fellow student Hugh Allen, Parratt's successor as Professor of Music at Oxford and Parry's successor as Principal of the Royal College of Music, and friend of numerous of the most important personalities of British musical life; the symphony's first broadcast performance was in 1936, in spite of its rejection by the music panel of the B.B.C. in 1933. Unfortunately, it does not have the qualities attributed to it by many authors – it is 'vigorous' rather than 'genial', as both maintained by Henry Cope Colles.³³ The first movement is formed in a distinctly school-like manner; it is difficult to identify genuinely unique stylistic features. Undoubtedly the best movement is the *Adagio*, a solemn-pensive march that is rather comparable to similar movements of well-known contemporaries in its emotional depth. The scherzo, which possesses some beautiful moments but seems to have no destination, carries certain similarities to Stanley Wilson's *A Skye Symphony* (1928), in which the corresponding techniques are, in contrast, able to find programmatical justification. The finale ultimately sinks into repetition instead of developing the material constructively.

Thomas Frederick Dunhill (Hampstead, London, 1 February 1877–Scunthorpe, 13 March 1946), a pupil of Franklin Taylor's (piano) and Stanford's at the Royal College of Music (he was befriended by Hart and Holst and later became a lecturer there himself), has been described as a 'fundamentally English' composer.³⁴ He was for ten years music director at Eton, where among his pupils was George Butterworth. Dunhill's reputation is mainly based on his chamber music and some of his songs. To his Symphony in A minor (1914-16) 'an attractive Irish accent'³⁵, careful instrumentation and melodic originality are attributed; the overall construction, harmony and development of the material, however, remain unsatisfactory³⁶ and old-fashioned.³⁷ Dunhill recalled in his diary on the occasion of the Belgrade première (which took place after a Patron's Fund run-through at the Royal College of Music):

32 *Ibid.*, p. 270.

33 Henry Cope Colles, 'Rootham, Cyril Bradley', in Henry Cope Colles (ed.), *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* VI (Supplement), London etc. 1940, p. 547.

34 Colin Campbell Macleod, 'Thomas F. Dunhill', in: *MM* XII/1 (1932), p. 6.

35 H. F., 'The Week's Music. Symphony of Thomas F. Dunhill', in: *ST* 5845, London 21 April 1935, p. 5.

36 Stephen Williams, 'Dunhill Symphony That Has Some Charming Melodies', in: *The Evening Standard*, London 27 April 1935.

37 Cf. Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and other Lectures*, London 1968, pp. 37–39.

‘Prince Paul (...) said he was delighted with the music. I was quite a long time in the room but had to ask him (in the middle) to excuse me to go on and bow again – as the audience refused to go – and kept cheering and shouting!! (I was called out 6 times). Then went back to the Prince’s room and resumed the conversation. The music went amazingly well considering all things. (...) A supper party at the Opera Buffet afterwards. I had a prodigious thirst. Everybody seems delighted with the symphony. I had a large laurel wreath from the *musicians* of Belgrade. Very gratifying.’³⁸

The last time the work was publicly heard at the Queen’s Hall in April 1935 in a concert conducted by Claude Powell, which also included works by Josef Holbrooke; after it Roger Quilter wrote on the work: “It is so finely made & conceived & so sincerity, also so cleanly scored; & without padding; a fine achievement.”³⁹ That the public reception was pronouncedly positive is not surprising given the strong retrospectiveness of the concert-going public in the mid-thirties, when Vaughan Williams’s Fourth and Walton’s and Rubbra’s First Symphonies could cause sensations. Dunhill’s instrumentation is indeed effective, but fails to lend genuine quality to the work.

‘The complete artist is not only a man, but includes also a certain percentage of woman and child: it is a truism that a great genius is in many respects a complete child; it is less generally recognised that he is also to a certain extent feminine. Cocteau has said that in every artist there is a woman, and the woman is always detestable. There is a lot of truth in that. Coleridge also has said somewhere that in every man of outstanding artistic capacity there is something feminine in his features. (...) The great artist should include everything – man, woman, child, invert [i.e. homosexual], Don Juan, prostitute, saint, sinner, god, devil.’⁴⁰

Thus wrote Cecil Gray, independent and still very similar to **Rutland Boughton** (Aylesbury, 23 January 1878–London, 25 January 1960). Boughton, however, in his booklet *Studies in Modern British Music* (1903, rev. 1905 and 1910) associated sexuality with compositional idioms, claiming that ‘a masculine expression ponderates in the Teutonic, and a feminine expression in the Celtic nature; while those whose works proclaim a mixed racial element are the same who attain most nearly to artistic bisexuality’.⁴¹ This line of thought led Boughton to classify Elgar as feminine, Parry as masculine and Vaughan Williams as bisexual. Indeed, Boughton was unambiguously mystically attracted to – and at the same time fearful of – Edward Carpenter, whom he considered one of the most humane people he had ever met.

38 Thomas Dunhill’s diary, 28 December 1922, quoted in Lewis Foreman, *From Parry to Britten. British Music in Letters 1900–1945*. London 1987, p. 125.

39 Quoted without reference in Lewis Foreman, CD booklet note to the Dunhill Symphony, Watford 2007, p. 5.

40 Pauline Gray, *Cecil Gray – his life and Notebooks*, London 1989, p. 186.

41 Rutland Boughton, *Studies in Modern British Music*. Quoted from Michael Hurd, *Rutland Boughton and the Glastonbury Festivals*, Oxford etc. ²1993, p. 245.

Boughton had studied at the Royal College of Music. Michael Hurd reports that Boughton 'was grateful to his teachers and in later years spoke affectionately of both Stanford who had tried to make him a virtuous imitator of Brahms, and Walford Davies who, through the study of Bach and Palestrina, had taught him "the spiritual value of counterpoint". In the long run, however, the most valuable lessons may have been those of St. John Dykes who, despairing of ever turning his hearty attacks on the piano into an orthodox technique, reached the sensible conclusion that he might do worse than get a thorough grounding in Bach fugues and Beethoven sonatas.'⁴²

Except for a proposition made to Boughton by his good friend George Bernard Shaw in 1934, there is presumably no real reason for Boughton having composed his Third Symphony in B minor, the first one without programmatic implications. The work is dedicated to Steuart Wilson, who had frequently performed at Boughton's Glastonbury Festival and had arranged some performances of the opera *The Lily Maid* at the London Winter Garden Theatre in January 1937. The symphony received its première performance on 1 January 1939 at the Kingsway Theatre on the occasion of Boughton's birthday. Adolph and Emil Borsdorf had put together an orchestra of 'London's finest players'⁴³, and the composer conducted the work in front of selected guests, among which were Ralph Vaughan Williams, Roger Quilter, Alan Bush and Clarence Raybould; the press, on the other hand, had not been invited.⁴⁴ After this performance, Boughton apparently did not make strenuous efforts to have the work performed again, and indeed the piece lay dormant until revived in 1983 by Edward Downes.

Completed in the autumn of 1937, the symphony would have been considered rather old-fashioned at the time, certainly not contemporaneous with Walton, Moeran or Rubbra. Still, it was full-blooded and vigorous, its thematic material suited to symphonic treatment. The spirit of Elgar may 'hover over the entire work; Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances* may intrude briefly in the working out of the third movement; the orchestration may have the *fin de siècle* opulence

42 Michael Hurd, *Rutland Boughton and the Glastonbury Festivals*, Oxford etc. 1993, p. 16.

43 Michael Hurd, CD liner notes to the recording of Boughton's Third Symphony, London 1989, p. 3.

44 A B.B.C. Internal Circulation Memo by Raybould reads: 'Last night I heard a private performance at the Kingsway Theatre of the above work, played by the L.S.O. under the composer. You will remember that on reading the score some weeks ago, I recommended its rejection. Last night's performance amply confirmed my poor opinion of it.' (B.B.C. Internal Circulation Memo by Clarence Raybould to D. M. and others, 2 January 1939. BBC Written Archives Centre, Boughton file.) A 'Personal and Confidential' note by Adrian Boult to Steuart Wilson had preceded this, reading: 'I am very sorry to say that Boughton's New Symphony has been judged unworthy of him and unworthy of a broadcast by two judges working independently, one on the staff and one not on. They compare it very unfavourably with the Deirdre Symphony, an earlier one, which is going to be put in a concert as soon as convenient and will be conducted either by Raybould or myself. From the report it appears that the new Symphony is really Boughton at his very weakest, "commonplace thematic material and no distinction of treatment". I am so sorry about it. You were good enough to translate Boughton's letter to me and make yourself the tactful postman, so perhaps you would be willing to do the same in the opposite direction, but if you would prefer me to write to Boughton I certainly will. We do feel, however, that there is no question of postponement in regard to the new Symphony; it just simply is not good enough.' (Adrian Boult to Steuart Wilson, 4 October 1938. BBC Written Archives Centre, Boughton file.)

of Richard Strauss – but what of that? Boughton's Third Symphony was the real thing; music that had heart, soul – a splendid affirmation of all the finest values of a bygone age.⁴⁵

Formally the symphony is traditional; the first, third and fourth movements are in sonata form while the slow movement is in ternary form. The tonal patterns involved in all four movements are also entirely traditional, as is the nature of the thematic material (especially the 'nobilmente' second theme of the first movement) – beginning in the first movement with the *staccato* four-note germ cell (not too dissimilar to Elgar's Third Symphony) from which everything else arises.

Ex. 17

Through his wife Adeline, Ralph Vaughan Williams became a relative of his colleague **Reginald Owen Morris** (York, 3 March 1886–London, 14 December 1948), 'composer, writer and academic teacher of the best kind'.⁴⁶ Morris's education was extremely solid: after attending Harrow, he went to New College Oxford and to the Royal College of Music, where he, in addition to other positions, was a professor for a number of decades, dying at the age of 62. He was famous for his knowledge of sixteenth-century counterpoint, and numerous famous composers passed through his school. Gustav Holst, an older colleague at the college, despised every kind of compositional textbook and principle – only *Contrapuntal Technique in the Sixteenth Century* (1922), Morris's first book, inspired his 'unbounded admiration'.⁴⁷ Holst was thus correspondingly pleased with a letter that he received from Morris: 'You made your 2 keys sound like one key, and how otherwise should it be? Any fool can write in Xⁿ keys and make it sound like Xⁿ keys.'⁴⁸

On R. O. Morris's concert works, Edmund Rubbra wrote: 'rather a self-conscious style, perhaps, but an invigorating one.'⁴⁹ And in 1949, on the occasion of Morris's death: '(...) the works (...) have a cultivated charm, a cleanliness of texture, a compactness of form, that are

45 Michael Hurd, *Rutland Boughton and the Glastonbury Festivals*, Oxford etc. ²1993, p. 267.

46 A. E. F. Dickinson, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1963, p. 67.

47 Imogen Holst, *Gustav Holst*, Oxford etc. ⁵1988, p. 100.

48 R. O. Morris to Gustav Holst, quoted from Imogen Holst, *Gustav Holst*, Oxford etc. ⁵1988, p. 143. Later Holst remarked: 'I felt secretly flattered when an excellent musician complained that my two-key writing won't do because it has no "wrong notes" in it.' (Quoted from *ibid.*, p. 143.)

49 Edmund Rubbra, 'New Music', in: *MMR* 76/875 (1946), p. 66.

models of their kind. R. O. never spoke of his works, and even to mention them was latterly the gravest of social indelicacies; yet one feels that it is precisely because he was a composer in his own right that he had such insight, such direct intuitions, in his teaching.⁵⁰ Morris considered his composition exercises to gain deeper insight into the formal aspects of music rather than genuine compositions. 'It is hard to say whether his abandonment of composition at about 50 was because of lack of public response, or simply because he had nothing to say.'⁵¹ Up to this point, important compositions nonetheless came into existence (for instance, the *Partita lidica* in F major for violoncello and orchestra or the *Canzoni ricercati* for strings, both 1931), in which Morris combined formal creative power with musical inventiveness.

The Sinfonia in C major (1928-29⁵²), dedicated to Arthur Bliss, bore, in sequence, the titles *A Little Symphony*, *Symphonia* and *Sinfonietta*, but it is in fact a four-movement sinfonietta or chamber symphony for modest forces and on a modest scale, both concerning intent and forms of movements (a gavotte can be found in place of the scherzo, a musetta in place of the trio), apart from the masterly built and instrumentated final Chaconne that basically inflates the modest frame of the small work (here already the trend that was to attain its full expression in the works of neo-classicism is encountered – see pp. 731ff.). The special concentration on the production of smaller symphonies is in any case striking in 1929. At least two symphonies, possibly more (Jacob's and Morris's), were either submitted or especially composed (see Brian's *Gothic Symphony* and Holbrooke's Fourth Symphony) for the competition on the occasion of the Schubert centenary.

The Symphony in D (1933), Morris's largest symphonic work, is also well-constructed. Like so many works of the time, the symphony is in three movements, and Morris knows precisely how to fill these. His formation of themes is very much to the point (see ex. 18), his developing of material solid and imaginative, and his formal construction convincing. The coda of the first movement ([R]) is developed as a canon, which leads the tightly developed movement to a final climax. Morris's knowledge of precisely when to close his movements is remarkable – he thereby avoids the excessive lengths of Carse, Sampson, Dunhill or Baines.

50 Edmund Rubbra, 'R. O. Morris: an appreciation', in: *M&L* XXX (1949), p. 107.

51 Henry C. Colles/Howard Ferguson, 'Morris, R(eginald) O(wen)', in: *Grove6* vol. 12, London etc. 1980, p. 591. Faced with such a comment, it is improbable that works attributed to Morris in contemporary publications were actually written – it is much more probable that they at the very most reached the planning stage. A Symphony in C major that was supposed to have been written in 1935 was as difficult to prove as the *Prospect* Symphony of 1938. However, given the frequent changes in title, it is perfectly possible that the Symphony in C major is in fact identical with the Sinfonia in C major of 1928-29. There is a work with the title *Prospect* from the hand of Henry Walford Davies, but it is a song cycle. Theoretically, the same could be true for the other work, i.e. that *Prospect* was the rejected title of the Symphony in D – 1935 and 1938 could then be the dates of the first performance or of publication or revision. The Bodleian Library also holds a sinfonia, submitted in 1937 as part of Morris's D.Mus. examination.

52 If Stephen Banfield's information is correct, i.e. that Gerald Finzi prepared a piano duet version of Morris's Symphony in 1926-27 and thus came to know Edmund Rubbra (Stephen Banfield, *Gerald Finzi. An English Composer*, London 1997, pp. 110–111), the composition date of either the Sinfonia or of the Symphony in D has to be changed.

(John) Anthony Burgess (Wilson) (Manchester, 25 February 1917–London, 25 November 1993) is best known as a famous writer; he was underestimated as a composer. His compositions were largely ignored, neither published nor performed, possibly or even probably because they were not given proper consideration by publishers – Burgess himself wrote on his work list: 'None of them [my compositions] is worthy of an opus number.'⁵³ Some of his chamber music, however, was recently revived and even recorded commercially. Of his orchestral music, hardly anything from the period prior to 1945 has survived, and certainly nothing of the symphonies mentioned below.⁵⁴

Burgess, son of a bar pianist and a dancer, had, similar to Brian, difficulty studying music, since in the industrial area of the Midlands it was hardly imaginable to earn a living from it. He thus had to acquire musical knowledge on his own initiative ('I was aware, and still am, that there is a lack of genuineness about the self-taught.'⁵⁵). In 1935 Burgess wrote a Symphony in E major with a two-hundred page score, on which he wrote:

'It was in E major, which meant that in the first and fourth movements I had to draw four sharps for every non-transposing instrument at the beginning of every page (one sharp for clarinets in A but five sharps for cor anglais, which I now patriotically called the English horn) and this was far more tiring than setting down the notes. It was a melodious work – the melodic gift is a property of youth, like the lyric one – but melodies are not required in symphonies, except in the slow movement. What are needed are pregnant themes, as in Beethoven. Reluctantly I began to listen seriously to Beethoven and to try to play his damnable sonatas. I examined those twelve-stave orchestral scores which are so visually unexciting compared with *Ibéria* or *Pétrouchka*. There was no doubt about it: old Ludwig knew how to make much of nothing. I was not mature enough to learn from the first movement of the *Eroica*, and the English symphony – Elgar, Vaughan Williams, the recently performed No. 1 in B^b minor of William Walton, a fellow-Lancastrian – was too much in my ears. My orchestration was Elgarian with Holstian condiments; from *The Planets* I stole a bass flute, six horns and four trumpets. The work was not, I knew, going to be performed any more than I was going to be elected to the Customs and Excise (a race of functionaries I hate but reluctantly admire), but I had to push on with it. (...) I learned, which was to quicken a growing stoicism, how physically taxing the composition of orchestral music is: sometimes four hours of scoring for one minute of sound. I learned, too, how thoroughly one has to imagine sonorities before setting down their bald symbols. And I realized how valueless the piano is as an aid to orchestral composition. A piano misleads, sets up the wrong sounds in one's head. I ceased to pity Beethoven, Smetana and Fauré for their deafness. Deafness was no great handicap: it shut in sonic realities against the intrusive and impertinent noises of the world.

53 Anthony Burgess, *This Man and Music*, London etc. 1982, p. 19.

54 Burgess's musical estate is presently housed in archives at McMaster University, Hamilton (Ontario), the University of Texas, Austin, and the Université d'Angers. I am very grateful to Paul Phillips, who has recently worked on Burgess's music.

55 Anthony Burgess, *This Man and Music*, London etc. 1982, p. 36.

What was the language of this symphony? A language altogether proper for a young man composing music in England in 1935. Diatonic, swift to modulate, inclined to the modal, Vaughan Williams harmonies, occasional tearing dissonances like someone farting at a teaparty, bland, meditative, with patches of vulgar triumph. Totally English music, hardly able to jump twenty-two miles into Europe. Here is a great mystery. Music is considered an international language, yet it tends to gross insularity. What makes English music English? An American conductor to whom I put the question said, cruelly: ‘Too much organ voluntary in Lincoln Cathedral, too much coronation in Westminster Abbey, too much lark ascending, too much clod-hopping on the fucking village green.’ We all know where to find, egregiously, these properties – in Vaughan Williams’s aspiring pentatonic violins, in the hushed treacle of *Gerontius*, in Holst’s *St. Paul’s Suite* and the E^b tune (six soaring horns) of his *Jupiter*. In the finale of my symphony six soaring horns give out a mixolydian melody in four-square three-two time, full of hope for the British future:

Ex. 19



The symphony, composed in 1937, is in striking temporal proximity to Dyson's other large-scale orchestral work, the Violin Concerto (premiered shortly after its completion in February 1942 and conducted by Adrian Boult). The symphony came out of fashion at the end of the forties, faced with the new concept of the 'Cheltenham symphonies' (see p. 735), and because of its late-Romantic meaning. It was not to be performed again for roughly forty years, by Richard Hickox and David Lloyd-Jones.

An essential quality of the three-movement work is a kind of charm and warmth, which it transports mainly by means of careful instrumentation. And as brilliant as Dyson's technique may have been, concerning form and inner cohesion, strong concessions must be made – one is somehow reminded of Arnold Bax. Clearly Dyson was more a master of the miniature than of the big symphonic arch, and his symphony is a clear 'lightweight' similar to Ireland's Piano Concerto. Dyson's quest for inner depth and honesty is no match for the brilliance of other symphonies written in 1937 (Moeran, Rubbra, Brian). Compared to Boughton's Third Symphony (also composed in 1937), however, Dyson's symphony has stronger ideas. William McNaught refers to the pronouncedly retrospective harmonic processes, although a comparison to César Franck in connection with his use of chromatics would be an exaggeration.⁵⁸ Although it has some charming ideas, the first movement remains somewhat episodic, containing awkward reminiscences of Smetana (*Šárka*). The slow movement takes up the best moments of slow movements in Sibelius's Third and Fifth Symphonies⁵⁹; other numerous hints of Brahms (especially the *Haydn Variations*), Strauss, Reger, Hindemith, Holbrooke (*The Birds of Rhiannon*), Butterworth, Moeran and especially Patrick Hadley's symphonic ballad *The Trees So High* (1931) are striking, but a convincing personality fails to emerge from behind the work. It is only in the finale that Dyson finds his own musical language, apparent in his *In Honour of the City* (1928) and other works; one always expects the entering of the chorus.

Craig Sellar Lang (Hastings, New Zealand, 1891–21 November 1971) received his training at Clifton College as well as at the Royal College of Music with Stanford and later became an organist and teacher; from 1929 to 1945 he was music director at Christ's Hospital in Horsham, Sussex. These days, however, he is mostly known for his *Tuba Tune* Op. 15 for organ (1929). In Sussex he also composed his Symphony in A minor in 1942; the composition's careful counterpoint anticipates Sorabji or Rubbra,

58 William McNaught, 'Dr. George Dyson's Symphony', in: *MTLXXIX* (1938), p. 14.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Ex. 20: [73] 1

while the formation and developing of themes, in spite of relatively interesting harmony, have a rather traditional flavour (see also Demuth and Carse).

Ex. 21

The instrumentation of the work, ending (like Vaughan Williams's Fourth and Walton's First Symphony) with a double fugue, is unfortunately not entirely on a par with the rest of the work (especially striking is the extensive use of the trombones).

In addition to Adrian Boult, Herbert Howells and George Thalben Ball, **Gordon Percival Septimus Jacob** (Norwood, London, 5 July 1895–Saffron Walden, 8 June 1984) was one of the long-standing lecturers at the Royal College of Music, teaching there for the first time as early as 1921. He joined the regular staff of the college only in 1926, however, after holding positions at Birkbeck College and Morley College, and stayed there until his retirement in 1966 as a professor of composition and instrumentation. His students included Malcolm Arnold, Elizabeth Maconchy, Bernard Stevens, Antony Hopkins, Imogen Holst (whose father was a man he esteemed more highly than Ralph Vaughan Williams⁶⁰) and pianist Colin Horsley. He was highly respected and very popular as an exceptionally modest professor (Malcolm Arnold recalled: 'Composition study with Gordon Jacob was

60 Lewis Foreman, 'Gordon Jacob in interview', in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 60.

marvellous. He let you do free work and would criticise it very thoroughly but in a way that encouraged you.⁶¹) However, together with R. O. Morris, the tacit authority at the Royal College of Music, he was not too much to the taste of some of his colleagues, who might have been called 'pompous' in direct comparison. Jacob did not receive appropriate recognition from his colleagues Dyson and Howells,⁶² perhaps because he was often considered a 'composer for occasions', or due to the fact that his extremely clear instrumentation, which always managed with the necessary but never indulged in sonorities for their own sake, was considered somewhat dry.

Jacob had studied with Stanford, Wood and Howells, and his fellow students included Leslie Heward, Ernest John Moeran, Constant Lambert, Ivor Gurney, William McKie, Patrick Hadley, Guy Warrack and Bernard Shore. Jacob reported on instruction with Stanford: 'I got on pretty well with Stanford, but he was very old-fashioned when I went to him after the First World War.'⁶³

Gordon Jacob clearly articulated his compositional credo in 1965:

'If I were asked to give advice to young composers it would be something like this: Obey the dictates of your artistic conscience and be bold enough to go against fashions and trends if that is where your inclinations sincerely lie. Remember that music should be enjoyed by composer, performer and listener, and don't forget that the musical public is not interested in means, but in results.'⁶⁴

Jacob's difficulty lay, his failure to adopt the instrumentational innovations of Schoenberg and Webern⁶⁵ notwithstanding (which made him the optimal consultant in orchestrational questions for numerous of his contemporaries, above all Vaughan Williams, yet denied him the degree of influence wielded for example by Richard Hall), in that his music was incapable of producing the lasting electrifying effect necessary to safeguard a place in the listener's heart. As outstanding as his control of the craft may have been, his music occasionally leaves the impression of being somewhat too calculated and hence ineffective, or even dry. Jack Allan Westrup commented that Jacob's 'flair of orchestration is stronger than his invention, genial and attractive though that often is'.⁶⁶ On Jacob's Concerto for Two Pianos (1969), William Walton wrote to Malcolm Arnold: 'D'you know, the trouble with the Gordon Jacob work is that it's just a bit too good.'⁶⁷ In 1946 Donald Brook cited

61 Malcolm Arnold, 'My Early Life', in: *Me&M* (October 1986), p. 8.

62 Michael Hurd used the word 'constipation' in connection with Dyson in a conversation with the author on 18 February 1993, but described Howells as 'gracious'.

63 Lewis Foreman, 'Gordon Jacob in interview', in: *BM* 7 (1985), p. 60.

64 Gordon Jacob, 'Personal View 5', in: *RCMM* LXI/3 (1965), p. 74.

65 Geoffrey Bush, *An Unsentimental Education*, London 1990, p. 140.

66 Ernest Walker, *A History of Music in England*, London etc. 1952, p. 359.

67 William Walton to Malcolm Arnold, c. 1970/71, quoted from Malcolm Arnold, 'My Early Life', in: *Me&M* (October 1986), p. 9. Malcolm Arnold had recorded a disc with the concertos for two pianos of Bliss, Jacob and himself for EMI in 1970.

Ex. 25



The work is far superior to Jacob's Second Symphony in C major of 1944–45 (one might note that both symphonies' central key is C), whose thematic material is not as consistently clearly organized as the former work's. The austere slow introduction to the first movement evokes a scenery not too dissimilar to that of Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony*, though the solo trumpet that opens the *Allegro molto* leads into a rather playful movement; the scherzo is equally frolicsome, while the slow movement takes up the austere mood of the symphony's slow introduction. Only in the final movement, 'Variations on a Ground', does the work display a clearly-constructed (though still somewhat playful) movement with 22 variations that show all aspects of Jacob's compositional and instrumental art, ending in a kind of apotheosis located somewhere between Bartók and Tippett.

At the first performance of her own First Symphony, **Ruth Gipps** (Bexhill-on-Sea, 20 February 1921–Eastbourne, 23 February 1999) herself played the English horn.⁷¹ She had taken up studying the oboe with Harold Shepley in 1938, and as an oboist also became acquainted with clarinettist Roger Baker, whom she married in 1942.⁷² As early as 1929, Gipps's first composition was performed at the Brighton Festival, when the composer was just eight years old. She had initially pursued the career of a pianist (she had already performed in public by the age of four), but then studied composition with R. O. Morris starting in 1937, also learning the craft from Herbert Fryer, Harold Samuel, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Arthur Alexander and Reginald Jacques (and later also from Gordon Jacob). Her opposition to contemporary music à la Schoenberg or Stravinsky doubtlessly dates from that time forward.⁷³ During her studies she regularly played in the Royal College of Music orchestra, usually conducted by Constant Lambert or Eugène Goossens.⁷⁴

Gipps's First Symphony in F minor Op. 22 (1942) has several movements, while the Second is a one-movement work (Richard Rodney Bennett, a pupil of Richard Hall's, would produce two early symphonies that closely mirrored Gipps's in terms of form). The First Symphony uses the traditional four-movement form, and the only remarkable feature in the work (which must be designated as not worth performing) is the dominance of the woodwind, above all the English horn(!) and the flute. In a letter to the author, Gipps wrote: 'As music it meant a lot to me at the time; it won the highest composition prize at

71 David Wright, 'Ruth Gipps', in: *BM* 13 (1991), p. 7.

72 *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

73 Ruth Gipps, 'A Personal Credo', in: *Composer* 54 (1975), p. 14.

74 Formerly Charles Villiers Stanford, and only in a performance of Bach's Mass in B minor, her fellow-student Malcolm Arnold took over the baton.

the Royal College in 1942 (one of the judges being Vaughan Williams);¹⁷⁵ then George Weldon said it was very lovely music and gave it the professional performance, and it was very well received, including getting a good notice from Eric Blom. After that the B.B.C. rejected it outright and refused ever to consider broadcasting it. Meanwhile Weldon went on to perform my 2nd. Symphony and Piano Concerto (twice each) and *Death on the Pale Horse* (four times), and the 1st. Symphony stayed in the cupboard!¹⁷⁶ The jealousy directed at the composer was so rabid that a member of the orchestra tried to wreck the performance by deliberately making obvious mistakes.

In a 'Credo' published in 1975, Gipps describes her stylistic philosophy, claiming that every piece of music must be inspired from 'higher place'.¹⁷⁷ 'It was no coincidence that a particular organisation promoting both *avant-garde* and "pop" was directed by a nihilist' is a statement typical for Gipps (in her view, *Avant-garde* and pop music were closely connected with 'total selfishness – not minding disturbing others with the noise', a phenomenon that was in turn associated with social grievances like drug consumption or violent crime¹⁷⁸). It is therefore hardly surprising that her music rarely sounds anything more than 'nice'.

Her position reflects a widespread return to traditional values, an orientation back to the nineteenth century, which is also often manifest in the orchestral forces of very many British symphonies. The Romantic or late-Romantic orchestra was commonly embraced, including the harp. Occasionally, elements of the Straussian (organ, oboe d'amore, saxophone, heckelphone) and, even more rarely, those of Stravinsky's orchestra (piano) are used. These special features were above all adopted by composers with an international orientation (Sorabji, Brian, Dieren, Foulds).

Norman Frank Demuth (Croydon, 15 July 1898–Chichester, 21 April 1968) was a pupil at St. George's Chapel, Windsor and a student at the Royal College of Music; later he was one of the most prolific professors at the Royal Academy of Music and an expert on more recent French music (Ravel, Franck, Roussel). Hugh Ottaway wrote in 1957 on Demuth's Viola Concerto (1951), 'it made an impression through its capable workmanship and sense of purpose but did not offer much of imaginative distinction. A certain monotony of

75 In a letter to the author dated 29 January 1993 Gipps wrote: 'I submitted it in pencil at the summer exam 1942 at the Royal College and won the Grade 5 prize with it, and then orchestrated it afterwards (doubtless during summer).'

76 Ruth Gipps to the author, 29 January 1993.

77 In the same letter to the author Gipps wrote: 'Of course as a real composer I have always been outspoken in condemning so-called serial music, so-called electronic music, so-called *avant-garde* music – all of them a great big con. A real composer has ideas, and uses craftsmanship to put on paper music that he or she hears mentally as a result of inspiration. A "composer" who does not believe in inspiration is not a composer. Real music satisfies both the mind and the emotions. This is an unfashionable view; never mind that – I know I am right.'

78 Ruth Gipps, 'A Personal Credo', in: *Composer* 54 (1975), pp. 13–14. After Gipps had written this creed, the National Association of Schoolmasters published a declaration in which 'pop culture' is specified as a basis for the lack of discipline at school (John Izbicki, 'Left Wing Accused of Subverting School System', in: *DT* 37151, 31 October 1974, p. 2).

rhythm and texture was acutely felt, especially in the opening section, which is a rather busy meditation whose *concertante* viola part is inclined to fuss and fidget.⁷⁹ Numerous of his compositions can be described in similar terms, and it is therefore not surprising that his works were quickly forgotten. Due to his comparably large output, many of his works were rejected by the B.B.C., among them the Symphonies in A and Nos. 4, 5 and 7 (some other works, though only rather few, were accepted). Colin Mason writes: 'Demuth's sympathies were with French music from Franck to Roussel, though his music stands apart from that of other English francophiles, avoiding the more superficial gallicisms. Its somewhat austere melody, in which definable tunes have little part, and its complex but subtle harmony displays a more general affinity with d'Indy or Roussel. His harmonic awareness was keen, and the corresponding range broad. Certain works, such as the *Tbrenody* [1942] for strings, are almost Franckian in their intense chromaticism; others, like the *Overture for a Joyful Occasion* [1946] have a Stravinskian brightness. In later works the harmony is rather hard and severe, with more bare 4ths and 5ths than 3rds, more major than minor 2nds. Demuth's form is often cyclic, and in many cases a large-scale work is evolved from one or two short motifs.⁸⁰ In contradiction to this is frequently simple melodic organization which in no case can be described (as by Mason) as 'somewhat austere' (possible evidence of this is that none of the works discussed here entered the work list⁸¹ of the Demuth entry in the *Grove*).

The Symphony in D minor, probably his first Symphony⁸² of 1930, was completed, as many later works, in Bognor Regis, where Demuth had settled and was employed as an organist, and was at its first performance in Bournemouth described in the *Bournemouth Times* as 'disturbingly dull'.⁸³ The first movement of the four-movement work is almost monothematic – a technique that one often encounters in Demuth. Furthermore, this movement, rather unusually for Demuth, is informed by distinct rhythmical features. An English horn solo structures the inner form of the slow movement while the final movement makes effective use of the 5/4 metre that Demuth so often employs.

The Symphony in A (No. 2?) (1931), like the Fourth Symphony (in D), ends with a final slow movement (perhaps only the missing second movement raises doubts about the formal qualities of the Symphony in A). As so often in Demuth, both works show some lack of imagination – the larger the work, one has the impression in the case of Demuth, the more conservative the instrumentation. Demuth's symphonic abilities improved only after the Second World War with his return to the four-movement concept and the use of a slightly larger orchestra. The first movement of the Fourth Symphony takes up the technique of the slow movement of the D minor Symphony, only this time it is an unaccompanied oboe that

79 Hugh Ottaway, 'Broadcast Music', in: *MT* XCVIII (1957), p. 78.

80 Colin Mason (revised), 'Demuth, Norman', in: *Grove6* vol. 5, London etc. 1980, p. 362.

81 *Ibid.*, p. 363.

82 Only the Fourth Symphony is actually numbered; the information of the key first sufficed. Since the First(?) Symphony was already in D, however, numbering became necessary.

83 Quoted in Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British composers*, London 1995, p. 187.

structures the movement rather than an English horn. The second movement, a scherzo in 2/4 time, also proves to be a sonata principal movement (like the first one) while the final movement, as is typical in Demuth, demonstrates his formal weaknesses. Four bars before the strongly rhythmic section, marked *Andante con moto* from [4], we find in the score the entry 'Brussels'; given Demuth's usual non-programmatical approach to composition, we can assume that it is probably a reference to the place of composition and nothing more.

Demuth's Fifth Symphony carries an enigmatic motto written in code. In the first movement, the importance of chromatics for Demuth clearly appears in a *tutti* downward movement:

Ex. 26

In the second movement metre changes between 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 are encountered frequently, and the final movement is planned as a set of variations whose thematic formation is informed by intervals of a second. Compared to the first movement, however, this finale is far too important, with the result that the proportions are not preserved within the work. A similar technique was sometimes employed by Josef Holbrooke (see pp. 570ff.), whom Demuth admired.

After complaining in 1905 that so many people heaped scores on him, Edward Elgar wrote in 1906 to August Jaeger: 'I was delighted to see Bell's works which he kindly sent to me: & I have done what I can in the way of recommendation but people are so difficile.'⁸⁴ **William Henry Bell's** (St. Albans, 20 August 1873–Gordon's Bay, Capetown, 13 April 1946) (First

84 Edward Elgar to August Jaeger, 26 January 1906. Percy Young (ed.), *Letters to Nimrod*, London 1965, p. 256.

Walt Whitman Symphony, performed in its entirety in 1906 under Manns at the Crystal Palace,⁸⁵ only one year before the conductor's death and towards the end of the great era of concerts at the Crystal Palace, is praised by Josef Holbrooke as 'excellent'.⁸⁶ That the piece nonetheless remained in obscurity once again furnishes proof of the ignorance of British music that had been written outside of Great Britain or by British composers who had emigrated. In 1880 Bell became a chorister at St. Albans and in 1893 a student at the Royal Academy of Music on a scholarship (studying with, among others, Alexander Mackenzie, Frederick Corder, Reginald Steggall and Alfred Izard). His talent was such that in around 1901 he also received unpaid lessons from Stanford, and in 1903 Bell was appointed professor of counterpoint and harmony at the Royal Academy of Music (he was, by the way, married to Helen McEwen, one of John B. McEwen's sisters). By 1893, he had taken over the organist's post at St. Albans, then in Oswestry (Shropshire), finally at the All Saints Church in London, and eventually took charge of the Festival of Empire 1911. In 1912 Bell emigrated to South Africa, where he became Principal of the South African College of Music, and in 1918 a music professor at Capetown University; his students included Hubert du Plessis and John Joubert. He introduced countless innovations, but nonetheless remained 'by conviction and idiom a member of the varied group of self-proclaimed British composers who grafted elements of impressionism on to a Germanically-rooted idiom to produce a music of national character.'⁸⁷ After his retirement in 1935, Bell's music, already forgotten during his lifetime (his compositions, for instance the tone poem *The Pardoner's Tale* (1898), formerly also performed by August Manns, or the *Walt Whitman* Symphony in C minor, Op. 8 (1899) received no further performances after his departure from England in 1912), was rediscovered in around 1948 (two years after his death) before it again sank into oblivion. Bell's fellow student Theo Wendt, dedicatee of the Second Symphony, writes:

He is a composer whose works musicians like Hans Richter, Artur Nikisch, Sir Thomas Beecham and Henry Wood were glad to conduct. (...) Bell's sincerity, artistic integrity and enthusiasm compelled the admiration of everyone. His command over the complexities of musical composition was astounding in a youth of 20, and his general culture was as astounding then as now – especially his knowledge and love of Elizabethan poetry. (...) During the years I was at the head of the Capetown Orchestra (...) it was my honour and privilege to give the first performances of several of his important compositions. There is no friendship in art and if I had not believed in the intrinsic value of those works nothing would have induced me to go to the trouble of performing them, because Bell's music is not easy. It is complex (in earlier years sometimes too complex), individual and does not deal with clichés. Although his music is warm and human, there is a fastidious austerity about it which disdains facile

85 The *Humoreske* (second movement) of the symphony had already been performed at the Crystal Palace on 29 April 1900.

86 Josef Holbrooke, *Contemporary British Composers*, London 1925, p. 256.

87 Lewis Foreman (ed.), *From Parry to Britten. British Music in Letters 1900–1945*, London 1987, p. 3.



Illustration 37. William Henry Bell, photograph.

appeal to the public. However, I was (and still am) convinced that Bell's music was worth fighting for.⁸⁸

Bell finished his *Walt Whitman Symphony* on 11 September 1899, dedicating it 'To my own folk' and heading it with three different mottoes by Whitman, the first and last taken from *Chants Democratic* (the words in brackets have been omitted):

'I was looking a long while for [Intentions,
For a clew to] the history of the past for myself
& for these chants – and now I have found it.
It is not in those paged fables in the libraries;
It is no more in the legends than in all else;
It is in the present – it is this earth to-day.'

'Come Closer to me;
Push Close, my lovers, & take the best I possess.'

'Muscle & Pluck for ever!
What invigorates life, invigorates death,
And the dead advance as much as the living advance,
And the future is no more uncertain than the present
And nothing endures but personal qualities.
What do you think endures?
Do you think the great city endures?
Or the teeming manufacturing state?
Away! These are not to be cherished for themselves;
They fill the hour, the dancers dance, the musicians play for them;
The show passes, all does well enough of course
All does well till one flash of defiance.'

A child of Victorian times, the symphony tries to find a new starting-point, but is in fact in the tradition of the great late British nineteenth-century symphonies, full of power and energy. The extensive first movement takes its time to present the main themes

Ex. 27



Ex. 28



88 Theo Wendt, 'W. H. Bell – the man and the Composer', in: *The Star*, Johannesburg 25 October 1938.

before the development begins ([D]), which is rather conservative in instrumentation, but strangely enough not as compactly orchestrated as the symphony to follow some eighteen years later. The development interestingly resembles that of Coleridge-Taylor's contemporary Symphony in A minor, although Coleridge-Taylor studied at the Royal College of Music and Bell at the Royal Academy of Music. It is, however, longer than Coleridge-Taylor's, too long to be of the right proportions, especially due to the far too restricted development of motivic material; the recapitulation (from [N]) is comparatively very short and is unable to reconstitute the opening ideas strongly enough.

The second movement, which had been omitted at the Crystal Palace première performance, is a set of variations. The last (9th) variation is a substantial waltz, which takes the place of a scherzo, with trio. This set of variations could easily be performed separately, although the thematic material

Ex. 29



is to a certain extent related to the first movement. It is doubtlessly the most inventive movement of the symphony, displaying Bell's abilities in thematic transformation and instrumentary refinement. The third variation is in Polonaise metre, thus already foreshadowing the danciness of the theme when transformed into the waltz. The fifth variation, entitled 'Rhapsody', features the solo violin in dialogue with the horns, clarinets and violas, followed by a scherzo variation *con molto Grazia*. Two *doloroso* variations slow the pace to make space for the Tempo di Valse, which indeed occupies nearly the second half of the movement (32 as opposed to 39 of 71 pages). This section probably underwent revision at some point, since some pages have been added without the page numbering having been adjusted.

The third movement, *Elegy*, is headed with the famous lines by Whitman also set to music by Hindemith and Hartmann:

‘When lilacs last in the door-yard bloomed,
And the great star early drooped in the western sky in the night,
I mourned ... and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets
Through day & night with the great cloud darkening the land,
With the pomp of the inlooped flags, with processions long & winding
With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices rising strong & solemn
Where amid these you journey,
With the tolling, tolling bells’ perpetual clang;
Here! coffin that slowly passes,
I give you my sprig of lilac.’

Bell gives no indication of whom he mourned, and his *Elegy* indeed makes hardly any use of brass; it is rather the horns and the woodwind that start to evoke a funeral march – although this is soon interrupted by an emotional outburst (bars 13–20). Only now, with the beginning of the tempo marked *Tempo di Marcia Funebre*, do the trombones begin to participate, though the cornets remain *tacento*, to be used later only very occasionally. The sombre mood lifts again (score p. 153; later once more, then marked *Strepitoso*, at p. 159), though the mood of the funeral march is never left. This movement indeed already foreshadows Vaughan Williams's *Dona nobis pacem* (1936), which also contains a number of Whitman settings.

In the finale Bell shows that he indeed was able to fill the sonata movement form with content in the best way possible for his time. The two themes,

Ex. 30



Ex. 31



as well as a further one that is only presented at the beginning of the development,

Ex. 32



are developed (from p. 182). The two main themes are also recapitulated (from p. 205) until a *stretta* (from p. 212) closes the movement. It is not an extraordinary, but a carefully built movement, the most interesting instrumental effects being a combination of low strings, low woodwind and horns (p. 178) and a bassoon/timpani counterpoint against oboes and strings (p. 186).

Bell's Second Symphony in A minor dates from 1917–18 and was revised in 1940. Compared to the near-contemporary works of Dieren and Baines, it is, concerning both instrumentation and harmony, relatively old-fashioned, with instrumentation that is often almost alarmingly compact (the favoured use of the trumpet is especially striking) – the 'austerity' mentioned above is also found in some of Elgar's works. The melodic characteristics are often lively and thrusting forward (Strauss and Bantock spring into mind), but cannot, however, hide some overly long passages. Formally, Bell uses the relative freedom taught to him by Corder and lets the music follow its own logic.

As is often the case with Bell, the harp only enters into the work in the carefully set slow movement,

Ex. 33: William Henry Bell, Symphony No. 2 in A minor, MS score, p. 57. University of Cape Town Libraries, W. H. Bell Library; all exx. are reproduced by kind permission of Peter Bell.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for a symphony. It consists of ten staves. The top two staves are for the strings, with dynamics like 'p' and 'pp'. The third staff is for the harp, with dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The fourth staff is for the trumpet, with dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The fifth staff is for the trombone, with dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The sixth staff is for the cello, with dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The seventh staff is for the double bass, with dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The eighth staff is for the piano, with dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The ninth staff is for the harp, with dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The tenth staff is for the cello, with dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

and then is rarely used again. The trumpet assumes a prominent role in the scherzo:

Ex. 34: William Henry Bell, Symphony No. 2 in A minor, MS score, p. 79. University of Cape Town Libraries, W. H. Bell Library.

III
Scherzo

♩ = 84

Fl. *p stacc* *p stacc* *pp*

Ob.

Clar.

Horn

Trumpets 1 & 2 *p cresc* *Solo* *mp. pronounced*

Tympani

Harp

Violins *cresc* *side*

Violas *stacc p* *side*

Celli *pizz* *side*

Double Basses *side*

This must all be played as delicately as possible so as never to hide the melody which appears in the off trumpet.
 This melody shines by quite clearly heard without the trumpet players having to play too loud or consciously!
 The wood wind especially must play pp.

Bell's Third Symphony in F major was composed immediately after his Second Symphony; both works were premièred together on 25 September 1919, but in the Third we find that Bell's technique has developed considerably. The instrumentation is clearer and more transparent than in the preceding work.

Ex. 35: William Henry Bell, Symphony No. 3 in F major, MS score, p. 35. University of Cape Town Libraries, W. H. Bell Library.

Handwritten musical score for William Henry Bell's Symphony No. 3 in F major, page 35. The score is written on ten staves, with instrument labels on the left: Flute (Fl.), Bassoon (Bass), Clarinet (Clarinet), Saxophone (Sax.), Bassoon (Bassoon), Horn (Horn), and Trumpet (Tr.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 31 and 32. The second system contains measures 31 and 32. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings like 'p.' and 'mp.'. There are also some handwritten annotations and markings, including a circled '31' and '32' at the beginning and end of measures, and a circled '31' at the bottom left of the page.

Through less strongly marked melodic characteristics, the structuring of the movements is this time rather obtuse – there is hardly any really concise thematic material, and what little there is is fairly motivic and thus developed motivically. The first movement is particularly affected in this respect (the recapitulation is abridged and only deals with the main theme).

Ex. 36

Andante tranquillo

Much more clearly structured are the scherzo, the slow movement designated as *Elegy* (which is quite strongly animated through upbeat semiquaver triplets and the use of the considerable group of percussion) and the short finale. The latter is in the form of a set of variations on one theme,

Ex. 37

Allegro

whose character is shaped by three falling 7ths, with a final fugue.

The prominence of trumpets in Bell's F minor Symphony⁸⁹ of 1932 is not nearly as strong as in the Third Symphony, although the harmony has not won much freedom. The instrumentation, however, has improved even further and has become clearer. Thanks to this greater flexibility, the work hardly suffers from excessive lengths.

The extensive slow introduction of the first movement again uses 5/4 time, and numerous memorable themes are presented that are of some importance for later developments:

Ex. 38

Lento

89 Bell ended the numbering of his symphonies with the Third Symphony. His fourth is actually the *South African Symphony*, and the F minor Symphony is his fifth.

Ex. 41: William Henry Bell, Symphony in F minor, MS score, p. 61. University of Cape Town Libraries, W. H. Bell Library.

II

Allegro (♩ = 72) *Schizzo.*

Viol. I
Viol. II
Vla.
Viol. I
Viol. II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Trp.
Tromb.
Harp

Allegro

p, *pmax*, *p*, *acc*, *pizz*, *arco*

Ex. 39



Ex. 40



The increases with which Bell structures his movements are much more distinct than before, as is the development of the thematic material (for example first movement, [I]). Simultaneously, however, more and more empty phrases recur (first movement, from [B] to [C], repeatedly in the fourth movement), but never become inadmissably long. Formally, the movements are still built very clearly, though also very conservatively; this too is probably a result of his studies with Corder (in the first movement, for example, the repetition of the slow introduction is a structuring element).

The scherzo seemed to be a real speciality of Bell's – his best capabilities are again detected here (ex. 41). The trio of the movement is now in 2/2–3/2 time, with the syncopic 3/4 recurring only with the return of the scherzo.

The slow movement demonstrates Bell's soloistic treatment of woodwind especially well. As the movement progresses, however, Bell returns to his former bad habits and produces a compactness that robs the movement of any special qualities it may have had. Things are different in the finale, on which Bell apparently spent a lot of time; although it is quite conservative, it displays a carefulness that is otherwise rather rare in Bell's symphonic output. Unfortunately, however, the instrumentation in the finale is again sometimes regrettably unimaginative and the composition in blocks over-present.

Adam von Ahn Carse (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 19 May 1878–Great Missenden, 2 November 1958) studied (as did Bell) with Corder at the Royal Academy of Music and was also a professor there, but his main achievement lies without any doubt in his promoting the history and music of eighteenth-century orchestral music – he even edited a whole series devoted to overtures by Arne, J. C. Bach, Handel and many more.

Carse's first two symphonies (in C minor, 1904, and in G minor, 1907) were intended for a much larger audience than the later ones, but both were first performed in collaboration with the Royal College of Music, even though he had hardly any real connection with this institution. Both were composed after his studies at the Royal Academy of Music (1893–1902), and after them we have a gap of twenty years before Carse returned to the symphony again. This hiatus was very probably caused by the duties he had to fulfil during his time at Winchester College (1909–22) before returning in 1922 to the Royal Academy of Music,



Illustration 38. Adam von Ahn Carse, photograph.

where he remained until 1940 as a professor of harmony and counterpoint.

Carse's First Symphony received several performances in the beginning of the century, not only at Queen's Hall where it was premièred at a Patron's Fund Concert in 1906 and repeated in 1911, but also at Bournemouth and Eastbourne (we are reminded of George Lloyd's early successes in mostly the same places). It is, as we will realize with most of Carse's symphonies to follow, very carefully constructed and instrumentated, irrespective of any eventual real invention. The rather conventional first movement, mainly characterized by two themes, gets started properly only after two run-ups. The last movement is similarly conventional, while the slow movement, beginning with muted strings *ppp* and with wandering harmonics (E \flat major-D \flat major-A major), displays some of Carse's strengths, especially in the development of single motifs.

Ex. 42



Ex. 43



Ex. 48



progresses in development even further, so that only the recapitulation can be stated for certain (from 4 [O]).

The second movement, the scherzo, often changes from 9/8 metre to 12/8 and back – here more than in any other movement, the conductor's skills are required to make the movement hold together (the timing that Carse has given ensures that the movement will stay intact, i.e. a very fast tempo has been prescribed, as the tempo marking *Allegro vivace* seems insufficient for the interpretation). The slow movement is a set of variations, the theme

Ex. 49



being derived from the second theme of the first movement. The first half of the movement is mainly characterized by the interchange of soli, tutti and strings; only later is more diversity permitted and also used in the treatment of thematic material.

Carse's Third Symphony in F (1927), the first in three movements, was first performed at Bournemouth and is, as so many of Carse's later orchestral compositions after the first two symphonies and since his activity as a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, written for a comparatively small orchestra; all of his later works were conceived mainly for beginners and student orchestras and were generally described as 'light, tuneful and individual, and ideally suited to their purpose as teaching material'.⁹⁰ At the heart of the entire symphony is a 'motto-phrase'

Ex. 50



that fails to gain much importance, although the two outer movements (both in sonata form) begin with it. The middle of the three movements, *Andante semplice*, fairly usual for Carse, is planned as a theme with variations, the last of which (12 [D]) is the scherzo (*Presto*) before the movement ends *Andante, come prima*.

90 Lyndesay Langwill, 'Carse, Adam (von Ahn)', in: *Grove6* vol. 3, London etc. 1980, p. 830.

Carse's Fourth Symphony in C major was completed in 1941 and written for almost the same forces as the Third Symphony; the quite strongly contrapuntal F major middle movement is, however, ternary this time, with a strongly rhythmic *Vivace* middle section. In contrast to the Third Symphony, the music is even more uninteresting – plenty of empty noise without real substance. The theme of the second movement is as follows:

Ex. 51



A similar technique of theme construction by sequencing can be found in the 'motto-phrase' of Carse's Fifth Symphony in E \flat (1945). The work is again formally excellent; its outer movements, both in sonata movement form, are effectively developed, although it cannot be denied that Carse has missed the connection to formal innovations established a long time ago. On the other hand, the work recalls Gordon Jacob's Second Symphony, which was completed the same year.

Another pupil at the Royal Academy of Music was **Godfrey Sampson** (1902–21 June 1949), who had previously attended Westminster School. He had entered the Royal Academy of Music in 1920, was awarded the Goring Thomas Scholarship in 1924 and was Mendelssohn Scholar in 1927. In 1926 he was appointed sub-professor of harmony and composition and in 1932 became a professor of harmony and composition there. He lived in Claygate in Surrey, was organist in the parish church and taught at Milbourne Lodge School when his duties at the Academy permitted. Sampson supported a young musician named Robert Bruce Montgomery (1921–1978), whom he met when the latter was still in his early teens (Montgomery was later to become a film composer of some renown⁹¹). On Sampson's Symphony in D Op. 1 of 1926, which he wrote at the age of twenty-four, Richard Capell, in a criticism of the second performance at a Promenade Concert on 25 August 1928 at Queen's Hall, conducted by the composer, wrote: 'The symphony is fluent but derivative music. Mr. Sampson remembered Elgar's A \flat symphony⁹² and the *Enigma variations* far too well. Still, the music was agreeable to hear, and the Promenaders gave the hopeful young composer every encouragement.'⁹³ The work, which requires extensive forces, shows careful counterpoint, although the identical formation of several themes by derivation from triads seems somewhat old-fashioned and verges on dullness at times. Most interesting is the middle movement, planned as a set of variations containing a march, the scherzo and the

91 Cf. David Whittle, *Bruce Montgomery/Edmund Crispin. A Life in Music and Books*, Aldershot 2007.

92 Benjamin Britten wrote in 1935 on this work: 'I swear that only in Imperialistic England could such a work be tolerated.' (Diary dated 5 September 1935; quoted after Humphrey Carpenter, *Benjamin Britten*, London 1992, pp. 68–69; this entry was not published in Mitchell's edition of letters.)

93 Richard Capell, 'A Student's Symphony', in: *MMR* LVIII/694 (1928), p. 300.

slow movement (variations II, III and V) – a technique also to be found in George Lloyd's First and Twelfth and Ruth Gipps's Second Symphony.

It has frequently been reported that **Eric Fenby** (Scarborough, Yorkshire, 22 April 1906–Scarborough, 18 February 1997), Delius's long-standing assistant and amanuensis, and later a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, destroyed most of his own compositions. Among the casualties was a symphony;⁹⁴ his only surviving compositions are the film score for Hitchcock's *Jamaica Inn* and the overture *Rossini on Ilkla Moor* (1938), a kind of musical entertainment for orchestra based on a Yorkshire folk song.

Only twice in the estate of **Gerald Finzi** (London, 14 July 1901–Oxford, 27 September 1956) is there any mention of symphonies. Finzi, most prolific in his song cycles based on words by Thomas Hardy, a number of choral compositions (*For St. Cecilia* Op. 30, 1947, *Intimations of Immortality* Op. 29, 1936–38/1949–50, *Magnificat* Op. 36, 1952/56, *In terra pax* Op. 39, 1954/56 and the unfinished *Requiem da Camera*, 1924) and a clarinet and a violoncello concerto (1948–49 and 1951–55, respectively), conceived several further works, many of which were never completed, amongst them a violin concerto, an orchestral serenade and a piano concerto. The symphony sketches probably date from the 1940s:⁹⁵

Ex. 52 (transcription by Stephen Banfield)

Stephen Banfield conjectures that the symphony, had it been written, would have been dedicated to Arthur Bliss, a close friend of Finzi's.⁹⁶ Finzi also numbered Edmund Rubbra, Herbert Sumsion, Ralph Vaughan Williams and R. O. Morris among his close friends, but especially Howard Ferguson, who remained a dear friend for the rest of his life (from 1926 on), in spite of some sort of mutual misunderstanding that caused Ferguson to discard Finzi's letters written after 1947.⁹⁷

94 Eric Fenby, *Delius as I knew him*. London/Boston 1981, p. xvii.

95 Stephen Banfield to the author, 30 November 1995. Cf. also Stephen Banfield, *Gerald Finzi. An English Composer*, London 1997, pp. 463–464.

96 Stephen Banfield, *Gerald Finzi. An English Composer*, London 1997, p. 235.

97 Cf. *Letters of Gerald Finzi and Howard Ferguson*, ed. by Howard Ferguson and Michael Hurd, Woodbridge 2001.

Edric Cundell (London, 29 January 1893–London, 19 March 1961) was a pupil at the Haberdashers' School and the Trinity College of Music, where he later became a professor of composition. Following a stint as an orchestral musician at Covent Garden, he became Principal of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and was very active as a conductor. Thomas Russell reported:

'Edric Cundell once spoke to me of the feeling of deep respect with which he always approached the professional symphony orchestra. "I regard an orchestra as a body," he said, "and I am quite over-awed by the sum of musical knowledge possessed by that body. In almost every single branch of music to which I might refer, there would be found one member, at least, whose knowledge exceeded mine."⁹⁸

Cundell's Symphony in C minor Op. 24 was not available for scrutiny.

Christopher Montague Edmunds (Small Heath, Birmingham, 26 November 1899–Whitley, Yorkshire, 2 January 1990),⁹⁹ a composition pupil of Bantock's, was Bantock's successor as Principal of the Birmingham and Midland Institute School of Music, 1946–56. He was also the initiator and organizer of the Bantock Society in 1946. His three symphonies apparently did not excite equal interest; the most often performed of them was the Second Symphony. The First Symphony of 1936, actually called Symphony for Strings, was ostensibly premièred by the Birmingham String Orchestra at Queen's College Chambers. Eric Blom wrote in his review in the *Birmingham Post*, after admitting that while the work was not without its charms, it was nonetheless somewhat derivative, borrowing elements from some of Edmunds's predecessors, notably Elgar:

'If the Symphony has its faults, they seem to be mainly formal. Each of the four spacious movements is a freely-shaped thing, it is true, but there is a dangerous variety of pace about them. If each were an independent piece, these fluctuations would make admirable contrasts, but as they are set side by side the contrasts tend to cancel each other out. [...] So, substituting tempo for colour, with Mr. Edmunds's Symphony. His slow movement, for instance, would stand out with much more distinction if the other three did not also fall into slowness there and there.'¹⁰⁰

This technique was indeed to remain a constant feature of Edmunds's symphonies, but Blom fails to notice that the first movement is not in fact a 'freely-shaped thing' at all, but a fully developed sonata principal movement. The division of the strings into many more sections than usual (violins I–IV, violas I–II, violoncelli I–II, cb) also makes for an improvement of texture, though not necessarily colour. Perhaps the most precise of themes

98 Thomas Russell, *Philharmonic*, Melbourne etc. 1953, p. 63.

99 Cf. Michael Jones, 'Against All Odds: The Life and Music of Christopher Edmunds (1899–1990)', in: *BM* 21 (1999), pp. 15–28.

100 Eric Blom, 'Philharmonic Midday Concert. Mr. Chris Edmund's String Symphony', in: *Birmingham Post*, 26 June 1937.

Ex. 55



The epilogue deviates from what we know of Bax or Vaughan Williams; it is much more majestic, perhaps even pompous (the thematic material again largely derived from the first movement), but eventually proves to be an altogether less inventive work. Edmunds himself thus comes off as a less imaginative composer than either Bax or Bantock – though his craftsmanship is indeed admirable.

The Third Symphony, which is not dated, was probably premièred in 1949 by Edmunds's own orchestra at the Birmingham and Midland Institute School of Music. It is more or less along the same lines as the Second Symphony, with the short recapitulation of the first movement leading into the slow movement, in which the strings play *con sordino* throughout. The thematic material again derives from the first movement:

Ex. 56



In the third movement Edmunds entirely refrains from the use of changing tempi, but the thematic material and its development still cannot be called an improvement over the Second Symphony. The symphony again closes with a (this time rather short) Epilogue, ending *Maestoso*.

Alexander Brent-Smith (Brookthorpe, Gloucestershire, 8 October 1889–Gloucester, 3 July 1950) was a pupil at King's School in Worcester and became director of music at Lancing College from 1913 to 1934, where he taught Geoffrey Bush and Peter Pears. Brent-Smith's scores are currently not available for scrutiny; all information given in this book was kindly supplied by Robert Tucker, conductor of the Broadheath Singers. Brent-Smith was quite well-known as a lecturer, a profession that may have shaped his music somewhat: like Tovey, Hall, Rootham, Carse and Demuth, Brent-Smith produced works that are rather uninspired, and although perhaps carefully built, by no means innovative.

Brent-Smith's First Symphony in G minor was written in 1924 and received numerous revisions, similar to Bliss's *Colour Symphony* or Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony* from roughly the same period of time. Like the aforementioned works by Bliss and Vaughan Williams, it too was premièred at the Three Choirs Festival in 1924, but only its last two movements were played; the complete symphony was premièred just one year later in Eastbourne, where Brent-Smith was active as a conductor from time to time.

Five days after the concert, he wrote that ‘Dan Godfrey will try to squeeze Symphony in A minor into Easter programme. Gordon Bryan put it upon his list for next season.’¹⁰³ But that hoped-for performance did not take place, and it was his Third Symphony in C minor Op. 46 that was eventually to reach Bournemouth, when Richard Austin conducted its first performance in March 1940. The Third Symphony was to a large extent revised either before or after the performance, both concerning the forces required and the denotation of movements.

Ralph Walter Wood (London, 31 May 1902¹⁰⁴–28 March 1987) was a businessman by profession; apart from a couple of lessons with Jacob, Walthew and Howells, he was self-taught as a musician. He wrote his ‘First Symphony’ in G minor Op. 22 (whether he wrote another one is unknown) as early as 1923; it was later annihilated and is presumably lost.

The Symphony in G minor of **Percy Whitlock** (Chatham, 1 June 1903–Bournemouth, 1 May 1946) is somewhat of a rarity in several respects. First of all, Whitlock is largely known for his works for organ and his church music, although he did compose a considerable amount of orchestral music, published by Oxford University Press. Second, his Symphony reflects his predilection for the organ – it is a kind of Sinfonia concertante for organ and orchestra, with a virtuoso organ part organically incorporated into the orchestral body. Whitlock was assistant organist at Rochester Cathedral, 1921–30, from 1930 to 1935 director of music at St. Stephen’s, Bournemouth and from 1932 until his death borough organist at the Municipal Pavilion there. Conductor Richard Austin, who had premièred the symphony Whitlock wrote in 1936–37, was a close friend of his. The symphony is Whitlock’s most substantial orchestral composition, but he wrote several other works for orchestra before and after it, including a concert overture in 1934 entitled *The Feast of St. Benedict*, followed by some suites for orchestra, the *Wessex Suite* of 1937 and the *Holiday Suite* of 1938–39. The *Elegy* movement from the symphony was also published separately, and forces similar to those for the symphony are required for a *Poem*, also of 1937.

The work is generally rather traditional with respect to conception and harmony, although with many colouristic effects in matters of orchestration. It is interesting to see how important a role both the two harps and the celesta have, a function only slightly secondary to the organ’s. Still, the organ’s prominence becomes more and more pronounced both in a kind of cadenza in the first movement (bars 76–86) and even more so in the slow movement, the *Elegy* mentioned above and composed in 1936. The movement is for strings and organ alone, the organ taking up initial material from the strings; solo strings also take up the thematic material, and it is only long after the middle of the movement that the strings and organ are eventually not only combined, but reconciled, though the movement

103 Quoted in Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British composers*, London 1995, p. 143.

104 On exactly the same day fellow-composer Billy Mayerl was born.

remains intimate well until the end. This kind of exchange between organ and orchestra remains to some extent extant in the scherzo, with the additional effect of the baritone saxophone supporting the wind group. Again, the movement is very traditional formally, but with attractive instrumental effects. The finale has the unorthodox and yet traditional form of a 'Toccatà & Fugue', which gives the organ plenty of opportunities to shine. It is somewhat difficult to compare the first movement, where the organ is well incorporated into the orchestral sound (and where in one moment an Elgarian trait may be found), and the remaining movements, where the organ is indeed treated more as a 'concertante' instrument rather than as a member of the orchestra. The movement is considerably extensive, concluding (from [G]) with an impressive fugue that wraps up the entire work.

Maurice Blower (London, 27 September 1894–Petersfield, 4 July 1982¹⁰⁵) gained early musical experiences as a choirboy at All Saints Church, Margaret Street, London. After working at the National Bank of India, he joined the East Surrey Regiment in 1916 for the First World War; he was taken prisoner at St. Quentin in 1917 and while detained learnt to play the clarinet and then taught fellow prisoners. After the war he initially studied at the RAF School of Music with Henry Walford Davies, later with Harold Darke and then went to Queens College, Oxford, where he took a doctorate by 1933. It is thought that Blower's Symphony in C, which came to light only in 2005 and was 'tried' in Havant on 8 December 2006, was started around 1934 although the score was not completed until 1939. Blower settled in Surrey where he taught locally and was actively involved in the Petersfield Festival. He wrote many choral works and works for chamber ensembles and string orchestra, but the symphony is his only orchestral composition on a grand scale. The work opens with a 'bold arresting fanfare for trumpets.'¹⁰⁶ A motto-theme links the four movements. A 'perky, 3/4 time *scherzo* [...] buzzes along quite gently for the most part',¹⁰⁷ a 4/4 *Andante* provides a complete contrast as trio. Most of the *Lento moderato* third movement 'is couched in the style of a slow serious march built around two expressive, yearning melodies. The introductory bars for solo horn and tonally unsettled strings have a touch of quiet menace about them that finds a stronger urge in the middle of the movement.'¹⁰⁸ Peter Craddock feels 'a strong nautical air to the finale with opening brass fanfares and scurrying strings soon making way for a jogging hornpipe dance.'¹⁰⁹ In total the work is described as faintly echoing 'Elgar, Debussy, the Russian Nationalists and the English folk-scene, but never anything that can be pinpointed as mere parody or pastiche. The themes have individuality as well as a certain

105 Information kindly supplied by Thomas Blower and Will Kemp, 19 August 2008.

106 Sandra Craddock/Peter Craddock, 'Maurice Blower (1894–1982) Symphony in C (1939) (Havant Symphony Orchestra: 29 March 2008)', in: *Bms news* 116 (2007), p. 231. The living dates were corrected by Blower's grandchildren.

107 *Ibid.*

108 *Ibid.*

109 *Ibid.*, p. 232.

nostalgia and the working-out and symphonic cohesion are remarkably assured. [...] It is an inspired piece of creativity and confidence'.¹¹⁰

Richard Hall (York, 16 September 1903–Horsham, Sussex, 24 May 1982) admired Delius, Scriabin and Cyril Scott,¹¹¹ and later Schoenberg and Berg. He had studied with Bairstow for a time, but apparently did not gain much from it¹¹² – he was mainly 'self-taught'.¹¹³ Nevertheless, Hall went on to become a professor at the Royal Manchester (now Northern) College of Music (where he had Thomas B. Pitfield as colleague). Here he taught Alexander Goehr, Richard Rodney Bennett, David Wilde, David Gow, Harrison Birtwistle, Arthur Butterworth, Ronald Stevenson, Elgar Howarth, John Ogdon, Peter Maxwell Davies and others (Birtwistle, Davies and Goehr were commonly referred to as the 'Manchester Group' in the 1960s). Similar to Walter and Alexander Goehr, Hall attached great value to Schoenberg and his twelve tone compositional technique, but the admiration is hardly reflected in his own works. Initially his music was strongly shaped by the prevalent organ repertoire (late Romanticism, Bach), but his later works (since 1960) moved in the direction of the Hindemith school (see pp. 731ff.). Alexander Goehr reported: 'He (...) sought balance, order and expressive moderation.'¹¹⁴ Like so many composition professors' work, Richard Hall's suffered from his professorial activities – his own creative development was a casualty of his teaching duties, and his style remained essentially moderate. He indeed composed no 'tunes',¹¹⁵ as the first theme of the first movement of his First Symphony shows,

Ex. 57

but he was nevertheless indebted to the ideas of previous eras. His first completely preserved symphony, Op. 34, dates from 1933 and uses, like symphonies of Vaughan Williams and others, the five-movement conception with a (here chamber-musically set) prologue and epilogue as structuring features. In the prologue, the material of the first movement is already presented in its entirety so that the *Molto Moderato* at first seems to be a development until the actual development begins.

110 *Ibid.*, p. 230.

111 Hall had a distinct religious orientation and was in his later years very active at the Unitarian church in Horsham.

112 Geoffrey Thomason, 'Richard Hall (1903–1982)', in: *BM* 6 (1984), p. 47.

113 According to the composer's widow, the late Ella Hall, in a conversation with the author on 30 June 1993.

114 Alexander Goehr, 'Richard Hall: a memoir and a tribute', in: *MT* CXXIV (1983), pp. 677–678.

115 According to the composer's widow, the late Ella Hall, in a conversation with the author on 30 June 1993.

The slow movement is central to the work and was valued by the composer most of all; it was in fact the only movement in the symphony to be published. Hall wrote in the score: 'The mood is that of a peaceful sunset in late summer, evoking pleasant memories from the more quiescent aspects of nature. – Thematically, the material consists of a serene, quiet background of slowly-moving harmonies through which short, interwoven phrases on solo woodwind come and go; secondly a clarinet-and-bassoon theme, towards the middle of the piece. After this has been treated, and the first section has returned, the two are brought into closer relation as the music draws to its close.' The harp, used throughout the work rather conventionally, was deleted in the printed version of the movement, and other parts were thinned out. The following movement shows the vaguest construction in the whole work – it was probably this shortcoming that led Hall not to publish the symphony in full.

In April and May 1940, Hall sketched a Symphony in B minor Op. 101. The full score was unlocatable, but according to the composer's widow, the symphony had definitely been written.

Having studied chemistry at the University of Melbourne and music at the Melbourne Conservatory of Music (with Fritz Hart), **Hubert Clifford** (Bairnsdale, Victoria, 31 May 1904–Singapore, 2 September 1959) went on to study with Charles Herbert Kitson and Ralph Vaughan Williams at the Royal College of Music in London starting in 1930. He obtained his D.Mus. there and befriended Mátyás Seiber and Benjamin Frankel along the way. From 1941 to 1944 he was B.B.C. Empire Music Supervisor and became a professor at the Royal Academy of Music in 1944. He was 'music advisor' at London Film Productions in 1946 (commissioning, for example, the music for *Anna Karenina*, *The Winslow Boy*, *The Fallen Idol*, *The Happiest Days of Your Life* and *The Third Man*); however, he gave up this post in 1950 to be able to devote more time to composing.

Clifford's only symphony, in E♭, written in 1938–40 and delivered as part of his D.Mus. examination, received, in spite of its fine qualities (it was extremely highly recommended by the B.B.C. several times), only few performances. On the first of the four movements, the composer wrote:

'The first movement (*Moderato con anima* in 6/4 time) is conceived on a fairly spacious scale and is for the most part epic in character. In formal method, it makes use of both the normal classical procedure as well as those of post-Sibelian symphonists. One divergence in form is the reversal of the normal order of presentation of the subjects in the recapitulation. The order ABC in the exposition becomes CBA in the recapitulation with the added difference that A in the exposition is only fragmentary, but in the recapitulation attains a final, coherent form. This expansion takes place of the usual coda.'¹¹⁶

116 Hubert Clifford, Notes in the score of his Symphony (1940).

The lively first movement swings out fully. It is reminiscent in places of Walton or of the beginning of Bantock's *Celtic Symphony* ([18]) and also serves as the beginning of the over-long slow (third) movement, in which Clifford's free tonality¹¹⁷ only occasionally solidifies into something clear and distinct. The movement

‘follows, broadly, a ternary plan, the middle section of which contains expressive fugal writing based on two subjects. In this movement, the composer aims at symmetry of form by using the same lateral inversion of the order of subject as in the first movement. Several of the principal themes of the movement are closely related and in the natural growth of the music are gradually translated from one form to another. The composer, in fact, uses thematic cross-references from one movement to another, sometimes intuitively, sometimes consciously. There is, however, no attempt to utilize a central subject or “motto” theme. The writing in the slow movement is for the most part of an intimate type, and in mood ranges from the pastoral tranquillity of the opening to the dramatic intensity of the climaxes.’¹¹⁸

Other influences besides those already mentioned are Hindemith (through harmony of sequences of tritones) and Ravel, and to cite a specific work, Dukas's *L'apprenti sorcier* (second movement, [21], use of the piccolo).

‘The second movement (Scherzo in 3/4 time) is very lightly scored and ranges through various moods usually associated with the Scherzo. The grotesque, the whimsical, the ironic and the freakish all have their place. An interesting point is the introduction, in the middle section, of a Passacaglia based on a subject in irregular, wayward, “swing” rhythms. This subject first appears in a slightly grotesque way on two bassoons.’¹¹⁹

The instrumentation of the scherzo is in fact distinctly chamber musical and in this way foreshadows the evolution of the symphony in the following twenty to thirty years.

‘The finale (*Allegro molto*) opens with an energetic and rhythmic subject on the 'cellos and basses. This subject sets the character of the whole movement which is one of driving energy, suppressed and overcast in the earlier parts – often sombre and intense – but sweeping on with an unflagging momentum until it attains fulfilment in the final peroration. The exultation of this peroration is enhanced by the introduction of the central theme from the first movement, which is square-hewn in equal note values, and given out in three-part harmony by the trumpets in their highest register. This trumpet theme is super-imposed over the end of the movement with quite brilliant effect.’¹²⁰

With its extremely vigorous surge forward, the finale takes up the tradition of Walton

117 Clifford's free tonality is somewhat reminiscent of Edmund Rubbra's Second Symphony.

118 Hubert Clifford, Notes in the score of his Symphony (1940).

119 *Ibid.*

120 *Ibid.*

Ex. 58

(First Symphony) and Vaughan Williams (Fourth Symphony) and, similar to Rubbra, leads harmonically into the post-war era. Pentatonics, harmony of fourths and the extensive use of tritones yield the progressive harmony, and the rhythmic are even more characteristic than Walton's.

Ex. 59

W. R. Anderson wrote on the première performance in 1945:

'The first movement made me think of a bracing sea-voyage, with no very close occupation for the mind. There is a stylish scherzo, but the slow movement seems to wander – to my ear, rather wearisomely – in some mid-European by-paths now by-passed by most composers. It made a good end, though. In a work not very homogeneous in style the composer has a safe grip on rather too consistently strident orchestration.'¹²¹

And Neville Cardus commented:

'There is, in fact, rather too much technique in it; the scoring is often prolix and diffuse, low-pitched, and stuffy and restless. (...) Many of the ideas in this tightly-packed score probably look better on paper than actually they sound. Like most of the present-day composers, Mr. Clifford must always be busy with his instrumentation. There is not enough simplicity. The detail crowds out the general portrait at times. But there is no denying the energy, the individual thought-processes, and the individual and truly musical feeling. In spite of the occasional turbulence and the contemporary harshnesses it is a romantic symphony, with a beautiful slow movement. The freedom of the part-writing is interesting; Clifford verges now and again on polytonalism without ever leaving the anchorage of a key-centre. There is a sensitive resolution of the theme of the adagio with a 'cello solo, but the expected coda is delayed by more and more technical parentheses. A little pruning will put air into the score, and bring into relief the abundance of striking musical conceptions.'¹²²

121 W. R. Anderson, 'Round about Radio.' [Hubert Clifford's Symphony, in: *MTLXXXVI* (1945), p. 83.

122 Neville Cardus, 'Symphony by Australian', in: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 February 1946.



Illustration 39. William Beaton Moonie, photograph. Kindly donated by the Moonie estate, Mrs. Annot Lighthouseart.

William Beaton Moonie (Stobo, Perthshire, 29 May 1883–Edinburgh, 8 December 1961) studied with Frederick Niecks in Edinburgh (Mus.B. 1902) and went on the Bucher Scholarship to Frankfurt, where he studied with Iwan Knorr, Lazzaro Uzielli and Willi Rehberg. When he returned in 1908, he had further tuition in composition from Donald Francis Tovey and became a good friend of Erik Chisholm's. Tovey, who had performed some of Moonie's orchestral music, was described by Moonie as 'a remarkable musical genius whom Scotland did not really appreciate.'¹²³ In 1910 Moonie accepted a teaching appointment at the Edinburgh Provincial Training College, Moray House, and became in 1915 Music Master of Daniel Stewart's College, where he had been a pupil himself. In 1919 he held the same post at George Heriot's School,¹²⁴ then at Watson's College, Queen Street Ladies' College and finally in 1948 at Dean College; in 1945 he was appointed examiner at London College. After his father's death in 1923, he took over Mr Moonie's Choir, with which he performed many of his choral arrangements of Scottish folk music as well as some of his other choral works. In addition, he was (although not a member of the faith) conductor to the Edinburgh Catholic Choir until 1948.

Moonie never felt quite at home in Edinburgh, even though he was eventually awarded an honorary doctorate in music there. By 1937 he said: 'Edinburgh may not be dead, but it is frozen.'¹²⁵ And Erik Chisholm gave Moonie the following advice: 'If you want to make your name, don't attempt it in Scotland. Work abroad first, then you'll be accepted as a success!'¹²⁶ In Chisholm's opinion, Moonie's *The Weird of Colbar* was worthy of being the Scottish national opera *per se*, and 'should be to Scotland what Smetana's *Bartered Bride* is to Bohemia.'¹²⁷

Moonie composed little chamber music (his First Piano Quintet was premièred in 1919), but lots of piano music and songs, a bit of stage music, a few orchestral works, and two symphonies, the second of which was extensively revised after its composition, and due to cutting away the first movement, even changed in title to Suite (we are reminded of Holbrooke's and Arkwright's symphony-suites¹²⁸). The Symphony in A^b major (undated) remained as it was, although it had been extensively revised and dramatically cut down. Three thematic fragments

123 'W. B. Moonie's Half-Century In Music. New opera, inspired by Scott theme, is on way', 1949, incompletely annotated Glasgow press-cutting in the collection of Annot Lighthouseart.

124 It may be mentioned that George Heriot's School retained a reputation for music: in 1977 Havergal Brian's Fourth English Suite was premièred there.

125 'Edinburgh Man's Praise For Glasgow. "The Red Wine Of Life"', in: *Daily Record*, Glasgow 20. February 1937. Collection Annot Lighthouseart.

126 'W. B. Moonie's Half-Century In Music. New opera, inspired by Scott theme, is on way', 1949, incompletely annotated Glasgow press-cutting in the collection of Annot Lighthouseart.

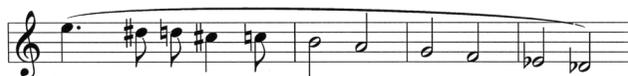
127 *Ibid.*

128 In the 1912 *BMS Year Book*, a composition by Marian Ursula Arkwright is listed as the *Japanese Symphony* in A minor; in the 1920 *Annual* the same piece is called a Suite. Concerning Holbrooke's Suite *Hommages* see p. 570.

Ex. 60



Ex. 61



Ex. 62



open the first movement, and the elaboration of material shows Moonie's love of canonic treatment. The exposition deals mainly with one subject,

Ex. 63



and two further subjects are added in the development (from [10]) – Moonie writes in the score: ‘The composer here [[15]] has adopted the device of employing two second subjects simultaneously. That in the Strings [and bassoon] should have predominance at first, but after a few bars the theme in the woodwinds [flutes and horns, later more]

Ex. 64

should receive equal prominence.¹²⁹ The lengthy recapitulation (from 2 [19]), although considerably cut down, still occupies quite a bit of space. In the final version, however, Moonie manages to restore the proportions of the movement.

The lively scherzo in 4/4 offers high-quality contrapuntal condensation. In this respect

129 William B. Moonie, *Symphony in A major*, MS score, p. 32.

the composition's quality, quite comparable to Chisholm's, demonstrates Moonie to have been Tovey's pupil. The trio (c. [4]) seems to calm things down a bit, but this is only very short-lived, and the scherzo soon returns again (c. [8]) – though not literally: because the movement is developed rather organically; a strict sectioning of the movement is hardly possible, and obviously not in Moonie's interest anyhow.

The third movement, a *Lamento*, again grows mainly from one motif

Ex. 65



that does not even entirely disappear in the middle section ([7]–[12]). The finale, finally, is the most conventionally conceived movement, but nonetheless full of energy and life. The two themes

Ex. 66



Ex. 67



are developed properly (3 [12]–2 [21]), and the second theme is in fact more important in the development. In the recapitulation it is ([22]) converted to *alla marcia*, slowly leading into the coda (from [27]) – the motif of the *Lamento* returns several times throughout the movement.

Most of Moonie's compositions are in one way or another linked to the folk music tradition, such as for example his Second Symphony, the *Deeside*, composed in 1923-26 (apparently within 15 months, as indicated by Moonie in the score) and premièred in 1931 in Montréal. After the first performance of the work, Moonie considerably changed its shape, cutting down the forces required and eliminating the first movement, 'The Standard (the Braes of Mar)'. In the parts, the title 'symphony' was crossed out and replaced by 'suite'. At the top of the score we find the following annotation from the composer:

'Fired by an enthusiastic admiration for the melodies of Aberdeenshire, the composer has conceived the idea of writing a symphony of four movements, each of which is

based on a tune associated with that country. The title *Deeside* is used in a poetical sense rather than an actual one. (The last movement has *two* Strathspey melodies incorporated in it.) The main idea is to picture different moods and scenes. A description of each movement will help towards a realisation of the composer[']s intentions.

I [originally II]: The beautiful plaintive melody which graces Byron's verses is here employed to form a slow movement. The composer has handled it with all the tenderness and reverence he is capable of.

II [originally III] The witching tune *O gin I were where Gadie rins* is here introduced to form a most unconventional Scherzo. The Gadie is a placid little stream but the composer's desire is to typify in mood all Scottish rivers, from the "wimplin' turn" to the foaming torrent. Throughout however there is a sense of humour and high spirits of a mischievous kind.¹³⁰

The last movement is, amongst others, described thus: 'The scene is a typical Highland Dance', although the ecstasy evoked resembles a dervish rather than a Scotsman. In this last movement themes from the former movements are recapitulated before the dance briefly reappears, and 'in a perfect delirium of violent movement the Symphony comes to an end. A most unconventional Symphony perhaps but still *A Deeside Symphony*.'¹³¹

Imaginably, after the deletion of the first (very probably in sonata movement form) movement, the conception of a symphony was very much in doubt, especially with regard to the other movements. The slow movement, now promoted to the first, is in fact another sonata movement, a secondary thought derived from the main thematic material:

Ex. 68



The main theme permutes in the development and is recognizable only in the very short recapitulation (from [S], opened with a violin solo). The scherzo contains two short trios ([C]–8 [D] and [E]–[F]) and sports a recapitulation and a coda. The finale is in fact exactly as described above in conception, a kind of *perpetuum mobile*, with a recapitulation proper (from [J]) and only a very short period of calming down (from [K]), which is then swept away by the cello solo; the finale takes up the first theme of the movement again.

Ex. 69



130 William B. Moonie, *'Deeside' Symphony in A major*. MS score.

131 *Ibid.*

The two folk songs are in fact very similar in mood and rhythm; they are hardly distinguishable.

The deletion of the original first movement entirely distorts the proportions of the symphony proper, and the lack of considerable recapitulation in the now slow first movement does not improve the situation from the symphonist's point of view. In fact there was not much choice other than to rename the work (although the title has been changed only in the parts).

William Brocklesby Wordsworth (London, 17 December 1908–Kingussie, Scotland, 10 March 1988) (see also pp. 751f.) was one of the few Scottish composers to achieve renown around this time – and is today much better known than Moonie. Wordsworth had studied with George Oldroyd and Donald Francis Tovey, and Tovey thought so highly of him that he wanted to teach him outside of the university turmoil in Edinburgh. It was from Tovey that Wordsworth inherited 'the conviction that a cultivated sense for form and style that he had learned from the classics was more important than originality or experimentation. (...) To his music adheres a little sad, brooding note that in this sense pays its tribute to the tradition of the name Wordsworth. Although his work requires respect rather than love, one must show recognition to his sincerity.'¹³² His view 'that "the best in music is that in which there is a balance between intellect and feeling" seems', as Marius Flothuis writes, 'to be more or less openly shared by most English people. He is a composer of a great number of works, mostly for chamber ensembles. They are written with artistry, though not free from a certain academic tendency.'¹³³ Wordsworth was awarded the first prize at the Edinburgh International Festival in 1950 for his Second Symphony Op. 34,¹³⁴ but as a symphonist he was already rather successful with his First Symphony Op. 23 in F minor (1944):

I quite like my First although I sometimes think it is a bit long-winded. It was first performed by the B.B.C. Northern Symphony Orchestra conducted by Julius Harrison. Some people liked it, others thought it dreadful. The performance was rather under-rehearsed and it is a noisy piece so that put a few people off. Also, I think it would be more efficient in a big hall rather than in an enclosed studio, which tends to give it a rather congested sound. It has never had a public performance in Great Britain. The first thing that one writes is never quite right, but I don't disown it altogether.¹³⁵

Both formally and concerning the sound language, the work proves to be carefully executed but unspectacular. Each of the movements is formed according to the textbook; melodically, a special penchant for steps in the interval of the 2nd can be realized:

132 Eric Blom, 'Zwischen vierzig und fünfzig', in: *Musica* 12 (1958), pp. 408–409.

133 Marius Flothuis, *Modern British Composers*, Stockholm/London 1949, p. 55.

134 Wordsworth had already in 1941 won the Clement Prize for his First String Quartet Op. 16.

135 John Dodd, 'William Wordsworth: A 75th Birthday Tribute', in: *BM* 5 (1983), p. 75.

Ex. 70: Second theme of the first movement

Ex. 71: First theme of the second movement

Ex. 72: First theme of the third movement

The thematic material links the individual movements exceptionally closely – in the finale themes from the first and the third movements are recapitulated, and the main theme of the second movement, as apparent above, is derived from the second theme of the first movement. It is interesting to see that it is in his assured and imaginative handling of larger forms that his individuality emerges most strongly. Although his music is predominantly diatonic, it is also remarkable for its continuity and close thematic organization. Still, there are reminders of Brahms (due to the tuition from Tovey) both in the textures of the orchestral works and in the disciplined handling of lyrical and Romantic material.¹⁵⁶

136 Cf. Hugo Cole, 'Wordsworth, William (Brocklesby)', in *Grove6* vol. 20, London etc. 1980, p. 530.

b) Attempts of expansion

After the First World War musical England was quite content to accept Elgar as the last and mightiest of the symphonic dynasty. However, symphonism had been disrupted by the war, and the necessity to start afresh with new symphonic ideas and visions was apparent. Still, the influence of a behemoth like Elgar upon younger composers was bound to be considerable. In this situation the first great symphonies of Bax, Vaughan Williams and Bliss came into existence – all of them in part evading Elgar's influence via the composition of 'programme symphonies' (though in a much broader sense than usually associated with the term). In the following decades the diversity grew steadily, and in 1946 Arthur Bliss wrote: 'We have no school of composers at the present time, but a very large number of individual creative artists.'¹³⁷

Frank Howes considered Howells, Rubbra, Bridge, Bush, Ferguson, Dyson, Jacob, etc. part of the 'academic tradition' in England by virtue of their top-notch teaching skills.¹³⁸ At the same time, 'academic' could also be used to describe their approach to the symphonic form (with some exceptions: Howells and Ferguson, for example, eventually avoided the form of the symphony altogether.) But since Sibelius's influence (see pp. 447ff.) was colossal and only a handful of composers – like Bridge – (see pp. 754f.) tried to blaze new trails, strict systematics do not really work. In these pages we will address only those composers who did not completely turn away from academic tradition but distinguished themselves by slightly expanding upon it (not through a simplification of the same – see pp. 731ff.).

In 1921 **Cecil Armstrong Gibbs** (Great Baddow, Essex, 10 August 1889–Chelmsford, 12 May 1960) was described as a 'meteor of modern music'.¹³⁹ He had certainly been well-schooled along the way, starting out as a pupil in Winchester and going on to become a student at the University of Cambridge (Trinity College, where Vaughan Williams had also been), where he studied with Dent, Rootham and others, and later a master pupil of Herbert Howells's¹⁴⁰ at the Royal College of Music.

Apparently Gibbs had already written a symphony before 1930, preserved, alas, solely in Steuart Wilson's memories (Wilson had been a fellow-pupil of his in Winchester): the work had indeed been accepted by the B.B.C., but was then removed from the programme at short notice. Gibbs might have sworn off composing symphonies after this experience, but he was not deterred¹⁴¹ – three symphonies followed, all of which have meanwhile been recorded commercially.

137 Donald Brook, *Composers' Gallery*, London 1946, pp. 25–26.

138 Frank Howes, *The English Musical Renaissance*, London 1966, p. 160.

139 'Allegro', 'A Meteor of modern music', in: *MM* I/8 (1921), pp. 9–10.

140 Christopher Palmer, *Herbert Howells – A Centenary Celebration*, London 1992, p. 186.

141 Cf. Steuart Wilson, 'Dr. Armstrong Gibbs', in: *The Composer* 5 (1960), pp. 9–10.



Illustration 40. Cecil Armstrong Gibbs, photograph by Herbert Lambert, c1922. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

Also Gibbs's E major Symphony Op. 70 (1930-31) follows the form of the traditional four-movement symphony, but was so inspired that Adrian Boult had a comparably high opinion of it. Gibbs's mastery of outer form was exceptional; he used diverse techniques to develop the material. The opening theme of the first movement

Ex. 73



is not treated in the development (from [G] to 2 [Q]); only the second and third themes appear here:

Ex. 74



Ex. 75: 3 [F]

Nevertheless, the introductory theme introduces the recapitulation as a fugue, and the second theme recurs ([T] 3 and [V]) only in varied form.

The work's dreamy slow movement, which in its use of strings and solo instruments somehow reminds one of Walton and Delius, respectively, is indeed Gibbs's very own invention and unites the traditional ternary form with the sonata form. The final movement also proves to be in sonata form – this time with the special feature that two of the movement's themes are presented only in the development and are also developed only here; the movement also leads to a return of the introductory theme of the symphony ([Q] 5) (ex. 76).

Frank Howes wrote of the first performance:

It (...) is a work of spontaneous vigour as well as of the lyrical beauty that one would expect from so sensitive a song-writer. The latter quality is naturally most apparent in the slow movement, which may well be compared to a summer day. The scherzo which follows is animated but thundery, and shows in its most logical form the composer's method of writing, as it were, across the orchestra, which he also employs in the two more substantial movements. The opening *allegro* develops no extended melodies, but unfolds the implications of concise themes by pitting groups of instruments antiphonally against each other. Similarly in the finale, which is a march that leads ultimately to the defiant reiteration of the opening theme of the symphony, the expression is crisp, and the scoring again such as to extract as briefly as possible the utmost significance of the subject.

The symphony is in E major, and while it makes free use of passing dissonance and psychologically expresses a frame of mind that is consonant with the temper of the times, it is founded in tradition. It is modern in that it indulges no grand manner, but goes directly to its point; it is English in that it equally avoids Teutonic long-

Ex. 76: Cecil Armstrong Gibbs: Symphony in E major Op. 70. MS score, p. 119. Royal College of Music, London: MS 4856; reproduced by kind permission of Jane Hill.

a tempo

Fl
Ob
Cl
Clar
Fag
Horn
Trp I
Trp II
Tuba
Timp
Bd
SD
Cym
Hh
Cel
Vn
Vla
Celi
Bass

a tempo

Sept 1931
Armstrong

Edmund Rubbra's (Northampton, 23 May 1901–Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, 14 February 1986) lessons in Oxford on the *Wohltemperirtes Clavier* must have been tremendous, as reported unanimously by Hurd and Pike.¹⁴⁴ Rubbra, who in many respects resembles Roussel (although he never wrote for the stage nor composed any programmatical instrumental music), had been brought to music by Cyril Scott, no doubt in Oxford (he later composed *Prelude and Fugue on a Theme by Cyril Scott* Op. 69, in 1950).¹⁴⁵ Rubbra studied with Holst and Evlyn Howard-Jones, a friend of Scott's, in Reading, and then, following Holst's advice (himself from 1919 to 1923 professor there), went to the Royal College of Music, where he studied with Vaughan Williams ('he wasn't a good teacher'¹⁴⁶), Goossens, Ireland, Gardiner and above all R. O. Morris (whose music he describes as 'an extraordinary combination of, say, Purcell and Vaughan Williams'¹⁴⁷). Morris's influence wiped away that of virtually every other teacher (except Holst's); fellow students were Maurice Jacobson (later chief of the Curwen publishing house and for a long time employed by the B.B.C.), Gordon Jacob, Howard Ferguson, Ian Whyte, Gerald Finzi and Constant Lambert.

Rubbra elaborated upon his philosophy of music in an interview:

'I use classical forms in my music, but each time I do I think I am able to give them a new personality. I use them instinctively, never as patterns to which I must shape my thought. Frankly, I don't give form much thought at all. I never know where a piece is going to go next.'¹⁴⁸

'I don't mind being called "traditional" for that expresses continuity. But if "reactionary" were used (really, I can't recall that word being used about my music) I should be indignant, for my music is not the result of reaction on my part, but an effort to build on basic principles as I see them. The real reactionaries are the revolutionists who react against tradition! (...) Well, there is one characteristic of much contemporary music that bothers me. I feel the emphasis on colour and timbre to be an unfortunate thing because that is the most ephemeral part of music really. If a colour is implicit in stronger lines underneath, then very well; but so often today it is treated as too important a thing in itself. I don't deny that colour has fascination, but for me, it's no substitute for the real substance of art. You can't abstract the green from a leaf and still pretend the leaf exists. (...) Those who thus accuse me [of "unimaginative" orchestration] obviously have a different viewpoint from myself. There are many others who maintain my orchestration is completely appropriate. Colour is not something I can put on; it either is or is not in the ideas themselves. All my orchestral ideas are conceived in a certain orchestral colour, and this is part of the fundamental conception of them. For instance, the second subject of the first movement of my sixth symphony came to me clothed in woodwind colour. I

144 Conversations of the author with Michael Hurd and Lionel Pike in February 1993.

145 Donald Brook, *Composers' Gallery*, London 1946, p. 92.

146 Edmund Rubbra in conversation with Ralph Scott Grover 1980. Quoted from Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, p. 10.

147 Edmund Rubbra in conversation with Ralph Scott Grover 1980. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 12.

148 Edmund Rubbra in Murray Schafer, *British Composers in Interview*, London 1963, p. 67.



Illustration 41. Edmund Rubbra, 1931, photograph.

could not have conceived it any other way. To go further in decking my themes out would, for me, introduce an element of distraction. Some critics may call the texture of my music dense or heavy – grey.¹⁴⁹ Perhaps I like grey. People sometimes look at Rembrandt paintings and exclaim: “Yes, but how dark it is!” What they don’t realize is that this very darkness was part of Rembrandt’s vision. You couldn’t brighten them up without distorting the idea behind them.¹⁵⁰

‘The texture of my music, whether symphonic, for chorus, or for solo instruments, is largely melodic and contrapuntal in conception. This, coupled with the unmetrical rhythm characteristic of early polyphonic music, makes it necessary that each part of the texture should be given minute attention. The plastic phrasing of each individual part, however seemingly hidden is of the utmost importance.’¹⁵¹

Rubbra refers here even to the influence of Tudor polyphony, which he had been studying with R. O. Morris and (to a smaller extent) Holst. Instrumentation must of course be subordinate to the counterpoint, which led Edward Lockspeiser to compare his instrumentation to the block architectures of Bruckner.¹⁵² At the same time, harmony and tonality were allowed to

149 Cf. Harold Truscott’s detailed discussion in ‘Edmund Rubbra (b. 1901) and Michael Tippett (b. 1905)’, in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*. Vol. II, Harmondsworth 1967, p. 182.

150 Edmund Rubbra in Murray Schafer, *British Composers in Interview*, London 1963, pp. 69–70.

151 Edmund Rubbra, quoted in Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, p. 28.

152 Edward Lockspeiser, Review of Edmund Rubbra: Symphony No. 3. Score, in: *M&L* XXIV (1943), p. 188. – Elsewhere Lockspeiser wrote: ‘He is chiefly a symphonic composer (...) and lays out his works on broad, austere

recede into the background, which is why inner cohesion sometimes threatens to fall apart – only later (in the Fifth Symphony and with the revision of the Second Symphony) did Rubbra realize the importance of a tonal centre for structuring his works. In his important, but little-known article on Rubbra's compositional techniques, Harold Truscott wrote:

'It is to be expected, since he is primarily a contrapuntal composer, that his music, symphonic, instrumental or vocal, will be mainly melodic, but what is not so easily foreseen is that it is his melody which provides the tension necessary to release the very real drama of his symphonies, coupled with his use of tonality, and a number of other features. (...) The tension of his melodic writing is produced at times partly by a use of bitonality, a device underlying a rather deceptive surface. That surface appears to show that Rubbra's music will sometimes remain harmonically static during a fairly long passage, and then suddenly shift to another harmony. In fact, as a rule the move has been coming gradually throughout the apparently static passage, which is not static at all. There is a friction between the contrapuntal lines of his music, which gradually pull against each other melodically and in tonal direction until they topple to the new harmony; and this makes for a very potent drama, although it is not a classical sonata drama. I give an instance, from the scherzo of the Second symphony:

Ex. 80: [27] 2

4153

lines. Some of the developments in his symphonies are remarkably virile and convincing, and he is able to judge novel orchestral effects with extraordinary sureness. Like the music of Maconchy, his work is on the whole inclined to be turgid, and, if I may express a purely personal impression, possibly too consistently serious in outlook. One craves a lighter, lyrical touch in their music to relieve the tense ponderousness. But Rubbra's ability to build up a climax is magnificent, and he is one of the few young composers sufficiently big to comprehend symphonic structure. One hopes that, as Rubbra develops, his fantasy may become more varied and that there will not be that anxious, hard-driven feeling at the bottom of his work which is apt to mar so many fine qualities.' (Edward Lockspeiser, 'Trends in Modern English Music', in: *MQ* XXVIII, 1942, p. 10.)

153 Harold Truscott, 'Style and orchestral technique', in Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Edmund Rubbra: Composer*. Rickmansworth

As in some of Holst's works, here two keys are set against each other (in this case A minor and C# minor). And as R. O. Morris said of Holst (see p. 372), in Rubbra's case the two keys are also heard as one rather than two.

Rubbra's entire symphonic output aspires to simplification, or rather to concentration – with special regard to traditional elements¹⁵⁴ (for this reason Rubbra's First Symphony can be found on pp. 453ff., the Fourth Symphony on pp. 736ff.).

Ex. 81



The first two symphonies were often condemned by critics for their complexity; Rubbra responded by revising the Second Symphony. In the Third Symphony (1940, see pp. 428ff.) there is, according to Ernest Walker, a 'new simplicity' and a firmer discipline.¹⁵⁵ Here, as in the Fourth Symphony (1942), the polyphony seems to expand with ease. 'The music grows by a steady process of accumulation, each idea generating without effort its successors. Rubbra pays no regard to current fashions; he is content to remain himself. Dissonance of a purely modern kind may be found side by side with traditional harmony, though tradition is often illuminated by a new and refreshing approach. (...) We are conscious everywhere of a purposeful determination, and of a passionate absorption in the very stuff of music.'¹⁵⁶ Wilfrid Mellers understands the 'much greater clarity and (*apparent*) simplicity' of No. 3 as a testimony both to the maturity of the composer's spiritual resources and to his more completely successful solution of his symphonic problem of reconciling texture and shape – 'the "spiritual" and "technical" are of course ultimately identical. No. 3 is more lucid, more clearly organized, more stable in tonality and at the same time more vocal, more lyrical, more fluid. It is perhaps the most "positive" work in twentieth-century music; and it is a perfect reconciliation of the principles of texture with those of shape. No. 4 (...) is no less positive, perhaps even warmer and richer,

1977, p. 19. Truscott's chapter is among the best articles ever written on Rubbra's stylistic means.

154 Cf. Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, p. 29. Julius Harrison, *The New Musical Companion*, ed. by Alfred Louis Bacharach, London 221964, p. 275 notes that Rubbra was also especially talented in harmonics and tonality: 'No composer more than Rubbra can see round a chord in all its aspects and limitations. His powers of modulation are in their way unique, for he is a master of the shifting semitone and the enharmonic change – which means that his acute ear and inventive skill so often create sounds pulling in two directions. Thus a C# may in the course of his music become a D# in his mind and so cause a subtle modulation as inspired as it is unexpected.'

155 Ernest Walker, *A History of Music in England*, London etc. 61952, p. 355.

156 *Ibid.*

but also subtler, more delicate, at once tender and strong in sensibility.¹⁵⁷

The Second Symphony Op. 45 nevertheless possesses an inner density, aptly described by William McNaught in his review of the première performance:

‘It is not easy to think of a parallel in modern works to the fine unified span of the first movement. Arch-like construction is rare nowadays. His ideas crowd upon each other, lie on each other’s backs in an urge of counterpoint. The score is heavily lined, and in the long run tiring to the ear. It is all rather reckless, though not in the way that word usually implies. And it is always interesting. This is not faint praise, for interest is the most lasting quality in music.’¹⁵⁸

This enhanced inner cohesion, which is also evident in the thematic material, may have resulted from revision; Rubbra apparently reworked the symphony twice, once in 1945-46¹⁵⁹ and again in 1950, when he reduced the scoring from triple woodwind to double, made a cut in the middle of the first movement, and rewrote the end of the finale so that it now closes in D major – D (modal-minor) is the tonic in the first movement – instead of the E^b minor in which it begins.¹⁶⁰

Grover rejects Rubbra’s¹⁶¹ claim that the first movement is in sonata principal form. Grover probably had difficulty attaching the individual sections formally. (This too was no longer unusual by 1938 – clearly definable formal sections had clearly been abandoned in favour of new ways). In fact, however, Rubbra – apart from giving up a division of scherzo and trio sections¹⁶² (which is really nothing new after Strauss and others) – barely ventures into new territory here; on the contrary, he claims his work full of ‘freedom’, but there is no sign of this formally. Rubbra’s development of thematic material is nonetheless a little unusual, although not without precursors. His technique of obtaining a big part of his thematic material from a small germ, as for instance in the scherzo (ex. 82), can already be found in Sibelius (for example his Second Symphony), whose music he greatly admired (see pp. 454f.). A critic wryly observed the composer’s debt to the Finn in a review of the première performance of Rubbra’s Second on 16 December 1938:

‘Sibelius’ long-awaited Eighth Symphony was performed by the B.B.C. Orchestra last night – but the composer was an Englishman, Edmund Rubbra. The Finnish Grand Old Man has never been so sincerely flattered. If this work had been announced as being by Sibelius the average audience would have believed it, but they might have commented: “the old man’s powers are failing at last.” The symphony is organised

157 Wilfrid Mellers, ‘Rubbra and the Dominant Seventh: Notes on an English Symphony’, in: *MR* 4 (1943), pp. 146–147. Reprinted in Wilfrid Mellers, *Studies in Contemporary Music*, London 1947, pp. 155–156.

158 William McNaught, ‘English Contemporaries’, in: *MT* LXXX (1939), p. 63.

159 Criticism mentions the first performance of a revised version to have taken place in 1946 (cf. e.g. Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, p. 65).

160 Cf. Hugh Ottaway, ‘The symphonies’, in Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Edmund Rubbra: Composer*, Rickmansworth 1977, p. 33.

161 Edmund Rubbra, ‘Second Symphony’, in: *Tempo* 1 (1939), p. 8.

162 Musically the scherzo resembles that of Vaughan Williams’s Fourth Symphony.

Ex. 82

Fl., Ob., Fg., Trb. *ff*

Fl., Ob. *mf*

Clar., Fg., Archi *ff*

Arpa, Cb. *p pizz.*

19

Ob., Clar., Fg., Cor *mp*

"Three Blind Mice" Motiv

Vlc. *p* *mf*

etc.

well and all its orchestral tricks – the woodwind arabesques, the bustling strings, the brass fanfares, the sweeping crescendos are Sibelian, but the sombre brilliance, the thematic fertility, and the big-hearted tunes are missing. *Three Blind Mice*, for example, is hardly adequate material for two movements. All the same this new symphony is honest and direct, whatever it lacks in strength and personality.¹⁶³

The *Three Blind Mice* figure (Holbrooke and Brian wrote orchestral variations on this children's song)

Ex. 83



is of course simple motivic material that also found its way into the third movement of Brahms's Fourth Symphony; similarly simple material can be heard in the first movements of Beethoven's Third and Fifth Symphonies.

When asked whether he was aware that his ideas had born affinities with one another, Rubbra replied in an interview:

163 Reproduced in Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Edmund Rubbra: Composer*, Rickmansworth 1977, inner side of the front cover.

‘Oh yes, very often, although I don’t realize it until later when others point it out to me. There is one obvious example in my third symphony. The underlying rhythm of the first movement is a timpani figure: ta ta ta ta tum tum tum – four quavers followed by three crotchets. The second movement, a scherzo, opens with precisely the same rhythm, now developed and stated in melodic terms as well.’¹⁶⁴

This beginning of the four-movement Third Symphony,¹⁶⁵ which formally does not stray in the least from the boundaries of tradition, strongly recalls (in spite of all contrary declarations by Rubbra’s intercessors) Brahms. The scherzo, described by Hugh Ottaway as ‘a contrapuntal commentary on a single theme’,¹⁶⁶ celebrates waltz-dancing and approximates Ravel’s lightness before an almost Brucknerian severity sets in. The beginning of the slow movement stands in the tradition of the great funeral march movements (Beethoven, Elgar, etc.) before this atmosphere is left. No continuous tension is maintained and the end of the movement is again unsatisfactory: to describe the work as a masterpiece would only be possible in the case of a congenial interpretation, as obviously occurred at the première performance with Malcolm Sargent conducting. The aforementioned qualities of No. 3 by no means detract from the strengths of No. 2, however, whose slow movement was described as ‘Rubbra’s finest achievement up to that date’ and simultaneously ‘his most “classical” and profoundly calm’¹⁶⁷ (Grover compares it to the *Canto* of Rubbra’s Sixth Symphony¹⁶⁸). Rubbra’s linear composition, whose continuous advance is meant to present formal aspects as if they were incidental, is in fact moulded strongly on Bruckner (as are so many other ‘Cheltenham symphonies’, for example Simpson).

The finale of the symphony (which happened to be premièred on the same day as Schoenberg’s Second Chamber Symphony Op. 38), named *Tema con 7 Variazioni e una Fuga*, is enormously interesting, especially the second variation, whose accompanimental harmonies are ‘quite unconventional in places. The lower strings and timpani have a rocking A, D, A figure with later changes to other notes. Dissonances are created between the first of these and the upper string melody, but they are not sufficient to disturb the general serenity. The later shift to other rocking fifths is more in consonance with the melodic material.’¹⁶⁹ There are two further accompanimental elements: the first, which goes no farther than the first eight bars and is assigned to the flutes and oboes, consists of a kind of scalic, Aeolian counterpoint. The second element is a brass chordal figure set in an ostinato rhythm: ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪.

164 Edmund Rubbra in Murray Schafer, *British Composers in Interview*, London 1963, p. 71.

165 Careful analyses of the work have been written by Arthur Hutchings, Wilfrid Mellers, Hugh Ottaway and Ralph Scott Grover (Arthur Hutchings, ‘Rubbra’s Third Symphony’, in: *MT* LXXXI, 1940, pp. 361–364; Arthur Hutchings, ‘Rubbra’s Third Symphony. A Study of its Texture’, in: *MR* 2, 1941, pp. 14–28; Wilfrid Mellers, ‘Rubbra’s No. 3’, in: *Scrutiny* IX, 1940, pp. 120–130; Hugh Ottaway, Unpublished notes on Rubbra’s Third Symphony, 1956/55, in Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*. Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, pp. 65–86).

166 Hugh Ottaway, ‘The symphonies’, in Lewis Foreman (ed.): *Edmund Rubbra: Composer*, Rickmansworth 1977, p. 33.

167 Wilfrid Mellers, ‘Rubbra and the Dominant Seventh: Notes on an English Symphony’, in: *MR* 4 (1943), p. 146.

168 Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, p. 58.

169 *Ibid.*, p. 79.

Eight bars from the end, trumpets and trombones employing this rhythm alternate between measures containing a major second and a minor third, leaving the final cadence unresolved when the major second is tied over into the final chord. 'A certain uneasiness colours the variation in these last measures.'¹⁷⁰

Ex. 84

Ob., Vln. II, VI, Vlc. I

Cor, Trb., Trbn. I & II, Vln. I

Vlc. II, Cb., Timp.

dim. e rall.

mf

Rubbra's special ability in counterpoint, the most essential feature of his style, is clearly evident, and R. O. Morris's influence was very obviously enormous. Nonetheless, his technique was entirely up to the standards of his times, as his occasional proximity to Tippett shows (for instance in the recapitulation of the first movement

Ex. 85: [14] 2

Vln. I, Fl., Ob.

Vln. II, VI, Clar., Fg.

Vlc., Cb.

ff

or in the – too short turned-out – fugue of the final movement).

170 *Ibid.*, p. 80.

Ex. 86

The musical score for Ex. 86 consists of three staves. The top staff is for Violin I, Flute, and Oboe (Vln. I, Fl., Ob.), the middle for Violin II, Viola, and Cor Anglais (Vln. II, Vl., Cor), and the bottom for Violoncello and Double Bass (Vlc., Fg.). The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 4/4. The first staff begins with a dynamic of *mf*, followed by *f*, *mf*, *f*, *mf*, and *f*. A first ending bracket is placed over the final two measures of the first staff. The second staff has dynamics *mf*, *f*, *mf*, and *f*. The third staff has dynamics *mf* and *f*.

Arthur Hutchings,¹⁷¹ the dedicatee of the work, compares the counterpoint (one might again consider the parallelism to Tippett) to Purcell's in his *Fantasias* for strings. It indeed imparts many of Rubbra's works with a certain epic warmth that found further supporters in the following period, and not only in Great Britain (Simpson, Stevenson, Patterson, Sorabji, etc.).

The symphony received very mixed reviews. Herbert Howells praised the work of his colleague after the first performance under the baton of Malcolm Sargent. (Sargent certainly contributed to Rubbra's success by infusing the symphonies with a vigour that was not necessarily prescribed in the score.) Howells positively gushed: 'Now and again there comes a work with the power to make one fall in love with music all over again. In such a mood I found myself when listening to your symphony.'¹⁷² John Ireland was much more critical: 'I heard the 3rd. It has some striking features, if a bit dull in places – but consistent in style, & free from cheap showmanship – a great merit in these days.'¹⁷³ Hugh Ottaway summarized: 'No. 3 (1938–39) has always been the most favoured of these earlier symphonies. Outwardly this is the most genial and relaxed, and there is no suggestion of the over-zealousness that marks No. 2.'¹⁷⁴ Rather differently reads Edward Lockspeiser's account, which is more akin to Ireland's:

'This is a fortress of a symphony, grim and unadorned and built on unshakable foundations. The sonata form, the scherzo and trio [sic] and the variations and fugue are the sites chosen, and Mr. Rubbra fills these old forms with themes as hard as rock

171 Arthur James Bramwell Hutchings (1906–1989) was a Professor of Music at Durham University from 1947 to 1968 before going on to hold the newly founded music chair at Exeter University for three years.

172 Herbert Howells to Edmund Rubbra, 1941, quoted from Arthur Hutchings, 'Edmund Rubbra', in Alfred Louis Bacharach (ed.), *British Music of Our Time*, Harmondsworth 1946, p. 202.

173 John Ireland to Geoffrey Bush, 29 September 1942, quoted from Lewis Foreman (ed.), *From Parry to Britten. British Music in Letters 1900–1945*, London 1987, p. 254.

174 Hugh Ottaway, 'The symphonies', in Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Edmund Rubbra: Composer*, Rickmansworth 1977, p. 33.

and with huge boulders for his developments. Here is a consummate technique; but if only some variety were introduced into all this strenuous music! If only the themes were not so constantly hard-driven! Such massive developments end by giving an impression of a mere *tour de force*. Humour is apparently unknown to Mr. Rubbra, though the second movement is not without a suggestion of grace. The orchestra is made to toil unrelentingly, and from one end of the score to the other there is seldom anything that one could call a solo. It has been said that the spirit of Brahms is in this music.¹⁷⁵ It is rather the spirit of Bruckner – a Bruckner who might have lived after Hindemith.¹⁷⁶

Christian Darnton (Baron von Schunck) (nr. Leeds, 30 October 1905–Hove, Sussex, 14 April 1981), son of exceptionally wealthy parents, studied with Benjamin Dale and Harry Farjeon, then became a private pupil of Charles Wood's and Cyril Rootham's in Cambridge, where he befriended Walter Leigh and studied alongside Arnold Cooke. Darnton then went to the Royal College of Music for about a year, where he studied with Gordon Jacob, before setting off for private instruction with Max Butting in Berlin. He married the painter Joan Bell in 1929 and began his First Symphony while honeymooning in Tyrol. In the 1930s he became assistant to Edwin Evans and a close friend to Constant Lambert and Alan Rawsthorne; in addition, he became exceptionally active as a secretary of the Adolph Hallis¹⁷⁷ Chamber Music Concerts (he also performed all over Europe as a chamber musician) and the Composers' Guild of Great Britain (with reference to the latter, Darnton described Norman Demuth as 'hostile'¹⁷⁸). Darnton also made room in his busy life actively to support the British political left, and is still remembered today as a socialist.¹⁷⁹

Like Bush, Brian, Lutyens¹⁸⁰ and numerous others, Darnton was (and is) regarded as polytonal, 'modern' and thus no longer 'English' – the influences of Busoni, Jarnach, Hindemith and Stravinsky as well as a clear refusal of the impressionists, the Post-Wagnerians and the English modal school are in fact quite evident in his work. However, Tippett, Britten and other more recent British composers were also shaped by these factors to some extent.

Christian Darnton's First Symphony was completed in July 1931 in London – considering the two-year period of composition, one hesitates to call Darnton a fast composer. The first of the three movements was later entitled 'Anapaest', no doubt with respect to the main themes:

175 Colin Mason, 'Rubbra's Four Symphonies', in: *MR* 8 (1947), pp. 132–139.

176 Edward Lockspeiser, Review of Edmund Rubbra: Symphony No. 3. Score, in: *McL* XXIV (1943), p. 188. Wilfrid Mellers also implied a comparison to Bruckner when he wrote that Rubbra's symphonies might be 'basically a religious affirmation' (Wilfrid Mellers in Alec Harman/Wilfrid Mellers, *Man and his music*, London 1962, p. 1037).

177 The South African virtuoso pianist Adolph Hallis (1896–1987) had commissioned the Piano Concerto in 1933.

178 Correspondence Christian Darnton. British Library: Add. MS 62765, fol. 133.

179 Darnton's complete estate, formerly in his family's possession, can today be found in the British Library. He left behind a novel, political newspaper articles, intimate recollections of his youth, some poems and prose pieces.

180 Cf. Benjamin Britten, 'England and the folk-art problem', in: *Modern Music* 18/2 (1941), p. 72.

Ex. 87

Cor, Trb.

Ex. 88

Clar.

The recapitulation of the first movement is strongly abridged and leads directly into the slow second movement, which is marked by creeping melodic characteristics and harmony. Rarely anything but 2nd intervals can be found here, and scale sections eventually return to the tone of departure. In the B section of the movement, climaxes are built rather than great melodic arches, as shown in the theme below:

Ex. 89

Cor, Trb., Tb II

The finale of the symphony, in 15/8 metre, is a sonata movement that again adheres more severely to the 'rules'; the thematic material, also from the first movement, is, in addition to new material,

Ex. 90

recapitulated and developed.

A^b major initially seems to be the tonal centre of the work, but it ends in C[♯] (the final movement begins in D^b major); given the extensive modulation, D would have been expected.

Darnton's Third Symphony in D major (for Darnton's Second Symphony see p. 575), completed and first performed in 1945 and revised in 1961, was also broadcast on continental European radio by 1946. This constitutes Darnton's first four-movement work; the first two symphonies had only three movements. Each of the movements shows careful, clear construction without ever becoming boring. The themes of the first movement



Illustration 42. Christian Darnton, photograph by Howard Coster, 1940. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

Ex. 91



Ex. 92



are in each of the following movements recapitulated and varied. As in his First and Second Symphonies, harmony of fourths is also essential here for the design of the work – fourths in every figure, perfect, decreased and augmented recur in outsized measure.

A tapestry of (muted) strings and woodwind introduces the second movement themes, which also resurface in the two last movements. In the scherzo (with two trios – in the second, the beginning of the symphony is taken up again) the second theme of the second movement reappears between the two trios and is also recapitulated at the end of the movement.

Ex. 93



The main theme of the finale, abating in concentration in comparison to the other movements, is derived from the main themes of the first and third (ex. 94) movements;

Ex. 94



the second theme of the movement is derived from the first movement.

Ex. 95



At last the main theme of the second movement is taken up again in the recapitulation of the movement.

Norman Del Mar (London, 31 July 1919–Bushey, 6 February 1994) was just nineteen years old when he wrote his first (but unnumbered) Symphony in C minor Op. 2 (finished in December 1938). He studied horn (with Frank Probyn) and composition (with R. O. Morris and Ralph Vaughan Williams) at the Royal College of Music (and thus had Grace Williams and Benjamin Britten as fellow students), and also studied privately with Mátyás Seiber (who had emigrated to England in 1935). He then started off as a professional orchestral player and then became a conductor, first as assistant to Thomas Beecham and others. The second movement (scherzo) of the work was recommended by Ralph Vaughan Williams for performance at a Patron's Fund concert, which indeed very probably happened. Apparently this was the only movement ever to have been performed.

Del Mar uses an extensive orchestra, with triple woodwind, but compresses the number of movements to three. As in Grace Williams's First Symphony (see pp. 560ff.), it was obviously the scherzo that pleased his teachers most, and indeed their point of view is understandable. The first movement, displaying remarkable energy, lacks precise thematic material, and although (or perhaps because) all of it is derived from a central motif,

Ex. 96



the instrumentation lacks the delicacy of the scherzo. However, the movement is carefully constructed, with steps of the second derived from the slow introduction helping to structure the different sections.

The scherzo is very energetic indeed,

Ex. 97



simultaneously highly elegant and carefully orchestrated, and sporting two trios. It somehow seems as if Vaughan Williams's strong suit as a professor was in teaching scherzo composition.

The third movement, quite experimental, combines a very unquiet, highly interesting slow movement and the finale (obviously modelled on Stanford's Seventh Symphony). The recapitulating section of the ternary basic shape leads into the finale and the second theme of the finale is identical with the main theme of the slow movement:

Ex. 98



Again, the thematic material does not feel very convincing; formally, however, apart from a far too lengthy recapitulation and coda, the movement is not only highly individual (the development again taking up the motif from the first movement), but also of stellar quality. Furthermore, the orchestration is far superior here than it is in the first movement. Del Mar's genial manner of dealing with transitions, apparent in many of his performances as a conductor, is already obvious in this student symphony.¹⁸¹

George Walter Selwyn Lloyd (St. Ives, Cornwall, 28 June 1913–London, 3 July 1998) is often compared to his colleague from Northampton, Malcolm Arnold (1921–2006). Both composers adored Western Britain and exhibited many compositional similarities (evident, for example, in Lloyd's First Symphony, [36], or in his use of the piccolo). Arnold must be rated the better composer, however. Lloyd studied piano with his mother, violin with Albert Sammons, composition with Harry Farjeon and counterpoint with Charles Herbert Kitson, and also with Ludwig Lebell, at the Royal Academy of Music and the Trinity College of Music in London.

Lloyd said proudly: 'I've gone my own way since I was nineteen (...) And I kept on going that way.'¹⁸² As a matter of fact, he absorbed several influences without really building a style of his own: 'Verdi is my god, and my other influences are Berlioz – of the *Requiem* and the *Fantastic Symphony* rather than the operas – and Puccini, with a dash of Debussy in my orchestration.'¹⁸³ Other influences mentioned are those of Arnold, Delius, Dvořák, Elgar, Mendelssohn, Ravel, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, Walton and 'almost any other 20th-century English composer you can think of';¹⁸⁴ at the same time, Lloyd rejected the music of Bax, Vaughan Williams, Stravinsky, Schoenberg and Hindemith. 'Lloyd, clearly, is a conservative eclectic who nevertheless "writes very tonal music quite unlike any other contemporary British composer."¹⁸⁵¹⁸⁶ In actual fact, however, Lloyd loved to shroud himself in mystery in an apparent attempt to generate interest in his music and make it seem better than it was. It is easily imaginable that Lloyd could have become an exceptional film music composer, but strangely enough he never pursued such a career.

Dan Godfrey had always given particular encouragement to young composers, even to those hardly out of college, and in early 1933 he received a package from 19-year-old George Lloyd containing the score of his First Symphony, which had received an amateur performance the previous year by the Penzance Orchestral Society. The young composer recalled:

'I didn't hear anything from him for a few weeks, so I took the train down to

181 Cf. also Richard Alston, *Norman Del Mar*, London 2000.

182 Andrew Porter, 'Musical Events: Symphonies', in: *The New Yorker*, 21 December 1987, p. 109.

183 Tim Rostron, '50 Years Ago', in: *Opera News*, New York November 1988, p. 8.

184 Quoted from Geoffrey Norris, 'Orchestral Music' [George Lloyd's Symphony No. 8], in: *MT CXXI* (1980), p. 453.

185 Malcolm Walker, 'Letter from UK', in: *Fanfare*, September-October 1982, p. 46.

186 Kenneth A. Kleszynski, 'George Lloyd: A selected Bibliography and Discography', in: *MR* 50 (1989), p. 298.

Bournemouth to see what was happening. I'm glad I did because he was a most ferocious customer. He ran that entire orchestra just by himself with one secretary. He did all the organising plus conducting. So I knocked at the door and told the secretary who I was. Suddenly this raging creature came out of a door. It was Sir Dan Godfrey with my score in his hands. "Can't you write triplets? – you've got slurs," he demanded.¹⁸⁷

Eventually the work was accepted, and Lloyd, at his own request, conducted the performance himself:

'[Godfrey] was wonderful when we were rehearsing. He used to be prowling around having a look at all the parts – he could never leave anything alone. He had to peer over the trumpets, over the trombones. He was going around all the time just to have a look to see what was going on.'¹⁸⁸

The First Symphony in A (not provided with a title) was the first 'absolute', one-movement British symphony since Frederic Austin's E major Symphony (1913, see pp. 318ff.). After his early success when Godfrey put up the First Symphony, Lloyd was similarly lucky with the two symphonies to follow – the Second was premièred in Eastbourne, the Third, by procurement of John Ireland, through the B.B.C., both in 1935 (Lloyd was equally fortunate with his first two operas, *Iernin* and *The Serf*, which had already had successful performances in 1935 and 1938 in London, *The Serf* at Covent Garden). After the Third Symphony, Lloyd had to enter the Marines. He ended up being stationed in the Arctic and suffered massive shell-shock during the war; he recovered only with his Swiss wife Nancy's help. Lloyd's Fourth Symphony (1946) was rejected by the B.B.C. in 1947. Luckily, John Ogdon, for whom Lloyd had composed his First Piano Concerto (*The Scapegoat*), came to the rescue and promoted Lloyd's music (*The Scapegoat* was first performed in 1964, conducted by Charles Groves). Lloyd's Eighth Symphony was accepted in 1969 after performances had been refused for almost twenty years, and even forbidden internally by the B.B.C.. The work was finally performed in 1977 (under Edward Downes), and thus began the George Lloyd renaissance.

On the First Symphony, which he had revised in 1934 and 1980, Lloyd himself wrote:

'At the time I was asked to write another symphony for the Albany Symphony Orchestra I was also having persistent enquiries about what had happened to Symphony No. 1. Some ten years ago I had had a good clearout of most of my early pieces but I had decided to keep the First Symphony, mainly because the form I had used intrigued me; there was also a youthful liveliness that I hoped would cover up some of the defects. (...) When I wrote the symphony I wanted to write a symphony but I did not want it to be a large work with the usual three or four movements because in those days big symphonies had become very ponderous affairs. I wanted something short

187 Quoted in Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British Composers*, London 1995, p. 68.

188 Lewis Foreman, 'George Lloyd: Britten's forgotten contemporary', in: *Records and Recording*, May 1980, pp. 26–27.

and sharp; so mine was to be in one movement. The form that evolved was quite simple but gave scope for variety. The whole piece was in three main sections: the first section comprised an introduction, which in itself was in three parts – ABA; then followed five variations on A. The second section – a short slow movement – was a development of B. The third section was a very free fugato on A. The orchestration is bright and clear and for the first time (in the final section) I was really indulging my love of brass sounds – an addiction that is still with me¹⁸⁹

(the finale of the Third Symphony gives another example).

The music sounds as expected at that time – sometimes like Rakhmaninov, harmonically pronouncedly old-fashioned (in contrast to Vaughan Williams, Brian, Foulds, Holst or Bridge), and even when the tonality runs wild, the music nevertheless remains strongly tonally bound and recalls in moments Tchaikovsky, Dvořák or Wagner. The ‘tunefulness’ sets the work back by decades, as exemplified by the secondary theme of the first movement:

Ex. 99

Andante

Ob., Fg.

In the 1930s the music may have sounded new, but today it seems dated – and it is precisely this seeming security in tradition that accounts for Lloyd’s present popularity. Julius Harrison once described Lloyd as ‘(equally) fashion-resistant’.¹⁹⁰ Supposedly ‘risky’ modulations come off as trite rather than shocking. The final fugato ([43]) approximates Straussian ductus more than ever, is heard almost exactly as the musical characterization of the two schemers in the first act of *Der Rosenkavalier*. The brass plays a theme reminiscent of *Rienzi* ([49]), and even a minor hint of Gershwin can be heard ([67]) – all this without urgent inner logic.

On his Second Symphony Lloyd wrote:

‘The Second Symphony was written in February-March 1933; it was first performed by the Eastbourne Municipal Orchestra, myself conducting, but only three of the four movements were then played. The work was revised in 1982. The first quick movement is a modified sonata-rondo; the second is a mixture of variations interspersed with free sections. The third is a quick march. The fourth is a moderately slow movement; it has two principal tunes; the second one was taken from a setting I

189 George Lloyd, CD liner notes to the recording of his First Symphony, Albany/Wharton 1990.

190 Geoffrey Self, *Julius Harrison and the Importunate Muse*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, p. 75.

had just made of Byron's *So we'll go no more a-roving*. This tune is later juxtaposed with one of the march tunes from the third movement. A dramatic effect is obtained by the use of polytonality; I was at that time experimenting with this device but have only rarely used it since then.¹⁹¹

This polytonality, however, occurs only temporarily, comparable to that in Malcolm Arnold. Doubtlessly, however, the Second and the Third are better than the First Symphony – although they too lack a strong inner logic. The first movement of the Second is a lively waltz when the metre is not upbroken by syncopics; the second is distinctly chromatic in the middle section. The work is again 'tuneful' and strongly bound tonally, but as soon as an oft-used theme from the third movement appears in the otherwise qualitatively exceptionally positive finale,

Ex. 100



the music again becomes second-rate. Another motif that occurs at the beginning of the symphony

Ex. 101



constitutes a departure from high quality, and the continuous repetition of the motif causes a standstill and drop of tension; the same technique was used to better effect in *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf der Wartburg*, where the motif is deployed to a smaller extent and is therefore more bearable.

Lloyd's Third Symphony is also carefully built – only the finale seems episodic, and above all, the motif mentioned above is less frequently used, recurring only in the unmotivatedly strong contrapuntal final movement.

'Some dozen years ago I decided I must get rid of my early pieces; anything written before my opera *Iernin* was suspect. I had a glorious bonfire and would have added my first three symphonies to the flames. There was a difficulty; by the time I was clearing away all this debris I had written seven more symphonies and I could not face

191 George Lloyd, CD liner notes to the recording of his Second Symphony, Albany/Wharton 1991.

having to change all the names and numberings on the scores and orchestral parts. The simplest course was to revise the first three and leave them to take their fate. This I did for Nos. 1 and 2 but the Third has been left virtually as it was apart from a few very small additions.

I wrote the first three symphonies when I was nineteen and at that time with all the arrogance of youth I greatly disliked large symphonies in the romantic style – except for Elgar's No. 2 which I still believe is the best symphony ever written by an Englishman. So I decided that if I wrote symphonies they would be short. To this end both No. 1 and No. 3 are in one continuous movement although they are both in three distinct sections. I was probably finding a good excuse for my difficulty in sustaining a long slow movement, something which is never easy to achieve.

No. 3 starts with an impetuous theme and soon grows into a long expressive tune. At 19 a young composer tends to be either ultra-romantic or cynical and worldly-wise; I was one of the former so there is plenty of vigorous despair in a minor key. The slow section is just one long sad tune in different guises. It dies away to be broken into by a brass fanfare leading to the final section which is bright and lively.¹⁹²

Edgar Leslie Bainton (London, 14 February 1880–Sydney, 8 December 1956) was a good friend of Rutland Boughton's (see p. 370) from their study days at the Royal College of Music,¹⁹³ where they received instruction from Charles Villiers Stanford, Henry Walford Davies and Charles Wood. In 1901 Bainton became a lecturer at the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Conservatoire of Music and took over the directorship there in 1912 (his best-known colleague in Newcastle was William Gillies Whittaker); apart from these duties he conducted the local Philharmonic Orchestra. The First World War took him, Frederick Keel and Benjamin Dale, all of whom were interned in Ruhleben near Berlin, by surprise. In 1934 Bainton went to Australia, where he served as director of the State Conservatory in Sydney until 1949.

Bainton's first symphony, *A Phantasy of Life and Progress* in B^b major Op. 5, has not survived. One listener at the Bournemouth première performance 1903 noted on his programme: 'awfully noisy pretentious rubbish'.¹⁹⁴ The next symphony Bainton wrote was a choral symphony (1907, see pp. 610ff.), which was not published until some thirteen years later, and it would be nearly twelve more years before he started on another symphony.

On his Second Symphony, which he began in the summer of 1933 as a tone poem *Thalassa*, but finished only in 1939-40, Bainton wrote:

I heard Joseph Post conduct my D Minor Symphony. It was not always *my* idea, but it was *his*, I am sure deeply felt, and I must admit gave me a great deal of pleasure. We

192 George Lloyd, CD liner notes to the recording of his Third Symphony, Albany/Wharton 1992.

193 Michael Hurd describes the influence that Bainton, with his style of private studies, exerted upon Boughton (Michael Hurd, *Rutland Boughton and the Glastonbury Festivals*, Oxford etc. 21993, p. 15).

194 Quoted in Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British composers*, London 1995, p. 68.

composers hear our ideal in our mental ear, the performer gains his through making and listening to his tonal values. I am just reading a new life of Sacheverell Sitwell, in which there is a passage from a letter of Chopin to a friend saying that he is learning how to play his own *Préludes* from Liszt!¹⁹⁵

The work unites the form of a four-movement symphony with that of a sonata principal movement with a slow introduction, exposition, development and recapitulation. The slow introduction with the flute and the oboe interwoven with the strings is distinctly reminiscent of Delius's idylls; Bainton later shows a proximity to Bantock in his harmonic language. A single theme

Ex. 102



often undermines the construction of the quasi first movement, a theme which is informed mainly by some modal harmony.

Ex. 103

Andante, molto tranquillo

1 Cor

Musical notation for Ex. 103, titled 'Andante, molto tranquillo'. It is for the Cor (Cornet) part, marked with a '1' above the staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is 'Andante, molto tranquillo'. The notation shows a series of chords and intervals, starting with a half note G4 and ending with a half note G4. The dynamics range from *pp* to *sf*.

The scherzo (from [18] 4) shows little intrinsic personality, rather reminiscent of Dukas.

Ex. 104

Molto vivace, scherzando

Musical notation for Ex. 104, titled 'Molto vivace, scherzando'. It is for Violin I (Vln. I) and Violin II/VI pizzicato (Vln. II, VI. pizz.). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is 'Molto vivace, scherzando'. The notation shows a series of chords and intervals, starting with a half note G4 and ending with a half note G4. The dynamics range from *p* to *mf*.

195 Helen Bainton, *Remembered on Waking*, Sydney 1960, p. 105.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Clarinet I (Clar. I), Cor (Cor), and Archa, Arpa (Archi, Arpa). The music is in 3/8 time and features dynamic markings of piano (p) and fortissimo (sf). The Clarinet I part has a melodic line with a crescendo and decrescendo. The Cor part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Archa/Arpa part has a bass line with chords and dynamics.

The trio of the movement (from 3 [25]) points strongly to Ravel and in its use of woodwind, to the *Siegfried-Idyll*; while the beginning of the *Adagio* transition (3 [32]) with its waterfall associations stresses the lack of musical individuality even further (es. 105).

The finale (from [34] 7) links the recapitulation of the sonata principal movement form with a sonata principal movement form proper; here especially the thematic connection between the individual movements and sections is detectable. Although the technique is not new in conception, Bainton succeeds at least formally in a successful linking of levels, whereas his sound language unfortunately remains unsatisfactory. Apparently Bainton attempted to leave the harmony of his contemporaries behind – but in this work, at least, he did not have the assertiveness that can be found in, for example, Scott, Foulds or Bridge.

Stanley Bate's (Plymouth, 12 December 1911–London, 19 October 1959) First Symphony in E \flat , probably a specimen for the Royal College of Music, was probably performed there in 1936, in his final year at the college. (He had enrolled in 1932, studying composition with Vaughan Williams, Morris and Jacob, and piano with Benjamin, and had won numerous prizes as a student.) Today it is lost. About the work Eve Kisch wrote:

'In both of these more tautly knit works [the Symphony and the First String Quartet] he shows a great advance on his hitherto somewhat rhapsodical and even improvisatory methods: the symphony's broadly-planned first movement has a strenuous compactness which was hardly noticeable before. Yet even here it is an effort of the will and intellect which imposes form from outside on the exuberant creations of the young composer's imagination: only in the following year does he suddenly seem to acquire that sense of implicit and inevitable design which informs his later works. The last two movements of the symphony and the somewhat uncompromising first quartet (it is not a work which commends itself at first sight to the string player) seem to lead from Stanley Bate's first and lyrical period to the one of sinewy fierceness which pervades his piano concerto.²¹⁹⁶

196 Eve Kisch, 'The younger English composers – VI. Stanley Bate', in: *MMR* LXVIII/801 (1938), p. 271.

Ex. 105: Edgar Bainton: Symphony No. 2 in D minor. MS score, p. 54. National Library of Australia, Canberra, ABC Federal Library; reproduced by kind permission.

The image displays a page of a musical score for Edgar Bainton's Symphony No. 2 in D minor, page 54. The score is written for a full orchestra and includes parts for the following instruments: 2 Flutes, Piccolo (2nd Flute), 2 Oboes, Cor Anglais, 2 Clarinets in A, Bass Clarinet, 2 Bassoons, Contra Bassoon (Ad Lib), 4 Horns in F, 3 Trumpets in C, 3rd Trumpet in C, 2 Trombones, Bass Trombone/Tuba, Timpani, Cymbals (C.C.), Side Drum, Harp, 1st Violins (divisi), 2nd Violins (divisi), Violas (divisi), Cellos, and Contrabass. The tempo is marked 'Adagio'. The score features various musical notations, including dynamics (pp, p, f), articulation (accents, slurs), and performance instructions such as 'con sordini' and 'rit.'. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout with staves for each instrument.

Then Bate went for a while to study with Nadia Boulanger (who had also taught Lennox Berkeley and would later teach Thea Musgrave), and after this to Berlin to study with Hindemith. A serious and undiagnosed illness struck Bate while he was composing his first symphony, an event that might, as Barlow and Barnett implied, have found its reflection in the work. During his studies with Boulanger, he began in 1937 to compose his Second Symphony in C, which he completed in London in spring 1939 shortly before embarking for the USA on the same ship as Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears. His First Sinfonietta was performed in 1942 at the I.S.C.M. Festival in San Francisco, as was Arthur Benjamin's *Prelude to a Holiday* and Benjamin Britten's *Sinfonia da Requiem* (both composed in 1940). By 1938, he had already become musical director for Michel Saint-Denis at the Phoenix Theatre, an appointment, as Kisch wrote,

‘for which he is exceptionally well qualified. His eclectic and unerring taste has already enabled him to produce delightfully apt music for varied productions of Saint-Denis and his associates, set respectively in Spain, Russia and Ancient Greece. With such natural powers and such a fruitful development already behind him we should expect much from Stanley Bate in the future: among the younger composers there is perhaps no one else who possesses so many of the qualities of a symphonist.’¹⁹⁷

The Second Symphony clearly shows that instrumentation was not the central aspect of Bate's studies with Boulanger. The presentation and development of material are worked out carefully and show a high degree of artistry; counterpoint is reduced to a necessary minimum so that the work evokes a strong momentum. Frequent metre and tempo changes have been moved into the foreground in the place of the elements formerly developed at the Royal College of Music. Still, the individual movements lack the density required for an entirely convincing symphony.

Though it may have been his most acclaimed work in his lifetime, Bate's Third Symphony ‘impressed more by its brilliant textures and dexterous handling of the orchestra than by its quality of thought. Bate never managed to achieve a synthesis of the numerous influences of his early years’¹⁹⁸ according to Richard Cooke. The symphony, completed in 1940 in New York, has been described as ‘a work whose mood was very much in keeping with the violence and instability of the times’.¹⁹⁹ ‘It has something of the “whirlwind” quality of Walton's Symphony No. 1, Vaughan Williams's Symphony No. 4 and parts of the 6th. It is impassioned storm-troubled music. Puccini's *Turandot* was cited by one critic as a momentary influence.’²⁰⁰

Bate's own programme note reads:

‘The work is in three movements to be played without a break. The first movement opens *moderato*; the first subject immediately presented *pp* on two bassoons accompanied by

197 *Ibid.*, p. 274.

198 Richard Cooke, ‘Bate, Stanley’, in *Grove6* vol. 2, London etc. 1980, p. 283.

199 Michael Barlow/Robert Barnett, ‘Stanley Bate – Forgotten International Composer’, in: *BM* 13 (1991), p. 21.

200 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

cellos and basses. This is developed into a *tutti (accelerando)* which leads to a subsidiary first subject (*più mosso*) which is easily recognisable by the leaps of ninths and trills on the strings accompanied by the side drums. This motif is used a good deal in the development section. It leads to a short bridge passage (*tempo I*) which in turn leads to the second subject. This begins quietly with chords on the strings and horns and builds up to a climax on the full orchestra. In the course of the development, which is the longest subject of the movement, all the subjects of the work are introduced, interrupted only once by a short passage (*tempo I*) on muted strings.

A restatement of the first subject follows, this time on the full orchestra, followed by a short agitated development of the subsidiary first subject, this time *maestoso*; the theme played by all the strings, the opening bars followed in canon by the trumpets. The first subject reappears quietly and a short passage on the horns accompanied by *pizzicato* strings leads directly to the second movement.

The *Andante* opens with a fugal exposition, the subject of which is introduced softly on the flute over a roll on the bass drum. It is taken up by the clarinet and bassoons in turns, and eventually played in an extended form by the violins and violas in unison, backed by chords on the horns.

After a brief development and recapitulation, the movement closes softly on the strings and one bar's rest for the whole orchestra brings us directly to the *finale*.

This movement opens *presto* with a very energetic first subject in 2/4 time, played by all the strings in unison. The figure is repeated by the woodwind and horns. Finally on the brass and woodwind, it accompanies the subsidiary first subject, played simultaneously on the strings. The second subject is a *scherzo*-like theme, first heard on the flute and clarinet over a *pizzicato* string accompaniment. It leads directly to the development which is based entirely on the first subject and its subsidiary motif. The recapitulation leads to an *adagio* section which is important because it sums up the emotional content of the symphony. The work is concluded by a short *coda (presto)* based on the rhythmic opening theme.²⁰¹

Especially in the first movement of the symphony, the influence of Vaughan Williams is discernable; the rhythm ♩ ♩ ♩ on a repeated chord is a typical example.

Ex. 106

The musical notation for Example 106 is presented in three staves. The top staff is in treble clef and shows a melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The middle staff is in treble clef and shows a repeated chord of G4-A4-B4. The bottom staff is in bass clef and shows a repeated chord of G2-A2-B2. The time signature is 2/4, and the rhythm is ♩ ♩ ♩.

201 *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.

In the second movement, one is sometimes reminded of soundtracks but also of the second movement of Hindemith's Symphony *Mathis der Maler*. With his almost continuous striving forward of semiquavers and quavers, the finale is comparable to one of the great toccatas by British composers, for example Finzi's, Vaughan Williams's, or Britten's for piano and orchestra.

The first performance of the Third Symphony did not take place until 1954 at the Cheltenham Festival, where numerous other works were also premièred, for instance Geoffrey Bush's First Symphony, Graham Whettam's Viola Concerto or Peter Racine Fricker's Second Violin Concerto. The press comments were exceedingly positive: '(...) the most striking modern orchestral work we have heard this week' (*Yorkshire Post*); '(...) first-rate composer, superbly competent' (*Manchester Guardian*); '(...) the nugget of the festival' (*Time Magazine*).²⁰² And Scott Goddard wrote in *The Musical Times*:

Bate's exhilarating work is hard-hitting music. It left one in no doubt, as soon as the first movement began to get under way, that this man knew his mind and could express what was in it forcibly. It gave an impression of exuberant, virile energy backed by a lively sense of form and a fine technique of orchestral manipulation, something other than a good orchestral sense, much more an ability to use the orchestra and not be used by it. The orchestra was bent, in fact, to the will of the composer and the needs of his music. From that came the feeling one had of taking part in the activities of a fresh, youthful mind's exploration. Bate's Third Symphony has had to wait fourteen years (on whose shelves?) for its first performance. Surely that is one of the oddest, most inexplicable quirks of fate, that such a work as this with its glittering, extrovert surface, let alone the deuce of a lot of interesting thoughts rising from its depths, should have lain so long neglected.²⁰³

It was only later that Bate was classed amongst the usual 'Cheltenham composers' – those whom one denied real inventiveness and substance (others thus classified were Lloyd, Simpson, Rubbra, Benjamin, Frankel, G. Bush, Whettam, Fricker and Smith-Brindle). We meanwhile know that this again was an unspecified and inappropriate reproach which is true only insofar as they were – mostly admittedly or even consciously – not 'avant-garde'.

202 *Ibid.*, p. 30.

203 Scott Goddard, 'The Cheltenham Festival', in: *MT XCV* (1954), p. 491.

c) Sibelius's reception in Great Britain

*'Mode: Musical modes, like many others, first came to us from the Continent. They still continue to do so.'*²⁰⁴

Naturally, the influences that British composers absorbed were diverse. When, after 1910, the dominance of Brahms, Liszt and Strauss decreased, East European composers filled the void. East European music made a stronger impression in Great Britain (Albert Coates, for example, was born in St. Petersburg, but settled in Great Britain) than in Germany; in France, Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky – and later Stravinsky and Prokofiev – became important forces. In Great Britain, it was mainly the composers whose work was indebted to late-Romantic harmony that became kind of fashionable, e.g. Scriabin,²⁰⁵ Tchaikovsky and – to a more limited degree – early Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Shostakovich.²⁰⁶ Of the latter, Kaikhosru Sorabji wrote in 1947 that 'enough and to spare has been heard [about Shostakovich] in this country of late years for us to realise that he is one of the biggest musical bluffers ever imposed upon the public'.²⁰⁷ Arnold Whittall commented some fifty years later:

'It cannot be denied that Skryabin and Szymanowski, as well as Schoenberg, Berg, Janáček, and a multitude of other composers, good and bad, lived out that transition from Romanticism to something else that is the story of twentieth-century music much more whole-heartedly than did either Sibelius or Nielsen. As a result, the most consistently Romantic twentieth-century composers have usually proved to be the most conservative, if not by that same token invariably the least interesting. As already suggested, Soviet Russia has offered a special, and specially ironic case, of Romantic tone surviving (and overpowering what might otherwise have become Expressionist or Neoclassical tendencies) in the major works of Shostakovich, the later Prokofiev (notably the Symphony No. 6) and others – and persisting into such relatively recent works as the far from life-affirming piano quintet (1976) by Alfred Schnittke, its haunting ending highly Romantic in its in-turned depth of personal feeling.'²⁰⁸

204 Frederic Hymen Cowen, *Music as she is wrote*, London 1915, p. 38.

205 Alexander Scriabin quickly set off a wave of controversy in England: some lauded him as a 'genius' (Alfred J. Swan, *Scriabin*, London 1923, p. 1), while others denounced him as immature (Hugh Evelyn Wortham, *A Musical Odyssey*. London 1924, pp. 181–182, describes him as retrospective concerning form and cast). The first important book on him appeared as early as in 1916 (Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, *A Great Russian Tone-Poet: Scriabin*, London 1916), hardly a year after his death. He is often highly praised as a piano composer, and as overestimated as an orchestral composer. 'One writer has referred to his later orchestral works as musical masturbation, and this is not entirely unfair.' (Colin Wilson, *Brandy of the Damned*, London 1964, p. 106.)

206 In conversations with Michael Hurd in February 1993 and Michael Jones on 12 April 1993, the author obtained the following further names of composers who were particularly well-received in Great Britain: Korngold, Schenker, Furtwängler, Schreker, Szymanowski, Medtner, Borodin, Magnard, Reger, and more recently, Lutoslawski (for further preferences, see sections on individual composers).

207 Kaikhosru Sorabji, *Mi contra Fa*, London 1947, p. 40.

208 Arnold Whittall, *Romantic music*, London 1987, p. 183.

In fact, the late-Romantic influence (mainly coming from Eastern Europe) seemed to stifle British composers, who almost without exception were reluctant to completely discard the entire tonal system and the formal possibilities made available to them by tradition. Many of the achievements by British composers (Bax, Vaughan Williams, Walton) in the fields of concerto and symphony can now be seen to be late-Romantic rather than contemporary or *avant-garde* in feeling.²⁰⁹ Constant Lambert wrote: ‘(...) the symphonies of Bax, though technically speaking of our day, belong spiritually to the nineteenth century and suffer from the same inherent disadvantages as the romantic symphonies. It is doubtful whether future critics will consider them as important as his symphonic poems.’²¹⁰ Lambert’s main point of criticism was Bax’s weakness in fulfilling the formal principle of the symphony, especially with regard to contemporaneous symphonism.

As a kind of link, at just this moment Jean Sibelius²¹¹ became the great paragon. He had an incredibly strong influence on British music until the Second World War (a comparable phenomenon can only be found in the USA, for example in the works of Harris or Barber). The force of his impact roused the suspicions of those who were interested in the then *avant-garde* compositional techniques. René Leibowitz called him ‘the world’s worst composer’, and Nicholas Nabokov dubbed his symphonies ‘antediluvian monstrosities’.²¹² Theodor W. Adorno²¹³ to a great extent sabotaged Sibelius’s reception in the German-speaking world with his sharp judgment,²¹⁴ which still reverberates in the minds of many people in Germany, ranging from orchestral players to musicologists. Interestingly enough, it is the musician-musical quality of Sibelius’s works, i.e. the (apparent) lack of ‘depth’ associated with the Schoenberg school, that turned the critics off.²¹⁵ Sibelius’s qualities only came to be recognized by musicologists much later, and these are, similar to those of Richard Strauss (whom Sibelius openly opposed²¹⁶), still not yet entirely accepted, although of the pre-

209 Cf. Sebastian Forbes, ‘The Orchestral Music’, in Alan Poulton (ed.), *Alan Rawsthorne*. Hindhead 1986, p. 86.

210 Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!*, Harmondsworth 1948, p. 231.

211 Actually, he was born Jan Julius Christian Sibelius, but changed his first name to Jean.

212 Quoted from Hugh Ottaway, *Sibelius*, Sevenoaks 1968, p. 1.

213 Theodor W. Adorno, ‘Glosse über Sibelius’, 1937, in Theodor Adorno, *Impromptus*, Frankfurt 1968, pp. 88–92.

214 Cf. the discussion of Adorno’s perspective by Erik Tawaststjerna, ‘Über Adornos Sibelius-Kritik’, in Otto Kolleritsch (ed.), *Adorno und die Musik*, Graz 1979, pp. 112–124.

215 Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, ‘Chasing a myth and a legend: “The British Musical renaissance” in a “Land without music”’, in *MT* 149/1904 (2008), p. 58.

216 ‘Nielsen, with his origins in Beethoven and Brahms, and Sibelius, with his in Beethoven and the Russian symphonists (with increasing awareness of Beethoven as he developed), together form an antithesis to the southern German-Bohemian, post-Schubertian-Wagnerian, completely romantic world of Mahler and Strauss (...). What they shared was a common ideal, a desire for discipline and forceful economy achieved without sacrificing warmth of expression.’ (Robert Simpson, *Sibelius and Nielsen*, London 1965, pp. 4 and 6.) This ideal finds its remarkable expression in the Fourth Symphony, which built the foundation for the last three symphonies and *Tapiola*. Sibelius wrote an Eighth Symphony from 1931 to 1950 that was, however, withdrawn and annihilated at the stage when the score had already been given to the copyist. Cf. Basil Cameron, ‘Sibelius’s Eighth Symphony’, in: *Composer* 13 (1964), p. 5. Arnold Whittall, on the other hand (‘Sibelius’ eighth Symphony’, in: *MIR* 25, 1964, pp. 239–240), felt that *Tapiola* should be considered Sibelius’s Eighth Symphony proper.

Schoenbergian generation, it was Sibelius and Vaughan Williams who 'were able to develop new symphonic styles within the diatonic system.'²¹⁷ Ralph Vaughan Williams observed:

'The impact of Sibelius on musical thought in England came just at the right moment. Wagner and Brahms seemed to be leading nowhere; we were all like kittens running after our own tails. This impasse was felt on the continent as well as in England, but in middle Europe it led to a complete revolt against all the traditions, and to a wandering about in the desert. They missed Sibelius – so much the worse for them. For us, in this country, the fresh air of his art permeated both our thought and our action, and we have discovered that it is possible to be absolutely new and yet within the strict tradition.'²¹⁸

The reception of Sibelius in Great Britain was in some ways exceptional. At the beginning of the century Rosa Newmarch, Hans Richter (who on 2 March 1905 conducted the first British performance of a Sibelius symphony, No. 2), Henry J. Wood (who had conducted first English performances of Strauss, Reger, Schoenberg and Debussy) and Granville Bantock promoted Sibelius's music through performances and the organization of visits of the composer to England.²¹⁹ Performances of his works took place regularly, and he caused quite a sensation: Churchill gave him cigars and books were published on him, the earliest ones by Rosa Newmarch (as early as 1906) and Cecil Gray.²²⁰ Symphonies Nos. 1–3 were premiered on gramophone records by the London Symphony Orchestra. Sibelius's reception was, at least temporarily, far more positive than that of for example Mahler, Beethoven or Brahms. His popularity may in part have been due to his non-Germanic nationality – after the First World War, German composers fell somewhat out of favour. In a letter to his wife, Delius wrote of the 1912 British first performance of the 1911 Fourth Symphony in Birmingham: 'Sibelius interested me much more [than Elgar's *The Music Makers*] – He is trying to do something new & has a fine feeling for nature & he is also unconventional – Sometimes a bit sketchy and ragged (...).'²²¹ And in the same year: 'the English like vagues for this and that. Now it's Sibelius, and when they're tired of him they'll

217 Paul Griffiths, *A concise history of modern music from Debussy to Boulez*, Norwich 1978, p. 23.

218 Ralph Vaughan Williams, 'Sibelius', in Ralph Vaughan Williams, *National Music and other essays*, Oxford etc. 31986, p. 263.

219 Ernest Newman, 'The independence of Sibelius', in Ernest Newman: *More Essays from the World of Music*, London 1958, p. 127. – Sibelius dedicated his Third Symphony to Granville Bantock – Bantock wrote to Dan Godfrey on 12 December 1927 that he considered the Fifth Sibelius's best symphony. The patron of the Bantock Society, on the other hand, whose president was Christopher Edmunds (later the principal of the Birmingham School of Music), was none other than Jean Sibelius; the committee consisted of Ivor Atkins, Adrian Boult, Rutland Boughton, Ernest Bullock, Havergal Brian, Edric Cundell, George Dyson, Christopher Edmunds, William Harris, Julius Harrison, Victor Hely-Hutchinson, Ernest Newman, Clarence Raybould, Jack Allan Westrup and others.

220 Rosa Newmarch, *Jean Sibelius. A Finnish Composer*, Leipzig etc. 1906. Rosa Newmarch, *Jean Sibelius. A short story of a long friendship*, Boston 1939. Cecil Gray, *Sibelius*, London etc. 1931. Cecil Gray, *Sibelius: The Symphonies*, London etc. 1935.

221 Frederick Delius to Jelka Delius, 1912. Quoted from Lionel Carley (ed.), *Delius. A Life in Letters*, Vol. II, Aldershot/Brookfield 1988, p. 93.

boost up Bruckner and Mahler.²²² In fact it took about fifty years (and Sibelius's death) for Bruckner and Mahler to overtake Sibelius in public favour – and then the ousting was nearly complete. This affinity for 'vogues' was already apparent in the eighteenth century, and would continue to be an important feature of British musical life until the present day.

Numerous composers, including Kaikhosru Sorabji, John Ireland²²³ and Constant Lambert,²²⁴ were ardent Sibelius supporters. A more recent enthusiast, Robert Simpson, composed four allegedly 'Sibelian' symphonies (which he then destroyed) before his fully valid First Symphony (1946-51). Sibelius's technique in the Fifth Symphony (1915), for example, to allow a scherzo to develop from a *Moderato* sonata movement even found a successor in Peter Maxwell Davies.²²⁵ Gerald Abraham wrote of the first movement of Sibelius's Third (1907):

In clearness and simplicity of outline, indeed, it is comparable with a Haydn or Mozart first movement. The one point in common with the first movement of the Second Symphony is the fusion, very simply effected by overlapping, of the end of the development with the beginning of the reprise. Nevertheless, the organic unity of the movement is far in advance of anything in the Viennese classical masters; and even the general architecture is held together in a way that had classical precedents but had never before, I think, been so fully developed.²²⁶

Another essential aspect of Sibelius's important influence is his close attachment to nature and the inspiration he drew from it without having to resort to folk airs.²²⁷ Accordingly, Harriet Cohen, who befriended Sibelius, reported that Arnold Bax 'has often told me that he considers his music to be directly derived from nature.'²²⁸ (This corresponds almost literally to what is frequently said about Sibelius.) Meanwhile, Sibelius wrote about Bax: 'Bax is one of the great men of our time; he has a fine musical mind, an original personal style, a splendid independence, and, thank God, he can write a melody and is not ashamed to do so.'²²⁹

Elsewhere Sibelius expressed himself thus:

(...) since Beethoven's time all the so-called symphonies, except Brahms's, have been symphonic poems. In many cases the composers have told us, or at least indicated, the programmes they had in mind; in others it is plain that there has been some story

222 Quoted from Andrew Porter, 'Some New British Composers', in: *MQ* 51 (1965), p. 12.

223 Murray Schafer, *British Composers in Interview*, London 1963, p. 28.

224 Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!*, Harmondsworth ²1948, pp. 231–241.

225 Paul Griffiths, *Peter Maxwell Davies*, London 1982, pp. 127 und 159.

226 Gerald Abraham, 'The Symphonies', in Gerald Abraham (ed.), *Sibelius. A Symposium*, London etc. ²1952, p. 22.

227 Jean Sibelius to Rosa Newmarch, 1906: 'I should be glad, Madame, if you would correct a common error. Often I find that my themes are described as folk tunes in the foreign press; so far I have never made use of any themes but those which are absolutely my own. Therefore the thematic material employed in *Finlandia* and *En Saga* is my own invention.' (Rosa Newmarch, *Jean Sibelius*, Boston 1939, p. 20.)

228 Harriet Cohen, *Music's Handmaid*, London 1936, p. 163.

229 Harold E. Johnson, *Sibelius*, London 1959, p. 159.

or landscape or set of images that the composer has set himself to illustrate. That is not my idea of a symphony. My symphonies are music conceived and worked out in terms of music and with no literary basis. I am not a literary musician; for me music begins where words cease. (...) A symphony should be first and last music. Of course it has happened that, quite unbidden, some mental image has established itself in my mind in connection with a movement I have been writing, but the germ and the fertilisation of my symphonies have been solely musical. When I set out to write symphonic poems it is a different matter. *Tapiola*, *Pohjola's Daughter*, *Lemminkäinen*, *The Swan of Tuonela*, are suggested to me by our national poetry, but I do not pretend that they are symphonies.²³⁰

Ernest Newman, however, doubts the veracity of this assertion: 'When Sibelius says that his symphonies are music conceived and worked out in terms of music, he forgets, if I may say so, that even in a symphonic poem or a song of the best kind the composer's mind functions in much the same way.'²³¹

Furthermore, one has to refer to Sibelius's special ability vis-à-vis complex inner structuring and his talent of continually building upon existing material.²³² Sibelius thus introduced a new technique for developing material, which entailed departing from a few germ motifs and thereby causing a stronger concentration of the individual movements. His innovation meant that themes were no longer the starting point, but now rather the destination. The entire material of the movement was developed from the motifs, causing a compression of the contents by means of a 'profound logic', as Sibelius himself called it, which has never been surpassed.

Regarding another novelty that Sibelius introduced, Percy Young noted:

'Throughout the first symphony there is an awareness of instrumental sonorities that was quite new in 1901. Lines rather than masses of sound predominate; woodwind is independent of string – notice the particularly Sibelian effect of woodwind rising out of the score in progressions of thirds; long pedal notes in the bass give an amplitude to the upper writing; contrasts of tone are abrupt and refreshing; there is, too, a new rhythmic energy that is, at the same time, flexible. And the melodic idiom is taciturn.'²³³

In the course of the generally prevailing tendency towards simplicity and clarity (see pp. 731ff.), this linear clarification is just as little surprising as the formal concentration that led to the principle of a one-movement symphony in the Seventh Symphony and simultaneously to a reduction of instrumentation.

230 Jean Sibelius in conversation with Walter Legge. Reprinted in the *Daily Telegraph*, 29 December 1934. Quoted from Ernest Newman, 'Sibelius on composition: the fallacy of "pure" music', in Ernest Newman, *More Essays from the World of Music*, London 1958, p. 121.

231 Ernest Newman, *ibid.*, p. 123.

232 Cf. Robert Layton, 'Sibelius in England', in: *Music in Britain* 70 (1965), p. 16.

233 Percy Young, *Symphony*, London 1957, pp. 60–61.

‘Whereas most modern music is concerned mainly with vocabulary, Sibelius is concerned with content; he has not, like so many contemporary composers, been forced to adopt an *outré* manner in a vain attempt to disguise the commonplace character of his thought. The quarter-tone quartets of Aloys Haba, for example, differ from the quartets of Brahms only through being written in the quarter-tone scale. Once we have assimilated their somewhat uninviting sounds, we find ourselves back in the old world of thought and form. Sibelius’s symphonies rarely contain any chords which, examined by themselves, cannot be found in the works of Grieg or Tchaikovsky. Yet through the manner of their presentation these chords are made to take on an entirely new meaning. Their importance is due, not to their momentary sound in space, but to their placing in time.

This power of sustained and concentrated thought over a long period of time gives to Sibelius’s works a spaciousness which is in striking contrast to the shortwindedness of even the best “revolutionary music”, and for a parallel to which we must go back beyond even Wagner to the first movements of the *Eroica* and *Choral* symphonies. One is so used to being told that some trifling and shortwinded neo-classical pastiche represents a return to the spirit of Bach, that one is a little chary of evoking the shade of Beethoven where Sibelius is concerned; but the comparison is inevitable, for not only is Sibelius the most important symphonic writer since Beethoven, but he may even be described as the only writer since Beethoven who has definitely advanced what, after all, is the most complete formal expression of the musical spirit.²³⁴

Although Constant Lambert did not write a symphony, he explains clearly what British composers found so attractive about Sibelius: a new departure from tradition. A highly important aspect was his interest in experimenting with the traditional four-movement form – something that in fact became fairly common in British symphonism and is certainly not wholly attributable to Sibelius’s influence. One has to think of the interweaving of a traditional symphony in several movements with the concept of a one-movement symphony, as can already be found in Schumann, Parry or Austin, but also Bantock’s programme symphonies (Sibelius dedicated his Third Symphony to Bantock). Sibelius also introduced the ‘condensation’ of the four-movement tradition into three movements (as in his Third and Fifth Symphonies), whereby the middle movement is a set of variations which remain comparatively close to the theme (the same can be detected in Tippett’s First Symphony). In truth, however, this practice was already very usual in the eighteenth century, and indeed represents the beginning of the concert symphony. The three-movement concept enjoyed a distinct popularity in Great Britain, as evidenced in the symphonies of Bax (most of whose symphonies are correspondingly built; the final movement in the Seventh Symphony is a variation movement), Rubbra (First and Fourth Symphonies), Davie, Walton (Second Symphony – the last movement is also a slow variation movement), Stevens (First Symphony), Carse, Gerhard, Walford Davies, Holbrooke (Third and Fourth Symphonies),

234 Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!*, Harmondsworth ²1948, p. 226.

Arnell (Second Symphony), Morris (in D), Lloyd (Third Symphony), Boughton (*Deirdre*), Sampson (as in Carse's Third Symphony, the middle movement is a variation movement), Brian (Fourth Symphony), Darnton (First and Second Symphonies), Lucas, Bate (Third Symphony), Foulds (*Pasquinades Symphoniques*), Demuth (Fourth and Fifth Symphonies – the last movement of the Fifth is also a variation movement), Hart, Tippett (in B^b major), Brent-Smith (*The South-Downs*), Bush (First Symphony), Rootham (Second Symphony), Britten (*Sinfonia da Requiem*) and numerous smaller symphonies. The composers in this listing all employed different approaches to the three-movement form, however.

Edmund Rubbra's (see also pp. 422ff.) three-movement First Symphony Op. 44 occupied him from 1935 to 1937. Years later he described the work's origin as follows:

'When I began writing the First Symphony, there was, as far as I can recollect, no compulsion towards such a work because of the existence of Walton's No. 1 or Vaughan Williams's No. 4 (...). If there are aggressive factors in all three symphonies, it is probably because they all reflect a prevailing atmosphere, for I certainly did not set out to make an aggressive statement²³⁵. Indeed, exactly the opposite, for the first movement to be written was the Finale, which is a long essay in the kind of inward lyricism that is common in my later works. Having decided that *this* was the Finale and not the first movement, I was forced into making the kind of dramatic statement in the first movement that would find its resolution in the relatively calm atmosphere of the ending. It is a most difficult formal problem to find a first movement for an existing finale (I had the same problem in Symphony No. 6), and I could only solve it by reversing the direction of its diatonic beginning (B-C – B-A) and inflecting the A to sharp (A[#]-B-C) thus forming a chromatic fragment. This, dissonantly harmonised, forcibly stated on the brass, and surrounded by active string and woodwind writing that stresses the semitone, starts the symphony off *in medias res*. It is an intense movement, even in its quietest moments.²³⁶

Ralph Scott Grover analyses the movement, with which Rubbra clearly supplies the model for the first movement of Malcolm Arnold's Fifth Symphony, alongside Harold Truscott,²³⁷ *not* as a free sonata principal movement even if it is doubtful that Rubbra did not plan it as such (though as a kind of monothematic sonata principal movement). On the one hand, Rubbra handles the form more freely, but in this special case presents the main theme relatively late (bar 28). As in every following symphony, the first movement ends softly – one of Rubbra's striking stylistic features that leads away from bare affirmative noise and towards intellectually informed mysticism.

235 The strong expression of moods that is inherent in all three works mentioned can be traced to Sibelius. This quality is also found in Clifford and Tippett, but not as intensely.

236 'Edmund Rubbra, now 70, looks at his eight symphonies', in: *The Listener* (27 May 1971), p. 690. Cf. Edmund Rubbra in Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, p. 16.

237 Harold Truscott, 'Edmund Rubbra (b. 1901) and Michael Tippett (b. 1905)', in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*, Vol. II, Harmondsworth 1967, pp. 182–183.

The symphony's second movement deals with a French dance, which Rubbra found printed in *Grove's Dictionary* under the heading *Périgourdine*. There is a more specific reference to the tune's origin in a note at the bottom of the score: the eight-bar theme of this movement was taken from *Essai sur la Musique* (Paris 1780) of De la Borde and Roussier. The original is in G major. 'It is a tune which, like the original tune in the Scherzo of the Fifth Symphony, contains within itself all sorts of contrapuntal possibilities, and these I made full use of. Its most prevalent interval is the fourth, which appropriately anticipates the *basso ostinato* that accompanies the main theme of the Finale.'²³⁸ In order to escape the danger of letting the movement slip into naivety or superficiality, Rubbra used all 'contrapuntal possibilities' provided by the material.

The finale is, according to Rubbra himself, in sonata principal movement form. However, in keeping with his ideas of 1939, he uses the concept flexibly:

'It can no longer be inferred from the word 'Symphony' at the head of an orchestral work that the music is divisible into fairly clearly defined sections, such as, in the first movement [the most usual one for the employment of sonata form], exposition, development and recapitulation. There are, of course, and must be, contrasts subject-matter, but these contrasts need not be in the places assigned to them by the text-book. Nor need the argument (or development) wait for a double bar, or the recapitulation be anything like a full repetition of the material of the exposition. This does not, by any means, imply a loosening of formal principles: only that the modern composer, in using material – as is mostly the case – that is not strongly anchored to a key-centre, must find other means of making the structure cohere in a logical manner (...) Now the nature of the themes of a Symphony determine the nature of the form. If the latter is unsatisfactory, it is usually because the composer has, owing to pre-conceived formal ideas, interfered with the evolution of the melodic thought, instead of allowing it to unfold naturally. It may be thought that if the latter course is taken the music, by continuous suggestion, would move too far afield, and thus lose touch with the initial impulse. This is true, however, only if the composer has no grasp of the formal implications of the idea. Provided he has this grasp, the idea is like a circle which, however much it expands, always has the same centre. When the expansion is at its fullest, then the contrasting idea has every right to appear. This, in turn, will expand and evolve.'²³⁹

A certain Mahlerian influence is apparent in the slow final movement (the dotted *ostinato* figure in the strings recalls Mahler's First Symphony, which Henry Wood had premiered in England as early as 1903) as well as a preview of Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*. Sibelius's influence is particularly strong in this work, in which all of Rubbra's later stylistic means are generally laid out as well. The counterpoint is still subordinate to the whole at this stage, and Rubbra's intellectual approach does not yet oppose invigorating composing, namely in two

238 'Edmund Rubbra, now 70, looks at his eight symphonies', in: *The Listener* (27 May 1971), p. 690.

239 Edmund Rubbra, 'Second Symphony', in: *Tempo* 1 (1939), p. 8.

different aspects: (a) in the relative formal freedom he grants himself without ever leaving the frame of the justifiable; (b) the 'nature-mood' that makes Rubbra's musical processing seem particularly organic, without neglecting strong impulses, aspects of instrumentation and the balance of the elements. Harold Truscott felt that the instrumentation might perhaps be too thick through the counterpoint. But with increasing knowledge of the work, he found: 'Whether or not it is ideal orchestration, it is the only possible one for this music, and the music is too important to ignore. And it is not true that there is no sense of orchestral colour; for the purposes of the music, there is plenty.'²⁴⁰ The counterpoint might simply curtail an especially strong booming-out of the instrumentational techniques.²⁴¹

The first performance of the work was a great success, and in spite of the widespread opinion that Rubbra was more successful as a symphonist in later works, contemporary reviews were consistently positive. Clearly an important new symphonist had arrived, one who could possibly outshine Walton and Vaughan Williams²⁴² (but then in January 1938 Moeran struck out with the première of his G minor Symphony).

The success of the symphony encouraged Rubbra considerably: 'I quickly wrote the Second, the Third, and the Fourth in the space of five years – from 1935 to 1940. Of course, they were all composed so close together that they were, in a sense, reactions to each other – not separately contained symphonies. No. 2, for instance, wasn't like No. 1. It begins with a single line, and it is more austere and contrapuntal. No. 3 is – I presume one could call it – more lyrical, and then No. 4 is more chordal.'²⁴³ (For symphonies Nos. 2–3 see pp. 424ff, No. 4 pp. 736ff.)

Religious impulse found its reflection in symphonies by Edmund Rubbra, Benjamin Britten (*Sinfonia da Requiem*), Ralph Vaughan Williams (Fifth Symphony), Cyril Rootham (Second Symphony) and Norman Demuth as well as in Paul Creston, Arthur Honegger and many others. The proximity of **Vaughan Williams's** (see also pp. 530ff., 575ff., 619ff. and 725ff.) Fifth Symphony in D (1938–43) to his opera *The Pilgrim's Progress* has often been stressed²⁴⁴,

240 Harold Truscott, 'Style and Orchestral Technique', in Lewis Foreman (ed.), *Edmund Rubbra: Composer*. Rickmansworth 1977, p. 26.

241 Cf. also Harold Truscott, 'Edmund Rubbra (b. 1901) and Michael Tippett (b. 1905)', in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*, Vol. II, Harmondsworth 1967, pp. 182–183.

242 Robert Simpson commented upon a radio performance of the Rubbra's First Symphony: 'You will probably agree it's a severe, even a stringent piece. It's rather curious that Britain in the 1930s produced three somewhat fierce symphonies: this one, Walton's First, and Vaughan Williams's Fourth. Some mystics think it was the War coming, though I don't see why three British composers needed some clairvoyant excuse for feeling a bit rampant at that time.' (Quoted from Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, pp. 48–49.)

243 Edmund Rubbra in conversation with Ralph Scott Grover 1980. Quoted from Ralph Scott Grover, *The music of Edmund Rubbra*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1993, pp. 16–17.

244 Cf. e.g. Deryck Cooke, 'Vaughan Williams's Musical Language', in: *The Listener* LXIII/1619 (1960), p. 639; Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 1992, pp. 261–262; Wilfrid Mellers, *Vaughan Williams and the vision of Albion*, London 1991, pp. 124–126; Hugh Ottaway, 'Vaughan Williams: Symphony in D and *The Pilgrim's Progress*', in: *MT* XCIV (1953), pp. 456–458.

among other places also on the title page of the autograph score. In this way, the symphony does not (similar to the *Sinfonia Antartica*) immediately suggest an immanent programme, but in various respects the connotations cause greater difficulties. The opera stealthily creeps into the mind and also unintentionally equips the symphony with programmatical aspects. This is not the place to deal at length with the passages that were ‘borrowed’ from the opera – however, it is striking that all employed material is from the first act and the second scene of the second act of the completed opera.²⁴⁵ The end of the symphony brings an apotheosis that would not have been possible in the opera – the symphony is in this respect an alternative solution to the problems set up in the opera. Percy Young described the opera as a ‘symphonic commentary’,²⁴⁶ but the symphony is really a symphonic comment on the opera. Only in the scherzo does Vaughan Williams refrain from using any material from the opera, which has led some authors to maintain that the symphony pursued its own compelling logic and is therefore Vaughan Williams’s best. The Fifth Symphony was an escape of sorts, one that enabled him to pursue the ideas initiated in the Fourth Symphony (the Sixth Symphony is not so much a further development as an additional experiment to express himself in that direction).²⁴⁷ However, Wilfrid Mellers wrote: ‘Vaughan Williams’s Fifth Symphony seemed, at the time it appeared, to be not only a masterpiece but also a consummation. If it was puzzling that the previous symphony had been the violent Fourth, one realized that the Fifth did not evade but rather transcended that conflict; and it soon became evident that the Fifth was also an end in a sense other than consummatory. A climax to Vaughan Williams’s religious sensibility, it was also a farewell to Eden, at least in a traditionally religious context.’²⁴⁸

The symphony is dedicated ‘(without permission and with the sincerest flattery) to Jean Sibelius²⁴⁹ whose great example is worthy of all imitation’; however, a passage for strings in the first movement, the symphony’s opening (similar to the opening of Sibelius’s Fifth Symphony), the presentation of the theme in the first movement with the wind against the rushing semiquavers in the strings (quite similar to Sibelius’s Third or Moeran’s *Sinfonietta*),²⁵⁰ and the use of germinal motifs are the only instances of some direct imitation.²⁵¹

The symphony begins softly with a gentle horn call over an unresolved modal minor seventh,

245 Hugh Ottaway, *ibid.*, pp. 456–457.

246 Quoted *ibid.*, p. 458.

247 Peter Pirie, ‘The RVW enigma’, in: *M&M* 30/2 (1971), p. 41.

248 Wilfrid Mellers, *Vaughan Williams and the vision of Albion*, London 1991, p. 187.

249 At that time Great Britain and Finland were, technically speaking, enemies. Cf. Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 1992, pp. 292–293.

250 Cf. Geoffrey Self, *The music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, p. 184.

251 Cf. Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 1992, pp. 279–283.

Ex. 107

with the second subject (if any of these continuously changing themes can be called thus) ([5]) moving the harmony towards E. 'Vaughan Williams's modulations are not so much contrast as evolution; the modal behaviour of the themes promotes side-stepping modulations into keys a tone or a semitone apart. Beethoven's modulations to the flat supertonic are dramatic events; Vaughan Williams's are a shift of tonal perspective, occurring as one theme grows into the next.'²⁵² The second theme proves to be an expansion of the horn call at the beginning of the symphony, reaching at the end of the exposition C minor. In the development Vaughan Williams develops a motif entered only in the codetta of the exposition – a fall to the flattened second. This chromaticism, usually in the penetrating tone-colour of the oboe or cor anglais, can naturally generate harmonic tension, as opposed to the lyrical modality of the main themes. The development is based completely on this motif, while the modality of the themes, comparable to Sibelius's technique, becomes pentatonic arabesques, successively increasing modulations. 'The ultimate climax, in B \flat , is hardly less powerful than that of a Beethoven symphony; but whereas Beethoven's drama implies a conflict between the Will and the forces that impede its fulfilment, in Vaughan Williams's symphony the drama is inherent in the process of growth.'²⁵³ This climax leads into the recapitulation, but here again the minor seventh remains unresolved.

A grotesque interlude of strongly rhythmic stamp is the scherzo, analysed by Lutz-Werner Hesse as pronouncedly complex,²⁵⁴ which from the basic ductus could have originated in the ballet *Job* or even the Fourth Symphony – however, unity with the other movements is achieved through the soft beginning and the calming coda. This becomes all the clearer in the slow movement, headed 'Romanza'. Into the manuscript of the score, Vaughan Williams wrote the following quotation from Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*: 'Upon that place there stood a cross and a little below a sepulchre ... Then he said: "He hath given me rest by his sorrow and life by his death"?' The movement begins with diatonic sounds that recall the *Fantasia on a theme of Thomas Tallis*; from the strings the English horn arises with an aeolian theme that justifies the temporary activation and chromaticization of the movement.

252 Wilfrid Mellers in Alec Harman/Wilfrid Mellers, *Man and his music*, London 1962, p. 978.

253 *Ibid.*, p. 979.

254 Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, pp. 119–120.

The serene close prepares the way for the final passacaglia, which resolves the whole symphony into the unity of the technique of divisions on a ground, or passacaglia. Hints of the alleluias of the Easter hymn *Lasst uns erfreuen* were audible in the Romanza; now they become increasingly obtrusive.²⁵⁵ When the first theme of the first movement eventually reappears, with its unresolved horn-call, we understand that the melodic material of the whole symphony has been leading towards these consummatory alleluias, and in the Epilogue, the alleluias create, at long last, a harmonic resolution. The flat 7th is sharpened. “The final resolution of the cadence is the end of what had seemed to be an eternal cycle; so the alleluias of the Epilogue can only herald another life. “When the Day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the River side, into which, as he went, he said Death, where is thy Sting? And as he went down deeper, he said, Grave, where is thy Victory? So he passed over, and the Trumpets sounded for him on the other side.” Slowly, almost imperceptibly, entry upon entry, the strings spread out until the vision is fulfilled: it is as though one had found, unaware, that the sky is suddenly filled with angels. Despite the beautiful prologue to Part II of *Gerontius* which so resembles Vaughan Williams, Elgar stops short at the river-bank, as Vaughan Williams does not. Whereas Delius and Holst, in their search for a metaphysical ecstasy, disintegrate cadential resolution, Vaughan Williams discovers it. His greatness consists in his positive assurance.²⁵⁶

The technique of the contemplative rather than dramatic use of the sonata structure was already prepared in the *Pastoral Symphony*; here, however, it finds a religious reinterpretation and additional elevation. The motif of the strings continually recurs in the first movement, a device that Wilfrid Mellers connects with Sibelius.²⁵⁷

Ex. 108



It could in fact be derived from *In the Fen Country*, but here, by means of concentration to the nuclear intervals and the rhythm, Vaughan Williams picks up Sibelius's technique of germ cell development. This motif, or germ, is, apart from the series of 3rds from the beginning of the symphony with minor seventh in the bass, the cell from which the symphony pulls its strength. At least in Symphony No. 3 onwards, this germ cell development (which, however, is by no means run through as strictly as in Sibelius; in the Fifth Symphony the quotations from *The Pilgrim's Progress* cross-run this technique) supports this point of view.

255 Vaughan Williams denied that this connection was intentional, saying the phrase were more like the second phrase of *The First Nowell* (cf. Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 1992, p. 282).

256 Wilfrid Mellers in Alec Harman/Wilfrid Mellers, *Man and his music*, London 1962, p. 980.

257 Wilfrid Mellers, *Music and Society*, London 1950, p. 168.

Hesse claims that Vaughan Williams might have introduced the self-sufficiency of the epilogue with the Fifth Symphony, and this was his 'independent service on the field of form processing'.²⁵⁸ However, this claim does not hold water: Arnold Bax applied the technique of the independent epilogue very much earlier.²⁵⁹ Hesse's other explanations are still valid, however:

'Analyzing common features in the epilogues [of Vaughan Williams] it is striking that their character is meditative except for one exception, the Fourth Symphony. In this fact we find probably also the key to the importance of the epilogue for Vaughan Williams: it represents a summary of the meaning of the symphony on a higher level and is therefore a spiritual-musical conclusion which furthermore adds to the formal balance. Therefore, the epilogue of the Fourth Symphony as "conclusion" can not be meditative: the dammed dynamics must lead to the blast. The epilogue finally induces this with a maximum of thematic concentration. In the Sixth Symphony, the harmonic conflict of the first movement (presentation of E minor by F minor) is carried into the last movement, where at the end the *pizzicato*-basses again and again change between the sounds of G and G[♯](=A^b) before they decide for good for G. Why the whole movement is entitled "Epilogue" is easily explained. It takes the unrest of the preceding movements – with other conclusion than in the Fourth Symphony – together in one movement that appears externally calm, more precisely considered however performs almost oppressingly. J. Day writes on this matter: "(The finale) is an epilogue, the longest movement in the symphony and the unexpected yet inevitable solution to the problems set by the first three movements. It is pianissimo throughout – yet it is not peaceful. It is quiet without being serene, austere and full of eerie tension. (...) All in all, it is a remarkable tour de force; a fugue without a theme, in which the composer broods over a limitless waste, so bleak and featureless that its impression is all the more profound on the thoughtful listener."^{260/261}

Of course, Vaughan Williams cannot be credited with having invented the technique of integrating pre-classic forms like the passacaglia into the symphony – this device can also be found in Brahms's Fourth Symphony and in Dvořák, Reger and many others. The technique did, however, find many supporters (Gordon Jacob's Second Symphony, R. O. Morris, Bernard Stevens, William Walton's Second Symphony) in the years that followed: the entire neo-classicist movement of Hindemith's pupils as well as its counterpart in America (Schuman's Third Symphony²⁶²: Passacaglia – Fuga/Chorale – Toccata) is rooted

258 Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, p. 121. Cf. also Elliot Schwartz, *The Symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Amherst 1964, New York 1982, p. 169.

259 Robin Hull points out that Henry Cope Colles made him aware of the fact that a kind of epilogue was present immediately before the coda of Beethoven's *Eroica* as well as in Elgar's Second Symphony and Cello Concerto. Strauss's *Don Quixote* and Vaughan Williams's *A London Symphony* are also mentioned (cf. Robin Hull, 'Approach to Bax's symphonies', in: *M&L* XXIII, 1942, pp. 109–110).

260 James Day, *Vaughan Williams*, London/New York 1961, 1964, p. 161.

261 Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, pp. 122–123.

262 'Atterberg, Barber, Berg, Bloch, Bingham, Britten, Citkowitz, De Filippi, Diamond, Dohnányi, Dubensky, Eppert, Fiorillo, Giorni, Jacob, Haubiel, Hindemith, Karg-Elert, Kaun, Mamorsky, Maesch, Morris, Pisk, Piston, Ravel,

in this rediscovery of Baroque-era music. In Vaughan Williams's passacaglia, however, developmental features can be found, and themes from past movements are recapitulated and conclude the work satisfactorily²⁶³; this constitutes a very individual solution in what has recently been called historicist modernism.

In this connection it must not be forgotten that many aspects of Vaughan Williams's harmony, including avoiding the tension of tonic/dominant or the use of dissonant-free chord formations,²⁶⁴ derived from modal melodic characteristics, even if Vaughan Williams himself 'invents' unique modes (it is often a question of the use of the modes, which Vaughan Williams discovered in folk songs or music of the Tudor era and brought back to life). Furthermore, bitonality (*Flos campi*, Fourth Symphony) enriches the harmonic field.

Michael Tippett (London, 2 January 1905–London, 8 January 1998) wrote his Symphony in B^b in 1933, his first work upon finishing his studies with Charles Wood and Gordon Jacob,²⁶⁵ from whom he allegedly had learnt nothing (Wood taught counterpoint so unsystematically that Tippett turned to Morris for instruction after Wood's death. Given the importance counterpoint held for Tippett, this was just the right move. Jacob's influence in contrast can nonetheless sometimes be detected in Tippett's music), and R. O. Morris at the Royal College of Music, where he had, among others, been a fellow student of Imogen Holst's. As in the String Trio in B^b, which he had written while still under Morris's tutelage, Morris's influence²⁶⁶ is evident in the symphony concerning both the still very traditional external form (slow introduction, exposition, from [5] development, from [21] recapitulation with inverted recurrence of the themes, coda) and his use of counterpoint.

But Sibelius's influence can also be proven,²⁶⁷ in particular in the technique of delivering complex sections and a continuous evolution of the entire movement from small motivic cells, without, however, giving up the traditional structure of a sonata principal movement (for example in the first movement). 'In the last movement, a much simpler rondo form, Tippett applies this technique [of "continual development"] on the melodic plane only. The lyrical second subject (modelled on the horns' theme in the finale of Sibelius's Symphony No. 5, the model for the whole movement) is built up by expanding and then contracting the phrase lengths, all of which begin with the same motif (as had the first three sections of the first movement).'²⁶⁸

Read, Reger, Riegger, Schönberg, Schuman, Scott, Sowerby, Starokadomsky, Vaughan Williams, Weiner, Weiss and Wolpe are among the twentieth-century composers whose works include one or more passacaglias.' (Leon Stein, 'The passacaglia in the twentieth century', in: *MeL* XL, 1959, p. 151.)

263 Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, p. 111.

264 Cf. Lutz-Werner Hesse, *ibid.*, pp. 100–101.

265 Tippett avoided studying with Vaughan Williams, fearing that he would not be able to escape the latter's not very intellectual influence later on.

266 Ian Kemp, *Tippett – the composer and his music*, Oxford etc. 1987, p. 78.

267 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

268 *Ibid.*, p. 79.

The musical language Tippett used for filling this formal scheme was still in large part derivative, as can be seen in the beginning of the exposition of the first movement: the first theme is marked *a*, the second *b*.

Ex. 109

One of Sibelius's typical fingerprints is the unobtrusively introduced chromatic appoggiatura, gradually swelling to a sharply articulated release: an example of this in Tippett is at *c*.²⁶⁹ The resulting dissonance gives the symphony much of its harmonic sharpness. In later works Tippett was to turn this little means into highly individual semitonal clashes. Sibelius expanded it into significant rhetoric, as if the music is being forcibly wrenched away from a position of comfort; Tippett creates a comparable effect in the beginning of the symphony's finale as well as in the beginning of the second movement of his String Quartet No. 1 or later in the *Fantasia Concertante on a theme of Corelli*. So although Tippett eventually decided to withdraw the symphony (it was, according to the score, not to be performed until 75 years after his death) 'because of its unassimilated Sibelian influence and of what he considered unsatisfactory transition sections'²⁷⁰, it is easy to understand why he delayed ten years before reaching the decision. From this crucial, preliminary integration of new and old elements emerged his String Quartet No. 1, the work in which he finally discovered his individual style.

269 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 80.

270 *Ibid.*, p. 80.



Illustration 43. Arnold Bax, photograph by Herbert Lambert, c1922. The National Portrait Gallery, London; reproduced by kind permission.

Scott Goddard wrote on the first performance of the work: 'One writes of this work as one might of a new Sibelius symphony of the middle period, or of a simpler, shorter Bax symphony. It is undoubtedly a work of real promise. The critic's duty is not to act as prophet. Nevertheless we shall look with more than usual interest to the next performance of this symphony and shall hope to hear more of the composer.'²⁷¹ The revised first movement of the Symphony was given in July 1935 again; the critic of this performance wrote: 'Its significance is that the composer attempts to weld together strongly contrasted moods into a consistent design. The opening *Lento* arouses interest, not completely sustained throughout, perhaps, but it is to be remembered that this movement is intended to be followed by others which may justify its prelude character. The actual themes seem too small for the emphasis laid on them, and some of the *fortissimo* emphasis seemed needlessly crude. But it is the crudeness of over-earnest youth, not of ineptitude.'²⁷²

Arnold Edward Trevor Bax (Streatham, London, 8 November 1883–Cork, 3 October 1953) had, to all intents and purposes, already faded into obscurity by the time of his death. Rediscovery had to bide its time until the end of the 1960s and was largely thanks to Lewis Foreman's and Vernon Handley's outstanding advocacy (although the valuable work of Colin Scott-Sutherland and others must not be forgotten). Bax studied alongside Eric Coates, Adam Carse, York Bowen, Benjamin Dale, Myra Hess, Montague Phillips, Paul Corder, Arthur Hinton, William Henry Reed and Harry Farjeon at the Royal Academy of Music with Frederick Corder (a devoted Wagnerian whose pupils often struggled to shake off the Bayreuthian influence²⁷³ – see p. 510) and Alexander Mackenzie, the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music (and who had known Liszt personally). Bax developed into an excellent pianist, but felt an aversion towards conducting, be it his own works or those of others. Bax and Ireland, and occasionally also Bliss, Scott and Walton, remained trapped in late-Romantic harmony; this was not the case for Bridge, Holst or Brian, however (the latter in particular abandoned the late-Romantic tendency early on).

Eric Blom pointed to Bax's habit of slowing down the momentum of his works with the presentation of the second theme²⁷⁴ – this practice makes Bax's weaknesses during the construction of symphonic movements all the more apparent and causes his nature – in spite of multiple applications of the sonata principal movement form²⁷⁵ – to appear all the more rhapsodic. But on any form he worked on, he essentially was an ardent, imaginative personality with a great love of nature. 'One does not find in them mystical experiences

271 Quoted from Scott Goddard, 'The younger English composers – IX. Michael Tippett', in: *MMR* 69/805 (1939), p. 73.

272 Frank Howes, 'R.C.M. Patron's Fund: New Orchestral Works', in: *The Times* 47115 (13 July 1935), p. 10.

273 Cf. Edward Dent, 'Arnold Bax', in: *The Nation and The Athenaeum* XXXII/8 (1922), pp. 328–330.

274 Eric Blom, *Music in England*, Harmondsworth/New York ³1945, p. 204.

275 Frank Howes, *Full Orchestra*, London ⁵1943, pp. 112–113.

but rather a delight in the romantic, the poetical, and the pagan.²⁷⁶ It is in his tone poems rather than his symphonies that Bax displays his abilities to best advantage. Minor echoes of Celtic folk-music (for example the first theme of the slow movement in the Fourth Symphony) are of rather secondary importance, while the importance of Sibelius, as will be clear later on, was much stronger. In all his melodic invention, it is motifs rather than themes that attain importance in the course of a Bax movement. But Nielsen (above all in the Second Symphony), Tchaikovsky and Borodin were of no small importance in shaping Bax's scores.²⁷⁷

As Lawrence Gilman points out in connection with the tone poem *The Garden of Fand* (1913-16), the colours of Bax's instrumentation often drift towards Debussy; Gilman also stresses Bax's individuality, however: 'Bax has all this upon his orchestra with singular poetic intensity, singular eloquence and beauty.'²⁷⁸ And Robin Hull wrote:

'The orchestration of Bax's symphonies confirms previous evidence that his natural mastery and original handling of this medium belong to the foremost rank. His scoring, though apparently generous, rarely outweighs the material: few composers can handle large resources with such self-restraint and fine judgment. Bax's musical substance requires for its expression many novel and fascinating relationships between instruments whose combined use has opened up immense possibilities in the field of orchestral writing. He yields nothing to the disastrous fallacy that originality may be attained by the pursuit of novelty *per se*; but both novelty and virtuosity are given their legitimate place. Illustrations of the composer's felicity in revealing musical character through instrumental means are countless: it must suffice here to mention four. The rich and sombre tone of the viola (the first subjects of the slow movements in Nos. 3 and 5 respectively) is ideally suited to the veiled moods distinguishing many reflective passages in the symphonies; the clarinet (the opening bars of No. 5; also the main subject (with oboe) in the epilogue to No. 3) and cor anglais (the second subject of the slow movement in No. 5) are perfect exponents of that poignant lyricism in which Bax excels; and no one has appreciated more musically the extent to which the dark sonority of the trombones can express an atmosphere of menace and foreboding. (The slow movement of No. 1 furnishes, when studied in its entirety, illustrations of a particularly comprehensive kind. The above examples are no more than representative of innumerable passages showing equally or even more remarkably characteristic handling of these instruments.) Such marvels of orchestration as occur in the symphonies are not external to, or in any way a substitute for, the essence of creative imagination: they communicate a wealth of original thought which itself justifies so profound an impression upon the receptive listener.'²⁷⁹

Bax's first attempt at a symphony was his four-movement Symphony in F (Op. 8) of c. 1907 (his

276 Gordon Jacob, *The Composer and his Art*, London etc. 1955, p. 92.

277 Cf. Gwilym Beechey, 'The Legacy of Bax', in *MO CVI/1271* (1983), p. 359.

278 Lawrence Gilman, 'Some Celtic Music, Old and New', in: *The North American Review* CCXIII (1921), p. 704.

279 Robin Hull, 'Approach to Bax's symphonies', in: *M&L* XXIII (1942), pp. 104-105.

only four-movement symphony), which he completed only in short score.²⁸⁰ This very first attempt already presents a couple of typical Baxian traits, for example Straussian influence (ex. 110) and a Celtic lilt (ex. 111).

Ex. 110

Sehr langsam und sehnsuchtsvoll

Ex. 111

Example 111, already sufficiently well defined to be recognizably second subject material – ‘a kind of evocation of the spirit of Fintan [the spirit of Irish song, created by Bax under the pseudonym Dermot O’Byrne] singing “memories through the fainting light”²⁸¹ – is lyrical and possesses a hint of that haunting Celtic nostalgia that has all too often led to the supposition that Bax ‘was for ever lost in that limbo of movements whose impetus petered out in the noise of subsequent eruptive happenings. The moment was of more significance than simply an echo of Celtic twilight. For Fintan sang not only in the long twilight, but along the warring plains and smote victorious chords from the harp of the winds. And in the mature works this Celtic element has a twofold expression, by turns eloquent and breathtakingly beautiful, and then suddenly harsh and warlike.²⁸²

Bax gives no hint of a programme, nor of any programmatic origin that the work as a whole might have had. But he does preface the third movement, *Intermezzo*, with a note suggesting an overall theme:

280 In contrast to what he wrote in his book on Bax (*Arnold Bax*, London 1973, pp. 15, 79 and 194), Colin Scott-Sutherland corrects himself in a letter to the author of 20 September 1997: there was only one early symphonic attempt, and this had four movements. – The short score was orchestrated by Martin Yates in c. 2013.

281 Colin Scott-Sutherland, *Arnold Bax*, London 1973, p. 16.

282 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

‘The motif of this intermezzo was suggested by, and to some extent based upon, the central idea of *Der Tor und der Tod* [*The Fool and Death*] by Hugo von Hoffmansthal [recte: Hofmannsthal]. The central idea of this author’s play, Claudio (der Tor) is the impersonation of the over-civilized and hyper-sensitive modern man, the tragedy of whose destiny is to be traced to the super-subtlety and complexity of his emotional life. At the end of life he realizes that he has not really lived in the fullest sense of the word. A perverse demon has haunted him throughout the whole course of his earthly existence preventing him from sounding the depths of any of the great spiritual experiences and mingling them together in such a manner that joy has become confused with sorrow and love with hate and so forth. It is this central conception that this intermezzo sets forth to illustrate. In the scherzo section the demon of unrest and perversity is represented and in that part of the movement usually occupied by the Trio three motifs [sic] are introduced symbolizing respectively (a) Love (b) Religion or Philosophy (c) The Battle of Life. Each of these is interrupted and broken to pieces by the theme of the Scherzo. In the coda the subject of the programme dies returning with a broken sigh to the love of his youth.’²⁸³

Lewis Foreman has thoroughly consulted the manuscript, and his conclusions are equally thorough:

‘Although the conception of the work is Straussian, the musical working out reveals a number of conflicting styles that the young composer has endeavoured to mould together, and they work surprisingly well. (...) In trying to work out what this work may have sounded like in orchestral dress, we are given more than a hint if we look at the chromatic middle section of the full orchestral score of *Fatherland* (front end paper), which is exactly contemporary with it. The theme of the Intermezzo itself is in waltz-time, and we find Bax hinting at a Straussian waltz-style before *Rosenkavalier* was thought of (ex. 113). The three “trio” motifs are also of interest. The first, “Love”, has previously been quoted by Scott-Sutherland as an example of Straussian writing, but in it we should not miss an “Irish” melodic line struggling to break through the chromatics that Bax associates with “Love”. “Religion or Philosophy” is presented by a hymn-like idea, while “Battle” really does remind us of Strauss. There are interesting premonitions of the later Bax in this work. The piano style of the sketch is reminiscent of the orchestral Scherzo (1913, orch. 1917), and the use of a waltz theme relates it to the music written (but never orchestrated) for the ballet *Tamara* (1911) and, not surprisingly, to a “waltz” (though not entirely in 3/4!) for piano written in 1910, and published by Boosey. The end of the Intermezzo is brilliant and thrilling even on the piano, and the movement might well have been viable on its own if it had been orchestrated. It is indicative of Bax’s quickly growing sureness of touch in larger forms.’²⁸⁴

283 Arnold Bax, MS Introduction to Symphony in F. Bax Memorial Room, University College, Cork. Quoted in Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, pp. 47–48.

284 Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, p. 48.

Ex. 112

Any first symphonic attempt offers invaluable help to a composer in detecting his weaknesses and strengths alike. If Bax had thereby discovered his abilities as an orchestral composer, he also became aware of his limitations in fulfilling such a large-scale concept on purely musical terms. His first finished symphonic composition was entirely programmatic – the programme-symphony *Spring Fire* (1913), dedicated to Sir Henry J. Wood, but unperformed until December 1970.²⁸⁵ It is effectively a single-movement work that falls into a number of clear sections, and Bax himself wrote that it ‘may be regarded as a kind of freely-worked symphony, the four sections linked together without a break’.²⁸⁶ It is thus comparable to other contemporary works, from Parry’s *Fifth Symphony* (1912) to Strauss’s *Alpensinfonie* (1915) and the symphonies of Granville Bantock, in which several movements or sections are also linked. As it was not unusual at that time (Bantock in particular was closely associated with the practice), Bax used quotes from the first chorus of Swinburne’s *Atalanta in Calydon* as mottoes for the single sections of the work. Further explanations are to be found in Bax’s own notes: ‘Indeed, the exuberant and pagan qualities of the earlier writings of Swinburne colour the musical content of the fantasy throughout.’²⁸⁷

The first section is headed ‘*In the Forest before Dawn*’. *Slow and quiet*, and indeed it is nothing other than a slow introduction to a one-movement symphony, not only slow but also quiet (only once at [1], during the presentation of the theme, do the dynamics rise to *mezzoforte*), with the beginning strongly recalling Debussy, Ravel and particularly Bantock’s *Pagan Symphony* (1928). In it the main theme

285 Lewis Foreman has provided us with a comprehensive history of the score – a scheduled Queen’s Hall performance on 28 February 1916 was cancelled, and various other plans came to nothing; Foreman himself promoted the late première performance.

286 Bax’s 1916 performance programme note, quoted in part in Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, p. 109.

287 Quoted in Lewis Foreman, ‘*Spring Fire*. A major unperformed work by Sir Arnold Bax’, in: *Bax Society Bulletin* 2 (1968), p. 31.

Ex. 113

cantabile
Vlc.
p ma marcato dolce *mf* *poco f* *dim.* *p* *ppp*

is presented. Further developed and gradually transformed in the second and third sections, the theme gains in importance throughout the entire work, though a strict correlation between the sections and parts of the one-movement work is nonexistent. The second section (which Bax later combined with the first section, reducing the five sections to four), 'Dawn and sunrise', continues the slow introduction for some time, presenting the theme once again in full. But already at [6], with the third section 'Full day'. *Allegro vivace*, the development of the material begins. The section's title is sub-headed:

Come with bows bent and emptying of quivers,
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of wind and many rivers,
With a clamour of waters and with might.

In his programme note Bax gives a detailed description of the programme he had in mind (a very real, detailed one, quite comparable to those for which Richard Strauss has been reproached).²⁸⁸ This, however, is unimportant for the music, its 'neo-paganism'²⁸⁹ reflecting the prevailing spirit of the times evident in the works of Bantock, Ireland and Bridge. The many brilliant orchestral effects and a strong feeling of coherence have hardly ever been surpassed even by his own later symphonies.

A short moderate passage is inserted in this third section (from [11] to [12]), and shortly afterwards ([15]) it is resumed by the fourth section, 'Romance'. *Molto Moderato. Romantic and glowing*. Here another quotation is given:

For winter rains and ruins are over
And all the season of snows and sins,
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins.

And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the Spring begins.

This section can be called the recapitulation of the one-movement symphony; in the bass clarinet the original form of the first theme re-appears.

288 In part quoted in Lewis Foreman, 'Spring Fire', *ibid.*, pp. 31–34.

289 Lewis Foreman, *Bax: A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1987, p. 109.

Quasi cadenzas by solo violin and solo flute set the scene for the last section, *'Maenads'*.
Allegro vivace.

And Pan by noon and Bycchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with laughing and fills with delight
The maenad and the bassarid.

It is in this coda proper of the symphony, in which a dance resolves the calmer mood of the Romance and leads into a stretta, that the core material is still further developed.

The Greek pagan figures and rites that are evoked can also be found in other works, particularly in Frank Bridge's *Enter Spring* (1927), a shorter work, less strong in harmony and colour but quite comparable in coherence and concentration, or Rootham's *Pan* (1912).

On 27 April 1921 Bax completed the first movement of his Third Piano Sonata. Harriet Cohen saw the score and became convinced that Bax had created something much greater that cried out for orchestral treatment. Bax's practice of orchestrating piano pieces was nothing new. As early as in 1916, he had already orchestrated the scherzo of a piano sonata begun in 1913; the *Russian Suite*, written for Diaghilev, had been orchestrated in 1919; the orchestral version of Bax's *Mediterranean* (1920) was written in 1922. Faced with the decision to write his first fully valid 'absolute' symphony, Bax felt compelled to write a new slow movement,

Ex. 114: Beginning of the original slow movement

Lento con molto espressione molto cantabile
mf dolce

The musical score for Ex. 114 is presented in two systems. The first system begins with the tempo marking 'Lento con molto espressione' and the dynamic 'pp'. The right hand features a melodic line with a long note, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system continues the piece, with the right hand playing a more active melodic line and the left hand providing a steady accompaniment. The dynamic marking 'mf dolce' is placed above the right hand in the second system.

Ex. 115: Beginning of the slow movement re-composed

Lento solenne
Cor con sord., Trb., Arpe, Archi con sord.

pp
pp pizz.
arco
poco cresc.
p
Trbn. I & III, Bass Tb.

‘the most emotional music he ever wrote. And surely the theme of Ireland, by then in open Civil War, is reflected in it. The symphony was a work apart from the rest of Bax’s orchestral output up to that time: a work of such aggression and searing passion as to startle previous admirers of Bax’s music and make them ask – why? In it the slow movement in particular seems to reflect some of the moods echoed in the poems written during the war. This movement is a highly charged elegy of great power, and towards the end the music seems to suggest the mourner sinking down in numbed despair.’²⁹⁰ In spite of this, Bax repeatedly referred to his First as ‘pure music’, independent of political or real events.²⁹¹

Bax dedicated the symphony to John Ireland who, according to Herbert Howells, was arrogant enough to be completely uninterested even though it was Bax’s best work at that point.²⁹² Ireland in fact had some exceptionally positive words for Bax: ‘Bax (...) has atmosphere; Bax is a musician; he is a genius.’²⁹³

The 1920s witnessed a collective commitment to new music, and this commitment was especially strong on the Continent, which strongly promoted new music. The I.S.C.M. was one of the main activists in this field. It had been set up in 1922,²⁹⁴ with its first festival taking place in Salzburg in August of that year. Edward Dent wrote of this organization: ‘The Schönberg “clique”, to their honour, be it said, were anything but narrow-minded; they

290 *Ibid.*, p. 191.

291 Cf. Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*. Aldershot/Brookfield 1987, pp. 191–192.

292 Christopher Palmer, *Herbert Howells – A Centenary Celebration*, London 1992, p. 351.

293 ‘Cadwal’, ‘Exploration, But No “Stunts”’. John Ireland’s Views on The Modern Trend’, in: *MM* III/12 (1923), p. 363.

294 The Donaueschinger Tage für Neue Musik had been set up in 1921.

cast their net over all Europe and America too. They even went so far as to include England, and surely that, in itself, was proof enough of their utter unmusicality. Never had England been represented so generously in a foreign country – Bliss, Ethel Smyth, Holst, Gerrard Williams, Bax, Gibbs, Goossens and Percy Grainger (Australian).²⁹⁵ But the 1920s were also a particularly exciting time for British music. The first British Music Society had been set up in 1919 but lapsed after Arthur Eaglefield-Hull's suicide (1928), dissolving by 1933. (The present British Music Society was established in 1978, nearly half a century later.) And, spanning these two movements, Edward Dent was not only a key figure for the I.S.C.M., but also a pupil of Stanford's and later Professor of Music at Cambridge.

Bax's new symphony had been such a success that it was given at the summer 1924 I.S.C.M. festival in Prague, conducted by young Fritz Reiner. This event led to the performance of Bax's Viola Sonata, one of his best compositions, two months later at Salzburg. Havergal Brian wrote an extensive review, his first contribution to *Musical Opinion*, a journal that he later edited for many years,²⁹⁶ stressing a kinship between Bax and John Ireland.²⁹⁷ Another critic wrote:

'We have in this symphony music of a tense violence, and gather that a poetic soul has been affronted with something of singular monstrosity and woefulness in the doings of a wicked world. And what should that be, for a poetic soul of one generation, but the events of 1914 and after? We may wonder if the composer is not still too freshly quivering under the outrage to his sensibility to have made a final expression – this music is not "emotion remembered in tranquillity," but an immediate reaction to the shock, in a moment in which all raging retorts are good. The slow movement, a Lament of deeply sombre but rich colouring, is that in which pure music has most indubitably disengaged itself from the conflict. Elsewhere we may feel that his crowding thoughts and passionate feelings are not entirely solved. The symphony remains a work of a rare order of imaginativeness, not to speak of its abundant technical invention.'²⁹⁸

The technique of working with a germ cell, albeit of a dual nature in the major/minor clash with which the First Symphony opens, embodied in the first five bars of the work (ex. 116), is one of the most essential Sibelian traits in Bax's style. This method allowed him to concentrate the material that he appeared unable to draw on in the earlier tone poems and

295 Edward Dent, 'Looking backward', in: *Music Today* I (1949), pp. 7–8.

296 Havergal Brian, 'The first Symphony of Arnold Bax', 1922, in Malcolm MacDonald (ed.), *Havergal Brian on Music. Selections from his Journalism. Volume I: British Music*, London 1986, pp. 233–240.

297 'Bax shows a soul affinity with John Ireland in his bitter defiance and sarcastic acidity against the trammels of convention. Has anyone ever got up from playing that storm-tossed *sonata* of John Ireland without wondering what was in the cups of bitterness the composer swallowed which is described in such wonderful and forceful music? In its fierceness, it has the character of an enraged giant hurling rocks at his enemies. There is a great deal of this feeling in the art of Bax, and nowhere else is there so much of it as in his new symphony. It breathes defiance and triumph.' (Havergal Brian, 'The first Symphony of Arnold Bax', in Malcolm MacDonald (ed.), *Havergal Brian on Music I*, London 1986, p. 235.)

298 C., 'Arnold Bax's Symphony', in: *MTLXV* (1924), pp. 167–168.

in *Spring Fire* and, that with respect to contemporaneous works, is only outdone by Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony*. Still, it was an easy task for Bax to manage an even stronger cyclical unit in later works.

The manipulation and development of germ motifs was taken even further in the Second Symphony (1924-25) in E minor and C. Four germs, presented in the slow introduction of the first movement,

Ex. 117



Ex. 118



Ex. 119



Ex. 120



rule and dominate the entire structure of the symphony and lend it a singular structural concentration. Sibelius also serves as the formal model in this first movement, which begins in C and ends in E minor: Sibelius's Fifth Symphony shows how convincingly a first movement can be associated with a scherzo. With this movement it is also evident that Bax had no doubt become acquainted with the symphonies of Carl Nielsen, in particular the Fourth: like Nielsen, Bax uses 'progressive tonality', for instance in the slow movement, which first wanders through different keys before ending in B major.²⁹⁹

The final movement of the symphony, beginning in C and finally ending in C major, lays the groundwork for the Third Symphony: the last 59 bars are in fact an epilogue (more formed than in the First Symphony, although not marked as such) and here we can witness

299 Gwilym Beechey, 'The Legacy of Bax', in: *MO CVI/1271* (1983), p. 359.

'Bax tentatively exploring the use of the three-movements-plus-epilogue form that is such a feature of the later symphonies. The music finally fades into silence, and if this is to be taken as an emotional self-portrait it is a frightening one. The desolation that Bax paints at the close will not be more fully explored in music until the last movement of Vaughan Williams's Sixth Symphony some twenty years later.'³⁰⁰

The symphony requires some of the largest orchestral forces ever prescribed by Bax. Though he calls for fewer low woodwind instruments than in the First Symphony (bass [=alto] flute, bass oboe or heckelphone³⁰¹ and contrabass sarrusophone), he does specify two tubas (tenor and bass tuba), piano, organ, celesta, two harps and an extensive battery of percussion (including glockenspiel, xylophone and gong) instead. The effect that Bax can create with this instrumental palette strikingly resembles that created by Walton some years later in *Belshazzar's Feast*. Bax also draws on the savagery of his tone poems (also by using the organ in the final movement) and at times foreshadows his later film soundtracks (especially *Oliver Twist*), particularly in the calmer middle movement and in the more lyrical passages of the finale.

Bax was annoyed by the grammatical statement that had wrongly been attributed to him, just as he had been in the case of the First Symphony: 'Why do the critics, when I write craggy, northern works like the Second and Fifth Symphonies, *November Woods* and *The Tale the Pinetrees Knew*, talk of a Celtic Twilight? This enrages me.'³⁰² In his open acknowledgement of the 'craggy, northern' influence, Bax essentially admits that his music was not written in a vacuum, independent of any kind of influence. Rather, it is a question of deeply subjective music carrying the unmistakable imprint of personal emotional turmoil. The symphony is described by Foreman as a reflection of the downfall of his relationship with Harriet Cohen. It is, as Foreman maintains, 'the most autobiographical of any of Bax's works'.³⁰³ Bax himself wrote in a letter at the time of the work's first performance: 'I put a great deal of time (and emotion) into the writing (...) it should be very broad indeed, with a kind of oppressive catastrophic mood.'³⁰⁴

Regardless of the supposed 'Celtic twilight', autobiographical aspects, or 'craggy, northern' influence, the work was widely praised. Josef Holbrooke described the symphony as 'a fine powerful work',³⁰⁵ and Edwin Evans wrote: 'The Second is introspective, as if the protagonist had been thrown back upon himself, bruised but not submissive. Ferocity gives

300 Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, p. 217.

301 Recent research conducted by Georg Otto Klapproth (Köln) resulted in the knowledge that Henry Wood obtained a heckelphone (which has been mentioned alternately with the bass oboe) from the firm of Heckel in February 1908 ('Frederick Delius und das Heckelphon. Neue Dokumente – neue Einsichten', in: *Robrblatt* 23/3, 2008, pp. 122–130).

302 Harriet Cohen, *A Bundle of Time*, London 1969, p. 37.

303 Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, p. 207.

304 Arnold Bax to Philip Hale, 22 November 1922.

305 Josef Holbrooke, *Contemporary British Composers*, London 1925, p. 56.

place to a philosophy that is at times bleak or austere, but without resignation.³⁰⁶ And Eric Blom (it is worth remembering what he wrote on Christopher Edmunds's First Symphony, see p. 401) observed:

'The oneness which the composer achieves here is due to an exceptionally close thematic workmanship, not to uniformity of tempo and mood within each of the three movements, which indeed would make for trinity rather than unity. Arnold Bax is often reproached for not maintaining the pace and atmosphere of a symphonic or sonata movement throughout, for a habit of frequently letting rhythmic energy flag and allowing all emotional tune to frustrate all energetic purpose. The criticism is by no means unjust and not inapplicable to the present work but the diversity within its movements is compensated for by the reappearance of the principal themes in each of them.'³⁰⁷

Before Bax turned to another symphony, he composed in 1927 *Overture, Elegy and Rondo*. He had already noticed that he was having difficulty filling the form of the symphony appropriately, and hence tried a new path similar to Schumann's *Ouverture, Scherzo und Finale* (1841). Bax's work corresponds formally to Schumann's to a large extent in outer shape but Schumann's is on a smaller scale. And, as was the case with Schumann in his Second Symphony, Bax also exhibits important further development.

The Third Symphony was begun in the autumn of 1928 and completed in February 1929, probably in Morar in the north-west of Scotland. This was the first winter Bax spent alone, far from any hectic hurly-burly, and it somehow brought this chapter of the composer's life to an end, while *Winter Legends*, the next major work composed, announces the beginning of a new one.³⁰⁸

The sequence of notes A-B-C# forms the germ idea of the symphony,

Ex. 121

Lento moderato

1 Fg. I

The musical notation consists of two staves of music in bass clef. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a first ending bracket labeled '1 Fg. I'. The music is in 6/8 time, marked 'p dolce'. It features a sequence of eighth notes with various accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats) and slurs. The time signature changes to 9/8 in the second measure of the first staff, then back to 6/8 in the third. The second staff continues the sequence, with time signatures of 9/8, 6/8, and 9/8. It ends with a first ending bracket labeled '1' and the word 'etc.'.

and formal foundations and structure are subordinated to the relentless advance of Bax's rhythms. An extensive slow section (from [43] to [51]) seems to break the basic concept of

306 Edwin Evans, 'The Bax Symphonies', in: *The Listener* XXIX/720 (1942), p. 573.

307 Eric Blom, 'Arnold Bax – Symphony No. 2', in: *The Music Teacher* X/4 (1931), p. 195.

308 Cf. Lewis Foreman, *Bax: A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, p. 242.

the first movement, but it is in fact the development of the movement, preparing ‘one of the greatest climaxes in modern music’.³⁰⁹ The music of the movement is more chromatic than that of any other Bax symphony (starting with the introductory theme of the bassoon), and in the slow movement it becomes manifest that chromatics here too rule large portions of the music – perhaps apart from the moments of affirmative diatonicism.

The third movement has strong rhythmical elements that correspond to those of the children’s song, *Tom, Tom the Piper’s Son*,

Ex. 122

Clar., VI.
giocoso 1
poco f

which impart a pronounced propulsive element that is resolved only in the epilogue. A theme presented by the clarinets

Ex. 123

Ob., Clar. 10 Col Fl.
p cant. piangendo *poco fp* *f*

demonstrates the influence that Bax would eventually have on Malcolm Arnold – however, the part of the clarinet not sufficiently integrated into the whole, despite Bax’s generally Straussian mastery of the orchestra. As in the Second Symphony, evocations of the soundtrack of *Oliver Twist* are to be heard. The recapitulation of the introductory theme leads into the epilogue, ‘and the work ends in complete tranquillity’.³¹⁰

Robin Hull wrote about the work, stating that ‘although the composer is emphatic in his statement that there is no programme attached, it has been suggested that the symphony possesses the mood of northern legends. Bax agrees that the interpretation is apt, allowing that subconsciously he may have been influenced by the sagas and dark winters of the North (...) the second movement does not share this mood in any way.’³¹¹ In the draft score of the work, two lines of Nietzsche are found as a motto: ‘My wisdom became pregnant on lonely mountains; upon barren stones she brought forth her young’, but these were omitted in the printed score.

Bax confirmed in a programme note for the symphony: ‘The work in its formal aspect deviates little from the lines laid down by the classical composers of the past.’ He nevertheless

309 Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. 1949, p. 351.

310 Arnold Bax, *Farewell, My Youth and other writings*, edited by Lewis Foreman, Aldershot/Brookfield 1992, p. 10.

311 Robin Hull, *A Handbook on Arnold Bax’s Symphonies*, London 1932, p. 33.

particularly admired the symphonies of Beethoven, in particular the Third and the Ninth. Burnett James reports: 'In the first movement of the Bax Third the woodwind set up an insistent rhythm at the end of the introduction which acts as a bridge to the movement proper. It is strikingly similar to the corresponding section of the Beethoven Seventh.'³¹²

The independent formal logic of the symphony needs a first-class conductor able to combine organically the frequent changes of tempo, in particular those encountered in the first movement. Accordingly, Bax expressed himself concerning the conductor of the first performance unambiguously: 'I would rather have Henry [Wood, the dedicatee] to conduct a first performance of my work than anyone else. He has such an amazing grasp of essentials, and does not mess the music about.'³¹³ Lewis Foreman shows in a survey (the duration times are from Edward Downes's BBC recording,³¹⁴ plus two recent CD recordings conducted by Vernon Handley and David Lloyd-Jones respectively) which sections in the first movement have to be combined with each other:

Basic speed	to	Downes	Handley	Lloyd-Jones
slow	[6] 6	3'25"	2'22"	2'56"
fast	[26]	3'25"	3'14"	3'20"
slow	[43]	8'58"	7'06"	8'22"
fast	[51]	1'37"	1'37"	1'50"
slow	[56]	1'25"	1'24"	1'42"
fast	End	50"	55"	52"
total		19'40"	16'38"	19'02"

'The Third Symphony has many very vigorous and energetic passages, but it is the slower sections of the work especially that make the deepest impressions. In the middle of the first movement there is a *Lento moderato* in E \flat (...), and this together with the closing passage in the last movement (*Epilogue – Poco Lento*) are both beautifully conceived and managed. The moods that are recalled in such passages as these can be traced in the slower sections of Sibelius's Seventh Symphony, and in the middle movement of the Third Symphony as well. These exquisite passages in the faster movements of the Bax symphony are matched by the refinement of the slow movement, which was one of the most restrained and distinguished that Bax wrote. The use of the horns in the movement as a whole is very impressive.'³¹⁵

Ralph Vaughan Williams reports: 'I first got to know Bax well in 1914, at the time of F. B. Ellis's Queen's Hall concerts. We were discussing my, then new, *London Symphony*.'³¹⁶ One

312 Burnett James, Unpublished essay on Bax, quoted from Lewis Foreman, *Bax: A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, p. 243.

313 Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. in 1949, p. 350.

314 Lewis Foreman, *Bax: A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, p. 245.

315 Gwilym Beechey, 'The Legacy of Bax', in: *MO CVI/1271* (1983), p. 359.

316 It was observed above that the *London Symphony*, although in four movements, already had an epilogue. The close connection between Bax's and Vaughan Williams's work at that time confirms the assumption that Vaughan Williams became a model for Bax.

passage disappointed me and I asked his advice. He suggested the addition of a counter-melody on the oboe. Indeed he sat down at the pianoforte and improvised one. This actual passage was too obviously Baxian to make its inclusion possible. But, following his advice, I made up another which, though not nearly so good as his, was more in keeping with the rest of the movement. Later on I was able to do something to return the compliment when I persuaded him to add about sixteen bars to the coda of the first movement of his Third Symphony.³¹⁷ Vaughan Williams wove a couple of bars from the epilogue of the symphony into the epilogue of his Piano Concerto (1926–31),³¹⁸ and Moeran also borrowed from the final movement for his Violin Concerto.³¹⁹

Bax began work on *Winter Legends* for piano and orchestra very soon after completing the Third Symphony. This work is also in three movements, with an epilogue that would have been worthy of a further symphony, and also contains a clear reference to the epilogue of the Third Symphony. Although dedicated initially to Sibelius, shortly before the first performance, this honour was shifted to Bax's long-time companion, Harriet Cohen. 'Chronologically and emotionally the concerto was another symphony in Arnold's mind – "my No. 4 really", he would say, and it was to lead, inevitably, to the great Fifth Symphony which was dedicated to Sibelius. "In these two works," he said, "I have gone Northern!"'³²⁰ Sibelius loved both works, saying, according to Harriet Cohen, 'Bax is my son in music.'³²¹ 'It is abstract music, of course', he said about *Winter Legends*, 'and any "programme" remember is a curious thing – any concrete ideas that may be in it of place or things are of the North – Northern Ireland, Northern Scotland, Northern Europe – in fact, the Celtic North.'³²²

In February 1931 Bax completed his Fourth Symphony, begun in October 1930, and dedicated it to his friend of student days, Paul Corder. With this work, and for the first time, Bax permitted himself a programmatic description: he admitted that the beginning of the symphony might represent a rough sea during a flood on a sunny day. This comment is significant in that the whole symphony sets profound inner conflicts aside and instead feels 'unashamedly extrovert'.³²³

The general consensus is that the first movement, in spite of exceptional sound-painting, is the most unsatisfactory in the symphony: 'isolated lyrical inspirations lie uneasily beside each other. The development section in the opening movement is typical in this respect, where several sections beautiful in themselves and related thematically do not really flow –

317 Ralph Vaughan Williams, 'Arnold Bax (1883–1953)', in Ralph Vaughan Williams, *National Music and Other Essays*, Oxford etc. 1986, pp. 243–244.

318 Harriet Cohen, *A Bundle of Time*, London 1969, p. 216. Later the quotation was deleted.

319 Geoffrey Self, *The music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, p. 140f.

320 Harriet Cohen, *A Bundle of Time*, London 1969, p. 182.

321 *Ibid.*

322 Watson Lyle, 'A musician of the North (Arnold Bax)', in: *The Bookman* LXXXI/485 (1932), p. 268.

323 Julian Herbage, 'Sir Arnold Bax, b. 1883', in Alfred Louis Bacharach (ed.), *British Music of Our Time*, Harmondsworth/New York 1946, p. 123.

the larger structure has not been felt.³²⁴ Bax continues the rhapsodic sound-painting in the central slow movement and thereby harks back to his large tone poems, but because it has been conceived as an intermezzo, the movement is absorbed.

The last movement in some ways suffers similar problems of 'continuity', again evoking a tone-poem rather than a symphonic movement. The movement concludes with an extended coda, *Tempo di Marcia trionfale*, 'and in 71 bars of gloriously coloured orchestral tutti Bax ends on a note of confidence and affirmation. The organ joins this thrilling sound, again with a 16-foot pedal note underpinning the tonality; indeed, without the organ it is difficult for Bax's effects to be fully made.'³²⁵ Throughout the movement one has the sense that Bax's concentration upon such pleasing matters absolves the listener from having to look for excessive profundity of aim, but the musical quality of his lighter-hearted moments is never less than sufficient.³²⁶ This relative lightness helps here, despite Foreman's opinion, to draw attention away from shortcomings in the structural organization of the movements. Unlike the Third Symphony, the contrasts are not so extreme in effect due to the lesser intensity of the composition itself. Sibelius's influence is in the background in the Fourth Symphony, which is comparable in mood to Sibelius's Fifth; the latter is nonetheless a much finer work than the Bax symphony.

Critical reaction to the symphony was mixed. Bax's 'Symphony No. 4 has revealed how complete is his present recognition of the stronger virtues attached to the exercise of judicious economy'³²⁷ wrote Robin Hull. Meanwhile, in a letter to Hubert Foss, William Walton commented: 'I should like to hear your considered opinion on Bax's 4th and the new Bliss work [probably *Morning Heroes*]. Instinct tells me that with the Bax, we have heard it all before at perhaps even greater length. Harriet Cohen told me it was all so gay, just like Beethoven,^[328] but perhaps better rather than that master, but my instinct (or is it prejudice) tells me otherwise.'³²⁹

During the 1920s Bax became interested in Sibelius, but until he heard *Tapiola* in 1928, no overt reference to him is apparent. A conscious nod to Sibelius first occurs in Bax's Third Symphony. However, Bax's pre-occupation with Sibelius is mainly a phenomenon of the early 1930s. Undoubtedly he was deeply impressed by the first performance of *Tapiola* in England. Harriet Cohen writes: 'Half-way through I turned to look at Arnold, and tears were pouring down his face. Years later he was to tell me that he and Cecil Gray had decided that if Sibelius had written nothing else, this work would place him among the immortals for all time.'³³⁰

324 Anthony Payne, 'Problems of a Lyric Composer', in: *Me&M* 13/5 (1965), p. 17.

325 Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, pp. 268–271.

326 Cf. Robin Hull, 'Bax's Fourth Symphony', in: *The Spectator*, 9 December 1932, p. 827.

327 Robin Hull, 'Arnold Bax: Shorter Orchestral Works', in: *MM* new series I/7 (1933), p. 203.

328 A certain similarity to Beethoven's Fourth Symphony is in fact striking and appears to be a kind of relaxation from the concentrated Third.

329 William Walton to Hubert Foss, 5 December 1932. Quoted from Michael Kennedy, *Portrait of Walton*, Oxford etc. ²1990, p. 70.

330 Harriet Cohen, *A Bundle of Time*, London 1969, p. 65.

Lewis Foreman attributes great significance to Bax's exposure to Sibelius, noting that 'having absorbed Sibelian mannerisms in the Third Symphony and *Winter Legends*, and becoming increasingly interested in a Sibelian subject matter, his overtly Sibelian works follow his visit to Finland in the summer of 1931.'³³¹ Burnett James did not espouse Foreman's view: 'The more I think about it, the more convinced I am that, much though Bax admired Sibelius, it is a red herring. I am convinced the line runs far more accurately from Mahler through Bax to Shostakovich. The famous meeting between Sibelius and Mahler seems to me to put Bax squarely in the Mahler not the Sibelius camp. I think this is important, because the eternal references to Sibelius only work to Bax's disadvantage, since his mind worked in a totally different orbit. Bax, with his confessed Russian affiliations, looks forward to Shostakovich not back to Sibelius, although at the time and for some time afterwards the real connection could not be seen.'³³² Although this might have been said in Bax's defence, a connection between Mahler and Bax seems rather far-fetched; an investigation of the relationship between Bax and Shostakovich and other Russian symphonists (perhaps also Szymanowski?) could be a very worthwhile task, however.

The march at the beginning of the Fifth Symphony calls to mind many a Shostakovich symphony, and despite obvious differences in other respects, the formal dependence on Sibelius's Third and Fourth Symphonies is unmistakable. The clarinet melody at the beginning of the symphony

Ex. 124

Poco lento

Clar.

con malinconia

etc.

is a striking reminder of the beginning of the slow movement of Sibelius's Fifth Symphony,

Ex. 125

Vlc. *marc.*

p pizz.

331 Lewis Foreman, 'Bax, the Symphony and Sibelius', in: *MO* 93/1109 (1970), p. 246.

332 Burnett James to Lewis Foreman. Lewis Foreman, *Bax: A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1987, p. 281.

while Bax's melodic characteristics are otherwise less concise than those of his Finnish counterpart. Furthermore, the first movement of Sibelius's Fifth Symphony was initially two movements, with a clear separation between the slower and faster movement, and similar elements can also be found in Bax (for example in the Second Symphony). The basic moods from which Bax wrote his preceding symphonies have indeed apparently been surmounted insofar as they no longer seem to contradict each other.³³³ At the same time, Bax's endeavours to follow Sibelian methods and develop his movements from a single germ are only partially successful: his penchant for slow interlude – which could well be assimilated into such a scheme – 'produces a flawed movement, which although unified on paper, I have never heard satisfactorily realised in sound terms.'³³⁴ It should be mentioned in passing that Robin Hull has identified a self-reference in the slow movement (a theme from the slow movement of the First Symphony). Felix Aprahamian refers to an apparent quotation from Debussy's *Le Promenoir des deux Amants*.³³⁵ Finally Bax deals, as previously in the Second Symphony, with the idea of 'progressive tonality' (Nielsen): the first movement begins in E minor and ends in C[♯] minor, the second movement is in B[♭] minor, the final movement begins in C[♯] minor and ends after multiple references to E minor in D[♭] major.³³⁶

Bax created his Sixth Symphony in 1934 and dedicated it first to Karol Szymanowski, then to Adrian Boult. This time, unlike the four-notes-theme in the First Symphony, it is a six-notes-theme that gives the first movement its cohesion,

Ex. 126



333 Robin Hull, 'Arnold Bax's Fifth Symphony', in: *MMR* LXIV/753 (1934), p. 7; reprinted in: *Bax Society Bulletin* 4 (1969), pp. 61–62: 'In his fourth symphony Bax employed a style which was anything but introspective, and departed from his usual custom by admitting a declared programme. The primary question raised by this brilliantly objective process was whether its nature must be interpreted as a radical change of attitude on Bax's part, or whether the metamorphosis indicated simply a temporary defection from his mainly introspective course. This dilemma is effectively resolved by the evidence of the fifth symphony, which unmistakably resumes the psychological sequence continued throughout the first three symphonies and momentarily interrupted by the fourth. One would expect critical opinion to agree that the fifth symphony (to which no programme is attached) goes much deeper than the fourth, while its character is influenced wholly for good by the objective experience to which the composer submitted after writing his third symphony. The fifth symphony appears to mark the triumphant emergence from an important artistic crisis – a crisis which could only be surmounted by the completion of the fourth symphony and by Bax's inspired recognition of the clearness with which that work directed his return to introspection during the next stage of his symphonic progress.'

334 Lewis Foreman, 'Bax, the Symphony and Sibelius', in: *MO* 93/1109 (1970), p. 245.

335 Cf. Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1987, p. 137.

336 Cf. Gwilym Beechey, 'The Legacy of Bax', in: *MO* CVI/1271 (1983), p. 359.

a unity that remains sustained throughout the many kaleidoscopic changes of mood. The movement is clearly structured as a sonata first movement, and it is ‘full of dramatic urgency (the more peaceful second subject forming a brief respite)’.³³⁷ To this the slow movement, ‘full of romantic nostalgia, ending with a curious slow march-like section (*Andante con moto*) in 6/8 time’³³⁸, offers a clear contrast.

Ex. 127

11 Andante con moto
Vln., Vl., Ob., Cor ingl. Col Fl., Cor I

cant.
poco f
poco f
poco f
poco f

The final movement, which parallels the Seventh Symphony, follows a specially devised form that may in some way have been inspired by Stanford's Seventh Symphony: ‘Introduction – scherzo and trio – Epilogue.’ Once again a six-note-group sets up the central theme of the movement.

Ex. 128

Introduction. Lento moderato

1 Clar. I

p *dolcissimo*

337 David Cox, ‘Arnold Bax (1883–1953)’, in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*, Vol. II, Harmondsworth etc. 1967, p. 163.

338 *Ibid.*, p. 163.



The introduction leads into a lively, forceful scherzo with trio followed by an 'Epilogue of grave, wistful beauty'³³⁹ that emulates that of the Third Symphony. This movement structure is a natural vehicle for Bax's contrasting 'episodes'. Certainly this conception is one of the most formally successful that Bax created in his symphonies. A quotation from *Tapiola* has been identified in this movement.³⁴⁰ There are also parallels with the cantata *Enchanted Summer*,³⁴¹ but these are relatively unimportant.

Kaikhosru Sorabji describes the work as

'in all respects the most mature and powerful work of Bax that I have ever heard (...). It is at once eloquent, reserved, rich, and sumptuous, yet austere and has a finer sense of form than I ever remember to have encountered anywhere else in Bax's work, with the exception of the first version of the *Symphonic Variations* for Piano and Orchestra. I know of no other contemporary composer who has a richer, more diversified nor more subtle harmonic sense than Bax. That tendency to a kind of slack diffuseness (...) that at one time was apt to mar Bax's work is certainly not here. The whole work marches irresistibly and irrevocably from point to point with the inevitability of complete mastery.'³⁴²

This sometimes pronouncedly 'veiled and shadowy'³⁴³ harmony is more a sign of the times than of Sibelius's influence. Some examples follow:

Ex. 129



339 *Ibid.*, p. 164.

340 Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield ²1987, pp. 278 and 301.

341 *Ibid.*, p. 80.

342 Kaikhosru Sorabji, 'Music', in: *NEW* VIII (12 December 1935), p. 174.

343 Robin Hull, 'Arnold Bax's Sixth Symphony', in: *MO* 59/698 (1935), p. 116.

Ex. 130

Musical score for Ex. 130, measures 44-45. The score is in 3/4 time and features a piano accompaniment with a complex, rhythmic texture. Measure 44 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note pattern. Measure 45 features a triplet of eighth notes in the treble and a similar pattern in the bass.

Ex. 131

Musical score for Ex. 131, measures 4-5. The score is in 3/4 time and features a full orchestral arrangement. The tempo is marked '4 Poco più vivo vl., Fg.' and the dynamics are 'pp molto leggiero'. The instruments include Violins (Vln.), Clarinets (Clar.), Trumpets (Trbn.), Violas (Vlc.), Cellos (Cb.), and Timpani/Cor (Timp., Cor.). The score shows a complex, rhythmic texture with a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (sf) climax. The bass line is marked 'pp' and 'cresc.'.

In the final climax of the Sixth Symphony, we can see the zenith of Bax's entire output.

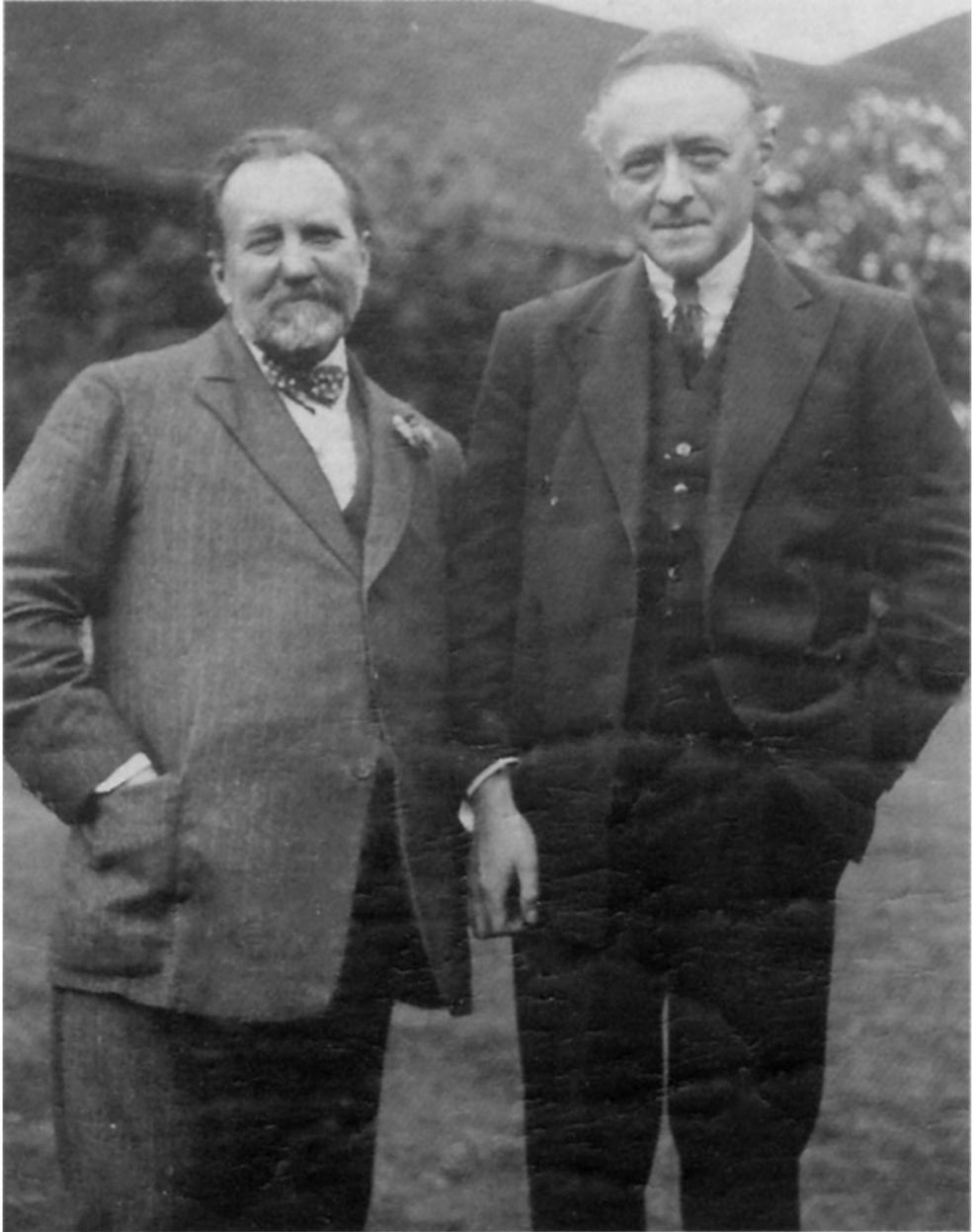


Illustration 44. Henry Wood and Arnold Bax at Wood's home, Apple Tree Farm, c. 1930, photograph. Lewis Foreman collection; reproduced by kind permission.

Peter J. Pirie has described this passage as the passing of worlds.³⁴⁴ But ‘it was more than that for Bax, whose vision was finally realised in this last climax and epilogue. Bax’s creative spark was beginning to fail, as he wrote to Vaughan Williams in 1935 – one of an increasing number of such letters to his friends in the ensuing years: “I am derelict in the doldrums just now and cannot get down to anything.”³⁴⁵’³⁴⁶

After he had completed the orchestration of the Violin Concerto, Bax began his Seventh (and last) Symphony (1938–39), where in the first movement, as in *Tintagel*, a *Tristan* quotation can be heard. This prompted Lewis Foreman to comment that the movement might reflect ‘a seascape, perhaps more successful than that in the Fourth Symphony.’³⁴⁷ This contention does not seem convincing to the author, however; rather, the complex organization of the movements (which evokes in David Cox the impression of a lack of form³⁴⁸) suggests to me far more than what Foreman also states. ‘It was in a strange mood of nostalgia mixed with objective detachment that he came to the Seventh Symphony. (...) The Seventh is technically the most secure of Bax’s symphonies, and at the same time the most relaxed: the summation of the two main streams of his creative life, the symphonic poem and the symphony, at least as far as orchestral music is concerned.’³⁴⁹ The second movement is entitled *In legendary mood*, which made the critics think of Nordic legends and which for Foreman is a reflection of that ‘nostalgia’.³⁵⁰ The final movement, which has a variation form unique among Bax’s symphonies by virtue of its *ostinato*-like theme (it may again have been inspired by Stanford’s Seventh Symphony),

Ex. 132

Moderato
Vlc., Cb.

pp

ends in the calmest epilogue that Bax has ever composed, ‘ending the whole symphonic cycle on a note of profound peace and acceptance.’³⁵¹

344 Peter Pirie, *The English Musical Renaissance*, London 1979, p. 150.

345 Arnold Bax to Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1935. Quoted from Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 1992, p. 248.

346 Lewis Foreman, ‘Bax, the Symphony and Sibelius’, in: *MO* 93/1109 (1970), p. 246.

347 Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1987, p. 316.

348 Cf. David Cox, ‘Arnold Bax (1883–1953)’, in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*, Vol. II, Harmondsworth etc. 1967, p. 164: ‘The first movement, although there are two main themes, is so elaborated with subsidiary material, lyrical and dramatic, that formally it comes near to suggesting free fantasy.’

349 Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1987, pp. 315–316.

350 *Ibid.*, p. 315.

351 David Cox, ‘Arnold Bax (1883–1953)’, in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*, Vol. II, Harmondsworth etc. 1967, p. 164.

7. The programme symphony after 1914

Ernest John Moeran p. 491 – Rutland Boughton p. 500 – Erik Chisholm p. 503 – Stanley Wilson p. 509 – Granville Bantock p. 510 – Cecil Armstrong Gibbs p. 526 – Harold Truscott p. 527 – Alexander Brent-Smith p. 529 – Ralph Vaughan Williams p. 530 – Harold Darke p. 542 – William Henry Bell p. 544

Havergal Brian p. 548 – Albert Coates p. 553 – Norman Demuth p. 556 – Grace Williams p. 559 – Henry Walford Davies p. 563 – Victor Hely-Hutchinson p. 564 – Arthur Bliss p. 565 – Josef Holbrooke p. 570 – Christian Darnton p. 574 – Ralph Vaughan Williams p. 575 – Benjamin Britten p. 582 – Bernard Stevens p. 585 – Cedric Thorpe Davie p. 588 – Ruth Gipps p. 589

Programme music: The following is a good recipe for making programme music. First write your music, putting in all the ideas you can collect (or one will do if you cannot find any more). Then think of a poem, or a character in history, or anything else that has some very slight analogy with what you have composed, leaving out those attributes of the poem or character that are unsuitable to the music – or vice versa. Mix up the ingredients well with a very large (orchestral) ladle, adding a number of weird and unpleasant effects; boil the whole with plenty of midnight oil, and serve before it has time to cool. Most patients will find the concoction quite easy to swallow, if they do not think too much about it. You must not forget to label the mixture carefully; but, when it is ready, should you feel at all doubtful, you can call it anything else you like. This will not matter much.¹

The programme symphony was established not by Beethoven or Berlioz (who both wrote programme symphonies in the sense we mean today), but by Franz Liszt, the leader of the 'Neudeutsche Schule'. He promoted the idea that every kind of music was based on a kind of 'poetic idea' (Richard Strauss) and himself wrote two (or three) programme symphonies,

1 Frederic Hymen Cowen, *Music as she is wrote*, London 1915, pp. 46–47.

i.e. the *Dante* and *Faust* Symphonies (and perhaps *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne*). The original conception of the programme symphony, however, harks back to the 'chasse' symphonies of the eighteenth century. To some extent, these certainly also derived from operatic overture-symphonies, which as such contained programmatic elements on almost any subject imaginable. With Beethoven and Berlioz, and later Spohr, Schumann, Mendelssohn and many others, the programme symphony found receptive soil. With the Neudeutsche Schule, the polarity between the 'absolute' and the programme symphony grew considerably, and comments like the following soon cropped up: 'Programme music is essentially the literary man's attitude towards an art with which he has sympathy, but of which his knowledge is comparatively small.'² 'I hold that the symphony without a programme is the highest development of art.'³ These comments were issued by Edward Elgar, but given his overtures *In the South*, *Froissart*, *Cockaigne* and the tone poem *Falstaff*, his sentiments should not, of course, be understood as a categorical condemnation of programme music, but only as a criticism of ungainly or superficial forms of it (which programme music in particular is ungainly or superficial remains open to discussion). Nevertheless, his emphasis is clear. Elgar felt that Strauss's formal qualities transcended (at least in part) any programmes, thus recognizing Strauss's mastery; he was certain that Strauss 'could give us a symphony to rank among, or above the finest if he chose.'⁴

Programme symphonies were already ubiquitous by the middle the nineteenth century in England (starting with Lodge Ellerton, see pp. 112ff. and Sullivan's *Irish* Symphony, see pp. 168ff., and continuing with the symphonies of Frederic Hymen Cowen, see pp. 176ff., and Alfred and Henry Holmes, see pp. 186ff.), and the form has survived until the present day (Ronald Stevenson began a choral symphony called *Ben Dorain*⁵ in 1973, completed only in 2007, and in 1990 Trevor Hold began to write a symphony entitled *Four Landscapes* indeed inspired by four English landscapes⁶, which was completed in 1995). As mainstays on the concert programme, Beethoven and Strauss had a considerable influence on British composers. Berlioz and Schumann were somewhat less popular but their music was nearly as well-known. They were all models for British composers, and accordingly, so were their ideas about programme music. Gordon Jacob wrote:

'Mendelssohn's *Scotch* and *Italian* and Schumann's *Rhenish* Symphonies do not follow a literary programme illustrating actual events but they are not of course strictly abstract

2 John Francis Porte, *Sir Edward Elgar, O.M., Mus.Duc., LL.D., M.A.*, London/New York 1921, p. viii.

3 Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and other Lectures*, London 1968, p. 207.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 207. On the subject of programme in general cf. also John Williamson, 'The symphony as programme music', in Julian Horton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony*, Cambridge etc. 2013, p. 344–358.

5 Ronald Stevenson in a letter to the author on 21 May 1993: '(...) my choral/orchestral *Ben Dorain* was inspired by a passage from [Hugh] MacDiarmid's *The Islands of Scotland*. I enclose a photocopy of two pages from this. You will see that he makes an important distinction between *symphony* and *epic*. My Passacaglia [on *DSCH* – Shostakovich's initials according to German spelling] (...); my *Ben Dorain* (...) and my Piano Concerto no. 2 (*The Continents*) are all conceived as epics, not symphonically.' Accordingly, Kaikhosru Sorabji, a close friend of MacDiarmid's and Stevenson's, conceived many of his works epically.

6 Trevor Hold to the author, 18 April 1993.

symphonies. Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony, although the composer was at pains to point out that he was expressing feelings rather than painting actual scenes, belies his apologia and comes squarely under the head of programme music. The movements, especially *Am Bach* and *Sturm* are as realistic as anything in Strauss's symphonic poems. Delius's *In a Summer Garden* though it is prefixed by some lines of poetical description is really the expression of a mood. (...) Debussy's *L'après-midi d'un Faune* is, on the other hand, programme music because it follows Mallarmé's poem in some detail. (...) The obvious danger in this is that the composer may be led into too many by-paths and abrupt changes of mood so that the work becomes shapeless and requires from the hearer a detailed minute-by-minute knowledge of the programme. Attention is thus drawn from the music and the audience is all the time feverishly trying to keep pace with it with the help of the programme note, and is soon in a state of worry and anxiety in case it has missed something and is in the wrong place. A piece of music should be good to listen to apart from any literary associations or preoccupations. (...) This is the reason for the decline of detailed programme music. The other type, where a title indicates in broad terms the subject, scene, or mood which has inspired the composer, is far preferable. If the subject chosen is one which is likely to be familiar already to the audience music can throw its own light on it.⁷

On this point nearly all composers agree, and only occasionally slip into the kind of programmatizing that exhausts itself in the mimicry of nature (Cyril Scott maintained that there did not exist simple sound painting, at least not in the common sense,⁸ i.e. not even in Strauss's *Alpensinfonie*). This is not necessarily tantamount to a betrayal of familiar conceptions; it is often a conscious instrumentary or motivic practice – in addition to possible formal aspects that are often neglected even though they are actually very essential for the understanding of the works.⁹

Kaikhosru Sorabji wrote polemically: 'Music of its very nature neither can nor does deal with verbal concepts. (...) This it was that made the very distinguished French master Vincent d'Indy truthfully and wittily remark, that for a symphonic or "tone" poem to be intelligible as the portrayal or attempted portrayal of a sequence of events, there was needed a personage stationed in the orchestra armed with a megaphone to declaim through it what it was supposed to be happening at any given moment.'¹⁰ This does not mean, however, that musical re-creation of feelings is impossible or illicit – it simply has to take place on the correct level of abstraction. In addition, the feelings must be experienced by the listener and not prescribed from above.¹¹

7 Gordon Jacob, *The Composer and his Art*, London etc. 1955, pp. 94-96. Cf. also Henry Walford Davies, *The Pursuit of Music*, London etc. 1949, pp. 417-419.

8 Cyril Scott, *The philosophy of modernism (in its connection with music)*, London 1917, pp. 47-48.

9 Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, *Richard Strauss und die Sinfonie*, Köln 1994.

10 Kaikhosru Sorabji, *Mi contra Fa*, London 1947, pp. 21-22.

11 Cf. e.g. Watson Lyle, 'A musician of the North (Arnold Bax)', in: *The Bookman* LXXXI/485 (1932), p. 268: 'But music often means something quite different to the composer from what it does to other people. The same work can have so many different interpretations, all more or less satisfying.'

The British programme symphonists¹² after 1900 also wrote on numerous levels of subjects that can be divided as follows.

a) ‘Exotic’ subjects. Irish, Celtic, Scottish, English, Greek, Swiss, South African, etc. symphonies

As with Mendelssohn Bartholdy’s and Schumann’s programme symphonies, many of those written in Great Britain were inspired by particular landscapes. While Mendelssohn had evidently been moved by the ‘spirit of Scotland’ (*Scottish Symphony*), Ireland proved to be the main source of inspiration for other composers (only one *English Symphony* is known – Parry’s Third, see pp. 234ff.). Although the Irish were admired for their musicality and culture, there was not much of an independent ‘classical’ music scene in Ireland before the Second World War. In *A Sketch of the Symphony*, Charles Villiers Stanford suggested that Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony, which was composed simultaneously to the folk song arrangements (the theme of the last movement is identical to a phrase from *Kitty Coleraine*¹³), might have reflected his fondness for Irish tunes. As Ireland moved towards independence from the United Kingdom, a new history of Irish music in the twentieth century emerged (Eire was part of the British Empire until 1923).¹⁴ Celtic landscapes, that is the landscapes of primeval pagan times, the legends of the people (as a source of inspiration for symphonies, antiquity is resorted to relatively rarely) and the sinister spirits and powers all found reflection in the works of numerous poets, including Shakespeare (*Macbeth*, *King Lear*). The composers influenced by Ireland included Sullivan (1866, see pp. 168ff.), Stanford (1887, see pp. 216ff.), Esposito (1902, see pp. 268ff.), Harty (1904, see pp. 303ff.) and MacMahon (1933?¹⁵), all of whom wrote *Irish Symphonies*, but also Bax and Moeran. In the end, many of those living in England had mixed feelings about being associated with the Irish: Charles Villiers Stanford, himself an Irishman by birth, described his compatriots as follows:

‘If one Kelt offends another and apologizes, the injured party does not only forgive, he entirely and completely forgets. Tempers in Ireland are quick but not bad. The Englishman does not appreciate this distinction; he may quite honestly forgive, but he never forgets. In this natural disability lies, I feel sure, in great things as well as in small, the true source of the proverbial incompatibility of the Irish and English

12 Selected British tone poems are examined by Heldt Guido in his Münster 1996 Ph.D. dissertation, published as *Das Nationale als Problem in der englischen Musik des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg 2007.

13 Sacha Stokes, ‘C. V. Stanford: man of letters’, in: *MMR* 85/964 (1955), p. 42.

14 Axel Klein, *Die Musik Irlands im 20. Jahrhundert*, Ph.D. dissertation Hildesheim 1995, Hildesheim etc. 1996 (Hildesheimer Musikwissenschaftliche Arbeiten, 2).

15 Desmond MacMahon’s *Irish Symphony*, which was performed in Bournemouth in 1933, is now apparently lost.

temperaments.¹⁶

Hamilton Harty, on the other hand, likewise an Irishman by birth, put it somewhat differently: 'I divide mankind into three categories: (1) People whom you can trust, (2) People whom you cannot trust, and (3) Irishmen.'¹⁷

Another composer inspired by the Irish landscape to write his own 'Irish' symphony was **Ernest John Moeran** (Heston, Middlesex, 31 December 1894–Kenmare, Ireland, 1 December 1950). 'When the Symphony in G minor received its first performance, we were expressly told that much of it had been written 'among the mountains and seaboard of County Kerry'. '(...) the material in the second movement was conceived around the sand-dunes and marshes of East Norfolk.'¹⁸ Aloys Fleischmann reported that most of the rest of the work was written in Kerry, mainly on Valencia Island,¹⁹ while great parts of the Violin Concerto (1942) were written in Kenmare, where the composer died.²⁰ The completion of the symphony had boosted Moeran's self-confidence, and he immediately embarked upon writing a violin concerto for May Harrison, the sister of cellist Beatrice Harrison (who had been so successful with Elgar's Cello Concerto). Geoffrey Self described the connection between the symphony and other works by Moeran, for instance the *Seven Poems of James Joyce* (1929), the choral suite *Phyllida and Corydon* (1934), the Violin Concerto, the Cello Concerto (1945) and the Cello Sonata (1947).²¹ 'Much of Moeran's music may be described as 'nature music', in the sense in which the term is applied to Sibelius',²² wrote Hugh Ottaway, referring to the composer's obvious inspiration from nature (Moeran himself stressed: 'It is not "programme-music" – i.e. there is no story or sequence of events attached to it and moreover, it adheres strictly to its form.'²³). Like Vaughan Williams, Moeran collected folk songs, and was thereby closely connected to his contemporaries, especially Warlock, Dieren, Cecil Gray and Bax (For Moeran's obituary, Bax wrote: 'During his first thirty years he was an Englishman and a diligent collector of East Anglian folk tunes, whilst for the remainder of his days he was almost exclusively Irish.'²⁴). Many authors speculate that Dieren's and especially Warlock's²⁵ bad influence sped up Moeran's

16 Charles Stanford, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, London 1914, p. 101.

17 Quoted from Dan Godfrey, *Memoirs and Music*, London 1924, p. 193.

18 Hugh Ottaway, 'The Music of E. J. Moeran', in: *Disc* 5/17 (1951), p. 7.

19 Aloys Fleischmann, 'The Music of E. J. Moeran', in: *Envoy* IV/16 (1951), p. 64.

20 Michael Dawney, 'Aloys Fleischmann in conversation', in: *Composer* 56 (1975), p. 31.

21 Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, pp. 37–38, 147–151, 189 and 208–209.

22 Hugh Ottaway, 'The Music of E. J. Moeran', in: *Disc* 5/17 (1951), p. 7.

23 Ernest John Moeran, Sleeve notes for the first recording of my Symphony, 1943. Reprinted in Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, p. 274.

24 Arnold Bax, 'E. J. Moeran, 1894–1950', in: *M&L* XXXII (1951), p. 126. Reprinted in Arnold Bax, *Farewell, My Youth and other writings*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1992, p. 111. Moeran departed from the agriculturally centred Norfolk to Ireland, where the Celtic influence had remained most intact (i.e. unaltered); however, Celtic culture had far more direct influence on Bax or Ireland (who turned himself to the southwest of England).

25 Herbert Howells could not tolerate Dieren and felt Warlock to be enormously satanic (cf. Christopher Palmer, *Herbert Howells – A Centenary Celebration*, London 1992, p. 354).



Illustration 45. E. J. Moeran, photograph. Lewis Foreman collection; reproduced by kind permission.

decline considerably,²⁶ but this viewpoint seems simplistic to the author, especially given that Warlock died in 1930, Dieren in 1937, and Moeran only in 1950. In 1944 Moeran wrote his *Sinfonietta*, which in many respects anticipates Poulenc (his art of instrumentation – among other aspects – deserves special emphasis), in 1945 his Cello Concerto, in 1949 his *Phantasy Quartet* for oboe and strings, in 1947 his Cello Sonata and in 1948 his *Serenade*, in which he tried to juxtapose the old style (see Warlock's *Capriol*) with the new (*Sinfonietta*). But it is only in the *Serenade* that 'derivation' and 'rhapsodic excess', weaknesses that were cited earlier, can be found.²⁷ Marius Flothuis wrote: '(...) the lyrical quality is to the fore in his instrumental works. (...) He is not among the 'radicals', but he is not afraid of harmonic experiments occasionally (there are indications of polytonality in the *Phantasy Quartet*).'²⁸

For numerous authors, Moeran's First²⁹ Symphony of 1924-37 occupies a special position: 'the composer adapted his lyrical invention to the wider purpose with admirable control and real conviction. (...) Indeed, the work is possessed of a driving force, a powerful urge, hitherto unnoticed in Moeran's music; there is a note of ruggedness, even violence, which gives rise to some strong, muscular material and helps in the attainment of that large contrast so essential to an extended score of this character.'³⁰ In harmonic respects, the symphony as well as other of his works recalls Delius,³¹ the great model who never wrote a symphony but nonetheless ranked among the highest-regarded British composers – higher even than Gustav Holst or Frank Bridge, whose contributions (comparable among his contemporaries only to Moeran³²) have still received too little recognition. Hamilton Harty, a friend of Moeran's since 1921,³³ was already scheduled in 1924 to conduct the

26 Michael Hurd in a conversation with the author on 19 February 1993.

27 Hugh Ottaway, 'The Music of E. J. Moeran', in: *Disc 5/17* (1951), p. 7.

28 Marius Flothuis, *Modern British Composers*, Stockholm/London 1949, p. 52.

29 A Second Symphony in E[♭] major, begun in 1945 in Ireland and already fairly well along, was never completed. As with the First Symphony, which was started in 1924, Moeran experienced a long stretch of 'writer's block', and the work remained incomplete at the time of his death in 1950 (he fell from the pier of Kenmare in Ireland and drowned; he had returned to the area in the hopes of regaining the inspiration that he was lacking in Cheltenham, where he had moved with his wife the cellist Peers Coetmore and was supposed to subject himself to an alcohol withdrawal treatment). According to numerous witnesses, the work was nearly finished (the first performance was scheduled with the Hallé Orchestra for spring 1949), yet the score was never found; only rough drafts and a symphony movement dated 1948 came to light (the symphony eventually realized by Martin Yates in 2011). The work evidently contained four movements, yielding a one-movement symphony similar to Sibelius's Seventh. (Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, pp. 221–228.)

30 Hugh Ottaway, 'The Music of E. J. Moeran', in: *Disc 5/17* (1951), p. 9.

31 Arthur Hutchings described a conversation with Moeran in 1938 in a radio interview: 'just after the first performance of the G minor Symphony, I spoke of Delius as an escapist; and he suddenly snapped: "Good Lord, you can escape into a crowd of fools, roaring round in cars or going from silly party to silly party"?' (In a radio interview of *Music Magazine*, BBC Radio 3, 27 December 1970. Quoted from Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, p. 49.)

32 Cf. Anthony Payne, 'Moeran, E(rnest) J(ohn)', in: *Grove6* vol. 12, London etc. 1980, p. 458.

33 In this year Moeran wrote his first orchestral composition, *In the Mountain Country*, a work that 'reflects that nature-worship characteristic of other music of the period; Vaughan Williams' *Pastoral Symphony* is a near contemporary, and perhaps there is even in the title an unconscious echo of Vaughan Williams' *In the Fen Country* (1904). One

first performance of the projected symphony and still believed in Moeran in 1935.³⁴ Most authors praise the work highly; Arthur Hutchings was of another mind, however: ‘His Symphony in G minor (...) fails to fulfil the promise of an eloquently melodic opening; subsequent ideas lose character in turgid passages that seem to derive their menacing moods from Sibelius.’³⁵ The symphony was nearly complete in 1924, but Moeran’s severe self-criticism stalled its conclusion for more than twelve years. During this time he nonetheless composed choral works, songs, the Sonata for two violins and the String Trio, piano pieces as well as the orchestra pieces *Lonely Waters* (1924, rev. 1930–31) and *Whythorne’s Shadow* (1925). The première performance on 13 January 1938 at the Queen’s Hall in a Royal Philharmonic Society concert was conducted by Leslie Heward, which offended Hamilton Harty (who had recently recuperated from a serious illness) so deeply that he no longer wanted to accept the dedication of the composition. Fortunately, Harty did not live to see the day that Heward also conducted the first – and up to now unsurpassed – recording of the symphony.

Sibelius’s influence on the work was soon recognized. Moeran knew *Tapiola*, and his symphony strongly suggests that he was presumably also familiar with Sibelius’s Symphonies No. 2, 3 and 4³⁶ (Walton’s First Symphony – see pp. 697ff. – also appears to a certain extent to have been modelled on Sibelius’s Second Symphony³⁷). Arnold Bax later commented: ‘I well remember his perturbation when I pointed out to him that a passage [from [107] to [115]] in his symphony bore a remarkable resemblance to the famous whirlwind in *Tapiola*.’³⁸ Early on, Moeran employed the technique of motif expansion, whereby (see pp. 447ff.) a motif is continued in constantly new permutations. Critics frequently disparaged the so-called inconsistency in the recurrence of the themes in Moeran’s as well as Sibelius’s work, thus missing the point entirely. In the melody of the beginning, for instance,

Ex. 1



melodic shape in the work is telling because it reveals again a composer vaguely present in Moeran’s thought – and more especially as he contemplates a mountain piece: the rampant, leaping phrase (...) that appears at letter E in the trumpet is familiar from the music of Delius. Delius had completed his *Song of the High Hills* in 1911, but it did not receive its first performance until 1920, one year before Moeran completed his work.’ (Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, p. 32.)

34 ‘I am glad to possess some autograph music of yours, and will place the score with the few pieces which I keep in a special place, and regard as particularly my own.’ (Hamilton Harty to Ernest John Moeran, 19 April 1935. Quoted from Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, p. 75.)

35 Arthur Hutchings, ‘Music in Britain 1916–1960’, in Martin Cooper (ed.), *The Modern Age. The New Oxford History of Music*, X. London etc. 1974, p. 519.

36 Cf. Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, pp. 107 and 111–113.

37 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 111.

38 Arnold Bax, ‘E. J. Moeran, 1894–1950’. Reprinted in Arnold Bax, *Farewell, My Youth and other writings*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1992, p. 111.

various motifs are contained that will be processed independently from each other over the course of the work. Not once does the melody return in its initial form. The same technique is utilized throughout the whole work, thus increasing its concentrated compactness.

As an example Sibelius's influence on Moeran, Geoffrey Self's observations on the scherzo, the one most isolated from the other three movements,³⁹ are particularly illuminating:

'His Scherzo (...) is patterned on Sibelius – on the scherzi of both Third and Fourth Symphonies. Interestingly enough, these two Sibelius scherzi are themselves related; both commence with oboe themes, which are tied over the bar and which descend scalically. Moeran's oboe theme is similar in shape but is approached scalically. The scherzo in Sibelius's Fourth Symphony has a *divisi* viola accompaniment, which Moeran echoes with his violin accompaniment (...). Moeran, however, phrases it in twos, to create a syncopation across the bar. For his first episode, Sibelius moves into 2/4 time; so does Moeran.

Ex. 2

The Sibelius Fourth Symphony is the most grim and forbidding of the seven: it came at a period when the composer was suffering from cancer of the throat and contemplating an early death (in the event, he lived to be 92). While Moeran's symphony is generally a grim affair, the scherzo is something of an oasis – it is warm and spring-like, whereas the Sibelius is cold and impersonal. Only the manner is shared.⁴⁰

Apart from Sibelius, Tchaikovsky (whose Sixth Symphony is of importance here), Elgar (Moeran particularly admired *Falstaff* and the Second Symphony, whose slow movement is reflected in Moeran's work), Brahms (whose Second Symphony served as model in this case)

39 Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, pp. 124–125 points out that none of the elements structuring the other movements emerges in the scherzo. Self described it as 'unique in British music since it were as one of very few a really cheerful interlude, a contrasting relief in an otherwise passionate and dramatic work'. 'Since contrast is its function, and isolation its protection, it seems only logical that it should not use those cells so deeply identified with the storm and stress of the outer movements.' (p. 126.)

40 *Ibid.*, pp. 111–112.

and Mozart (the key of the symphony is identical to Mozart's great G minor Symphony of 1788) all apparently influenced Moeran as well.⁴¹

Moeran's combination of polytonality and diatonicism rivals Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphony (see pp. 725ff.; as in the case of Vaughan Williams, one finds in Moeran modal reminiscences) and Walton's First Symphony (see pp. 697ff.); his instrumentation is also highly successful. 'It has been said of Bax that his subject-matter cannot be considered separately from his orchestration, since his orchestral style so much conditions the expression of the material. I think this will also be found to be true in some degree of Moeran's work. His orchestration, besides satisfying in technical regards, bears a personal stamp too strong to admit an echo from Finland, towards which more than one contemporary has stared when deciding points of instrumentation.'⁴² Moeran himself, Edwin Evans, Robin Hull, Heathcote Statham (the organist of Norwich Cathedral) and Geoffrey Self all furnished analyses of the symphony that we cannot recapitulate here.⁴³

Numerous authors found fault with the finale, which even Moeran described as 'five minutes too long'.⁴⁴ Aloys Fleischmann summed up the problem neatly:

'After an exceptionally spacious slow movement, and a scherzo which, for all its incipient playfulness, keeps slipping back into that wistful, forlorn mood which is at the heart of the whole symphony, a firmly knit finale would be needed to sum up all the foregoing elements and balance the whole design. But the materials which go to make up the finale – the slow introduction (profound piece of heart-searching that it is), the initial pentatonic passage-work, the broad main theme which has so chequered a development, the storm-episode which recalls *Tapiola* – these do not cohere sufficiently, and the movement loses momentum more and more as it draws towards a close.'⁴⁵

The finale in fact overwhelms the average listener with more material than can easily be digested after the concentrated preceding three movements, but it would have been unwise for Moeran to do otherwise. Had he brightened the tension, criticism similar to that levelled at the finale of Walton's First Symphony would surely have arisen. Geoffrey Self stressed that it

'may be possible to show poetic *reason*, if not "poetic justification", for the design. Indeed, there may be a poetic basis for the design of the symphony as a whole. It may also be possible to show that there is in this last movement a convincing summary,

41 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 109–114 and 122.

42 Robin Hull, 'Moeran's Symphony in G Minor', in: *MMR* LXVIII/793 (1938), p. 15.

43 Moeran, reprinted in Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, pp. 274–276. Edwin Evans, 'Moeran's Symphony in G minor', in: *MT* LXXIX (1938), pp. 94–99. Robin Hull, 'Moeran's Symphony in G Minor', in: *MMR* LXVIII/793 (1938), pp. 15–17. Heathcote Statham, 'Moeran's Symphony in G minor', in: *MR* 1/3 (1940), pp. 245–254. Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, pp. 102–133.

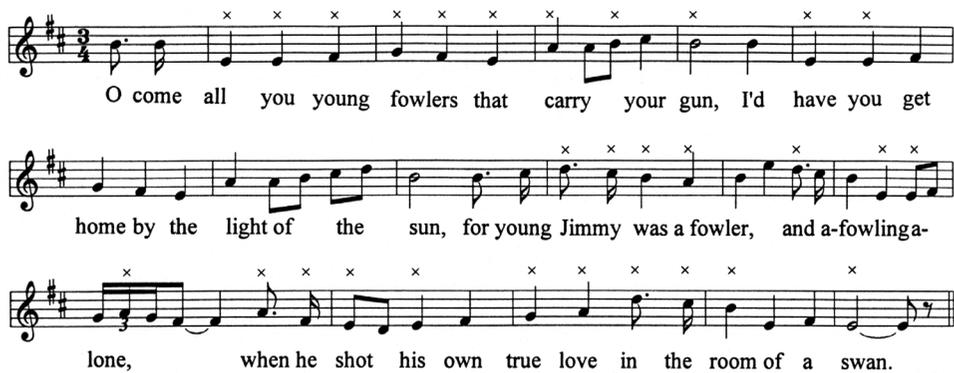
44 Michael Bowles to Geoffrey Self, 26 January 1981.

45 Aloys Fleischmann, 'The Music of E. J. Moeran', in: *Envoy* IV/16 (1951), p. 64.

without “loss of momentum” of the “foregoing elements” of the entire symphony. For, to Moeran, structural coherence was vital. As Aloys Fleischmann said, “it was Moeran’s habit to work out his basic material with the utmost exactitude, so that almost every detail can be related to one or other of a few parent ideas”.^{46,47}

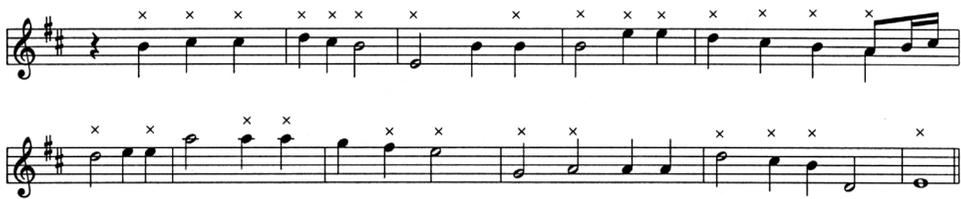
In this case it is a folk song from Norfolk that Moeran had arranged in 1923. One of them had been *Lonely Waters*, which Moeran arranged for small orchestra, and another was *The Shooting of his Dear*; he built his symphony⁴⁸ on the latter, whose melody he had published in his collection in 1924. A commentary upon it in the first edition reveals an intense reverence for Irish culture.⁴⁹

Ex. 3: Folk-song



O come all you young fowlers that carry your gun, I'd have you get
home by the light of the sun, for young Jimmy was a fowler, and a-fowling-a-
lone, when he shot his own true love in the room of a swan.

Ex. 4: Symphony



By 1924 Moeran had written the symphony’s slow movement, a funeral march that both constitutes the heart of the work and is the key to its structure.⁵⁰ Bars 8-10 of the

46 *Ibid.*, p. 64.

47 Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, p. 115.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 115–117.

49 L.E.B. in E. J. Moeran, ‘Songs collected in Norfolk’: ‘I have noted a tune in the Western Highlands of Scotland, the text of which turns on the same subject as this and the Irish *Peggy Bann*.’ (Quoted from Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, p. 116.)

50 Geoffrey Self, ‘E. J. Moeran – Unpublished Letters and Songs’, in: *BM* 16 (1994), p. 38 reports the discovery of a folk song called *One Morning in Spring* (1923) from Norfolk that was also taken up in the symphony.

piano introduction to the 1924 folk song arrangement were taken up here, but rhythmically varied:⁵¹

Ex. 5: [35] 4



The folk song itself then appears. Self described the movement as ‘a free meditation on the Folksong, and as such we would not expect it necessarily to follow any of the standard forms.’⁵² In terms of its reliance on the folk song, the movement could be analysed as bi-partite: the first part is characterized by short phrases and motifs derived from the song, and the second part is shaped by extended melodies from it. Self observed a similar pattern in the first movement of Sibelius’s Second Symphony, ‘where the fragmentary and apparently unconnected ideas presented in the first part of the movement synthesise into a sustained flight of melody. Throughout Moeran’s movement, the “clue” phrase (ex. 6) acts as a kind of ritornello, marking off and introducing paragraphs.’⁵³ Additional short themes derived from the folk song appear in sequence; one of them was to be taken up in Moeran’s unfinished Second Symphony (Self described it as ‘a classic example of a basic Moeran shape – three upward steps and a leap – characteristic of Irish and Norfolk song. Indeed, it is here a rationalisation of those bars in the Folksong from which it came, and in due course blossoms into a soaring arch of melody’⁵⁴). With respect to tonality, the second half of the movement follows the original key of the folk song in Moeran’s arrangement of 1924, and indeed in the low strings, a melodic variant (the first seven notes deviate from the 1924 version) of the entire folk song (for the purpose of comparison, this passage can be found below the excerpt of the folk song) appears that recurs repeatedly. The opening melody of the symphony⁵⁵ could actually be yet another variant of the folk song; similarities are marked in exx. 3–4 with asterisks.

In his analysis of the symphony’s outer movements, Self set up, in addition to the variants of the folk song mentioned above, three ‘parent cells’ (A, B and C). The first two are derived from the verse ‘For young Jimmy was a fowler’, but the last one cannot be derived from the folk song:⁵⁶

51 Cf. Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, pp. 117–118.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 118.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 119.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

55 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 122.

56 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 122–124.

Ex. 6: [40] 4

Ex. 7

Ex. 8

In the first movement, a sonata principal movement with a shortened recapitulation and apparently shifted tonality (the movement ends in the seemingly foreign key of G minor), the cells A and B are put against C, in particular in the development and coda. In the final movement, a rondo fulfils the form freely, but by no means resolves the conflict superficially (the last recapitulation of the rondo is replaced by the central episode of the movement).⁵⁷ In this movement the theme extracted from the introduction of the folk song attains more and more importance; cell A is to be found at the very heart of the main theme, but as the movement progresses, B takes over, to be merged only at the very end with A, which is then dropped again. The symphony ends with six hard fortissimo strokes. “Thus the symphony ceases, but is hardly

57 Geoffrey Self sees Sibelius’s Second Symphony as the formal model for both the first and final movements in *The Music of E. J. Moeran*, London 1986, pp. 127–128.

finished. The music ends, but the impulse which generated its power is hardly exhausted. The sublimation of bitterness would require another work for its expression.⁵⁸

Geoffrey Self summarized the functions of the individual movements as follows:

‘The first movement is an exposition of conflict – a conflict between the rigour and discipline of the primary idea, together with its attendant martial fanfare, and the pastoral vision of the secondary idea. No resolution of this conflict is achieved by the end of the movement. The slow movement, bleak and elegiac by turns, is the fulcrum, and indeed the fountainhead, of the symphony. In its progress it gradually achieves the quality of a funeral march. The scherzo is an interlude; it is a point at which tension is momentarily relaxed, although even here there is that slightly forlorn mood never too far away in Moeran. The tension and struggle return in the last movement.’⁵⁹

Based upon his study of the folk song’s lyrics, Self concluded that Moeran’s symphony represents a kind of requiem or memorial.⁶⁰ The song recounts the story of the shooting of a young man, a theme that undoubtedly resonated with the composer; Moeran had been a soldier in the First World War. This interpretation may be far-fetched, but the symphony nonetheless reveals itself to be strongly programmatical, even if the composer himself never mentioned the programme.

On **Rutland Boughton’s** (see also pp. 371ff.) Second Symphony *Deirdre* (and his withdrawn First Symphony *Oliver Cromwell* – see pp. 685ff.), the composer wrote to Bernard Shaw:

‘I have tried the symphonic method of Drama in 2 works (*Oliver Cromwell*, *Deirdre*), but it leaves *too much* to the imagination of the audience. Elgar did the same in *Falstaff* (which of all his works I love the most) – and as a consequence it is the work of his which has taken longest in getting hold. But the divine love of Elgar for the fat rascal comes out in such thematic form that one curses the cancer that broke such power.’⁶¹

Deirdre was initially written as a ballet in 1925–26. Terence James Stannus Gray, the founder of the Cambridge Festival Theatre, had proposed a series of subjects, of which the Celtic drama suited Boughton best (Boughton had already composed a couple of Arthurian operas and founded the Glastonbury Festival, which cultivated music dealing with this topic). In September 1927 Boughton met Ninette de Valois, who, according to Boughton’s statement, expressed unequivocal enthusiasm. Gray, on the other hand, was reportedly not too happy with the composition.

In any case, it became clear to Boughton that nobody was sufficiently interested in the ballet, so he reworked it into a symphony by making insignificant cuts.⁶² Still, Arthur

58 *Ibid.*, p. 133.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 126.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 132.

61 Rutland Boughton to George Bernard Shaw, 23 September 1935. British Library: Add. MS 50529, fol. 76.

62 ‘To do this he simply removed 67 bars: a 49-bar introduction in which a Bard had set the scene in song, a 3-bar link between what is now the first and second movements, and a 15-bar sung interjection in what is now the first

Bliss's assessment, i.e. that the new work was a suite⁶³ rather than a symphony, is spot on. He argued that it 'depended heavily on a "programme" – a work that was not quite a symphonic poem, and certainly not a symphony in the usual sense of the word. Boughton suggested it might best be thought of as "A music-drama without action", but pointed out that the underlying concept was symphonic in the wider sense.'⁶⁴ One has to agree that the work is distinctly unsatisfactory in formal terms, being in fact a sequence of tone poems rather than a symphony. The beginning of the second movement is especially strange: celesta and flutes, accompanied by muted strings, play the *Westminster Chimes*. Over the course of the movement, counterpoint is used excessively, partially referring to Wagner's *Waldweben*. The instrumentation of the extensive final movement, the best constructed of the three movements, frequently sounds like a film soundtrack, while the formation of melody recalls Mahler at times.⁶⁵ Hurd additionally pointed out the influences of Strauss and Elgar.⁶⁶

Boughton's own programme note reads thus:

*'First Movement: Allegro Vivace
The Young Girl – The Old King – The Young Lover*

Deirdre is as wild as the mountains where she has her home. She cares much for the beasts, the winds, the skies, the flowers, and the mystery of the stars and the tarns. She is indifferent to the fate which, she has been told, is in store for her. For King Conochar has willed that Deirdre shall become his Queen. Her music, as the expression of free, virginal, hill-life is stated and developed, chiefly by strings and woodwind.

Ex. 9

Allegro vivace

movement. Nothing else needed to be altered, for the ballet had been conceived in symphonic terms.' (Michael Hurd, *Rutland Boughton and the Glastonbury Festivals*, Oxford etc. 21993, p. 264.)

63 Gregory Roscow (ed.), *Bliss on Music*, Oxford etc. 1991, p. 166.

64 Michael Hurd, *Rutland Boughton and the Glastonbury Festivals*, Oxford etc. 21993, p. 198.

65 Arthur Bliss wrote in 1939: 'The centre movement is rich in lyrical beauty and the sombre movement of the last is impressive. As in the case of some other English symphonies, I feel the need of visual aid, such as the cinema screen can give. I believe the experience would so enhance the inherent dramatic content of the music that a new art form of beauty might result. The spell of Celtic lore does not enchant me. (...) It is a proof of the strength of much of Boughton's music that I can listen to its Celtic quality with admiration.' (Gregory Roscow (ed.), *Bliss on Music*, Oxford etc. 1991, p. 166.)

66 Michael Hurd, *Rutland Boughton and the Glastonbury Festivals*, Oxford etc. 21993, pp. 266–267.

Conochar's music is introduced by trumpets. With the coming of the King, come also the three young sons of Usna. When Deirdre's eyes fall upon Naisi it is he who enters her heart. The first timid phrase of what becomes the love-tune is heard on oboe and violas, with a dark background of trombones. The conflict arising in Deirdre's heart through her fear of the King and her passion for Naisi constitutes the middle section of the movement. She makes her choice; and the last section is devoted to a happy dance-rhythm, developed chiefly in transformed themes of Deirdre and her love. The closing bars sound a new theme – as of a shadow in the background, stalking their happiness.

Second Movement: Adagio molto
Moonlit Idyll

The lovers run away together, and this is the music of their consummated love.

Ex. 10



A smaller orchestra is used. The strings are much sub-divided, into solo quartet with two lines of tutti in each of the four upper parts. The cloud which shadowed the joy of the first movement passes also over the peace of this movement.

Third Movement: Allegro moderato
Love and Death: A Dance of Death-defiance

This is the longest movement, and is less simple in its dramatico-emotional development. Deirdre may love Naisi, but Conochar has power over their lives. The movement opens with the suggestion of that adverse power.

Ex. 11

Allegro moderato

A feeling persists that the power may be used tyrannically. (This being a “Deirdre” symphony, its moods are developed only from her point of view – until the last few

bars, when she no longer has any point of view!) When the tyrannous music has been fully stated, it is followed by Deirdre's counter-music: first, a soft coaxing appeal, which fails; then, conscious of the certainty of death, a weak sobbing reaction. But an innate sense of her own right to life and to Naisi reawakens the flood of her love and the assertion of her own full womanhood. That having been asserted, it strives with the tyranny which is more crudely and emphatically proclaimed. With ever-fiercer exaltation, Deirdre faces her doom by the side of her lover – finally leaving the tyrant only the clay of the beauty he was unable to win.⁶⁷

Erik Chisholm and Arnold Bax⁶⁸ were also inspired by the legend of *Deirdre*, but in the form of Synge's play *Deirdre of the Sorrows*. Vaughan Williams also referred to Synge for the composition of his one-act *Riders to the Sea* (1925-32), as did Brian for his overture *The Tinker's Wedding* (1948).

Erik William Chisholm (Cathcart, Glasgow, 4 January 1904–Cape Town, 8 June 1965) studied with Herbert Walton and Lev Pouishnoff, and at the Glasgow Athenæum School of Music from 1918 to 1920. From c. 1923 to 1928, he was employed as a conductor, pianist and lecturer in Canada. Chisholm had made a name for himself in the Scottish musical world not only as a conductor of the Grand Opera Company (for which he premièred in Scotland Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, Mozart's *Idomeneo* and Moonie's *The Weird of Colbar*), but above all through the concert series of the Active Society for the Propagation of Contemporary Music, which he had founded. The series brought a galaxy of contemporary composers to Glasgow from 1930 to 1938, including Hindemith, Szymanowski, Schmitt, Bartók, Dieren, Casella, Lambert, Medtner, Berg and Sorabji.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, he studied at the University of Edinburgh with Donald Francis Tovey. Chisholm's *Dance Suite* for piano and orchestra was given in 1933 at an I.S.C.M. festival in Amsterdam.⁷⁰ From 1935 to 1940 he was musical director of the Celtic Ballet, directed concerts organized by the E[n터테인먼트] N[atational] S[ervice] A[ssociation] for the troops in India and the Far East during wartimes, and in 1940-41 reorganized the Carl Rosa Opera Company.⁷¹ From 1941 to 1944 he was conductor of the Anglo-Polish Ballet Company, and then embarked for the Far East, where he set up the Singapore Symphony Orchestra.

After having failed to obtain a professorship at Glasgow University despite recommendations from Bax and others, Chisholm moved to South Africa, arriving in Cape Town in 1946. There

67 *Ibid.*, pp. 264–266. – Erik Chisholm and Arnold Bax were also inspired by the legend of *Deirdre*, but in the form of Synge's play *Deirdre of the Sorrows*.

68 Cf. Lewis Foreman, *Bax. A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1987, pp. 50–52.

69 William Saunders, 'A front-rank Scottish composer: Erik Chisholm', in: *The Sackbut* XIV/2 (1933), pp. 45–47. Cf. also Colin Scott-Sutherland, 'A Peek Into Erik Chisholm's Archives', in: *British Music* 21 (1999), pp. 67–71.

70 A nearly complete worklist is published in Jacques P. Malan, 'Chisholm, Erik', in Jacques P. Malan (ed.), *South African Music Encyclopedia*, Oxford etc. 1986, pp. 272–275.

71 Even Carl Rosa was a German, and along with Richter, Manns, Benedict, Hallé and some others, formed a strong German influence in England. Among the musicians active for the Carl Rosa Company was Gustav Holst.



Illustration 46. Erik Chisholm, March 1933, photograph. Reproduced by kind permission of Morag Chisholm.

he took up his post (secured for him since 1939) as dean and professor of the university's Faculty of Music. Chisholm completely reorganized the College of Music, created new jobs, more than doubled the curriculum and introduced new degrees and diplomas. The opera school (incorporating the company set up by Albert Coates) was founded in 1954. Around the turn of the year 1957-58, institute members gave a series of performances in Glasgow and London, including Chisholm's opera *The Inland Woman*. Chisholm's area of activity had in the meantime increased substantially. He had successes in the USA as well as the Soviet Union. Stanley Glasser writes:

'Dr. Chisholm's grasp of the many musical styles in the history of Western European music is thorough and his tastes are catholic, and for an academic head his love for and practise of our controversial twentieth century music is quite unusual. The results of his vitality is sometimes harmed by impatience due to having to deal too often with people of a less imaginative and less adventurous outlook, and there is lot of evidence of his peppery nature in the minutes of meetings, letters to the press, and so on. Yet the irritation that this may cause is of no consequence since, in the first place, Dr. Chisholm never bears a grudge against those whom he thinks have musically 'sinned' and in the second place, one always finds that many of his ideas which at first seemed preposterous, unbelievably materialise into the most successful realisations. (...) Dr. Chisholm is an authority on Indian, Middle Eastern and Gaelic folk music and of the various styles to be found in the contemporary music scene. Above all, we (...) should be grateful to him for the busy propagandist and stout friend he has proved to be on behalf of the creative efforts of South African composers. Through his efforts most of South African composers, certainly all those belonging to the younger generation, have received various kinds of assistance such as commissions for compositions, scholarships, teaching posts, performances and generous personal attention. He has been instrumental in the performance of more South African works than any other single person in the country.'⁷²

Colin Scott-Sutherland felt that Chisholm's music (at least *The Forgotten Mermaid*) demonstrated 'very Scottish invention',⁷³ while Donald Mitchell characterized Chisholm's style as that of a 'South African' who was 'not especially national in artistic inflection'.⁷⁴ This was not surprising given that Chisholm had only arrived in South Africa in 1946. Still, Glasser summarized his works as falling into two groups: 'works written in Scotland and nationalistic in character, technique and style and works influenced by his residence in the Far East'.⁷⁵ Chisholm's music is typical for its time, the post-war years – resembling in many ways that of Bainton, Clifford or even Kabalevsky.⁷⁶

72 Stanley Glasser, 'Musical Personalities. V. Professor Erik Chisholm', in: *Res Musicae* 7/1 (1960), pp. 5–6.

73 Colin Scott-Sutherland, 'The Music of Ronald Stevenson', in: *MR* 26 (1965), p. 118. Cf. also John McQuaid, 'Scottish Composers – II. Erik Chisholm', in: *Con Brio* 1/3 (1949), pp. 14–15.

74 Donald Mitchell, 'Music and Musicians from South Africa', in: *MT* XCVIII (1957), pp. 91–92.

75 Stanley Glasser, 'Musical Personalities. V. Professor Erik Chisholm', in: *Res Musicae* 7/1 (1960), p. 5.

76 With the first movements of his two first symphonies (1932 and 1934) in particular, Kabalevsky influenced the three mentioned composers.

Chisholm's First Symphony in C minor (1938) supposedly carries the subtitle *Tragic* (which would, strictly speaking, place it in rather close proximity to more 'general programmatic' symphonies, such as Britten's *Sinfonia da Requiem* or Bliss's *Colour Symphony*) – still, this word is nowhere to be found in the score. The work of the thirty-four year-old already shows pronounced maturity in both instrumentation and construction – the *stretti* are impeccable – but the individual movements seem a little too long. In harmonic respects close to Nielsen, Clifford, Rubbra, Bainton and Rawsthorne, Chisholm's music contains highly individual ideas. Often associated with the sound language of the post-war times, with melodies like the following, he proves to be rather closely related to late-Romantic composers like Boughton or Howells.

Ex. 12



Formally perfect, the work nonetheless fails to distinguish itself from the many good symphonies being written then; however, it was one of the best by a Scot at that time. The critic of *The Musical Times* wrote: 'Chisholm's first Symphony was for the most part stern stuff. Its best features were its genuineness and urgent drive, frequently marred by fussy and thick scoring. One movement, labelled 'Funeral March,' was really impressive (...).'⁷⁷ Chisholm's instrumentation does in fact achieve carefully calculated effects with a small orchestra – one could never say that his instrumentation was too thin (as for instance in the case of Jacob). His counterpoint only occasionally seems too thick and tiresome – he generally avoids this by coupling instruments (ex. 13)

The scherzo of the symphony is determined by scale sections:

Ex. 14: [E] 2

77 F., 'B.B.C. Contemporary Concert', in: *MTLXXX* (1939), p. 140.

Ex. 13: Erik Chisholm, *Symphony No. 1 Tragic*, MS full score, p. 30. Cape Town University Libraries; reproduced by kind permission of the Erik Chisholm Trust.



Ex. 15: [P] 7

The symphony perhaps received its subtitle from the third movement, a funeral march (simultaneously passacaglia) for W. Wigham Parker, a close friend and colleague of Chisholm's. The interval of a second forms the starting point for the development, with thirds appearing only later:

Ex. 16

The movement in the bass keeps going as though it were an ostinato, pausing for only a few bars in the entire movement.

The form of the final movement is freer; the different sections follow each other and are then repeated before they are associated with each other in a great final *stretto*.

Chisholm's Second Symphony of 1939 was reused for the ballet *The Earth-Shapers*, which Chisholm wrote that same year for the Celtic Ballet; Boosey & Hawkes published the third movement under the title *A Celtic Wonder Tale*. Here Chisholm's interest in Celtic legends is quite apparent, and the composition's subtitle, 'Ossian', refers to the famous bard much revived in the nineteenth century. Despite these elements, Chisholm avoids the superficial use of Celtic melodies, although Celtic scales are used in the symphony:

It is striking that apart from the title, no reference to the Isles of Skye occurs in the score; the music is thus left to perform 'on its own'. The extensive use of the solo violin recalls Granville Bantock, another composer who was interested in Celtic and northern culture and took inspiration from folk tunes.

Although he is far too little known today, **Granville Bantock** (London, 7 August 1868–London, 11 October 1946), the 'arch-experimentalist amongst British composers',⁷⁸ was one of the most important British composers of the era. More than fifty years have elapsed since his death, and he has still not been honoured with a comprehensive monograph.⁷⁹ Bantock was mainly a composer of vocal works. His unaccompanied choral symphonies *Atalanta in Calydon* (1911) and *The Vanity of Vanities* (1913; see pp. 598ff.) are among the first contrapuntally more complex choral works in over two hundred years, and his oratorio *Omar Khayyám* reveals him to be a master of the Orientalist style (Holst, Scott and Foulds also pursued exotic directions in order to escape the Victorian 'typically English' domesticity of Stanford or Parry; Bantock, the oldest among them, occupies the most superficial attitude, possibly by virtue of being the most strongly bound to the nineteenth century).⁸⁰ Other, sacred oratorios refer to Liszt, Gounod, Stanford, Parry, Dvořák, Draeseke and other composers of the second half of the nineteenth century. A pupil of Corder, Wagner and above all Liszt strongly influenced him, as his tone poems (*The Witch of Atlas*, 1902, *Fifine at the Fair*, 1901) particularly show; his programme symphonies bear the imprint of Liszt and Strauss. This musical direction just so happened to be in vogue in the British musical landscape at the beginning of the twentieth century. Bantock's popularity ebbed during the First World War and never really recovered (a fate shared by many other composers). To some extent this is certainly due to his professors at the Royal Academy of Music, where, as Peter Pirie points out, the students were not sufficiently trained in self-discipline.⁸¹

Bantock was regarded as a good conductor,⁸² but few of his recordings have survived.⁸³ He was contemporary with Elgar, to whom he dedicated the Festival Symphony *Christus* (1901, see pp. 599ff.), and he is counted – alongside Delius and Smyth – by Percy Young as a

78 Herbert Antcliffe, 'A Brief Survey of the Works of Granville Bantock', in: *MQ* IV (1918), p. 333.

79 An extensive Ph.D. dissertation on Bantock was written by Trevor Bray, but never published. Other than that, Bantock's secretary Howard Ormond Anderton and daughter Myrrha wrote books on him in 1915 and after his death in 1946, respectively.

80 Edmund Rubbra, 'Bantock', in: *The Listener* 80/2068 (1968), p. 657 wrote: 'If Bantock had not been content to write so profusely in a relatively unchanging idiom, and if his allegiance to the Wagnerian musical ethos had weakened sufficiently over the years to allow later European developments to influence his thought, then England might have had a composer whose works would have occupied as permanent a place as Elgar's in the orchestral and choral repertory.'

81 Peter Pirie, 'Bantock and his Generation', in: *MT* CIX (1968), pp. 715–716. Meanwhile, mainly through the advocacy of Vernon Handley, Pirie's wish to revive Bantock's music was ultimately fulfilled.

82 Myrrha Bantock, *Granville Bantock*, London 1972, p. 54.

83 Cf. Michael Freeman, 'Holbrooke – an informal discography', in: *bms news* 66 (1995), p. 123.



Illustration 47. Granville Bantock at home in Hazelwood, photograph; reproduced by kind permission of the Granville Bantock Society.

one of the 'old era' composers. (According to Young, the new generation begins with the year of birth 1870; Scott, Shaw, Coleridge-Taylor, Hurlstone and Quilter are thus considered part of this generation.⁸⁴) He had many friends, among them Havergal Brian and Josef Holbrooke, and tirelessly promoted the works of others (including those by Boughton, Vaughan Williams, Hartly and Bax). In addition, Bantock found time to teach Clarence Raybould, Julius Harrison, Claude Powell, Cecil Gray, Laurence Powell and Christopher Edmunds.⁸⁵

Bantock studied first at the Trinity College of Music in London with Gordon Saunders (after leaving Birmingham, he himself remained a professor at Trinity College up until his death) and then with Henry Lazarus (clarinet), Reginald Steggall (violin, viola and organ), Corder and Mackenzie at the Royal Academy of Music, where he became a lecturer early on. In 1893 he became editor-in-chief of the *Quarterly Musical Review*. Like Elgar, Bantock had a strong affinity for light music, as his work for Sidney Jones's comic opera *A Gaiety Girl* (1894-5)⁸⁶ and his overture *The Pierrot of the Minute* (1908) show. From 1897 to 1901 he held the post of musical director of the Tower in New Brighton on the shore of the Irish Sea. In 1901 he was appointed Principal of the School of Music at the Birmingham Midland Institute (today Birmingham Conservatoire) and in 1908 succeeded Elgar as music professor at the University of Birmingham (he was knighted in 1930); Victor Hely-Hutchinson took his place in 1934 (see pp. 564ff.).⁸⁷ Cecil Gray reported on his studies with Bantock in 1914:

'Bantock's personal tastes and sympathies lay entirely on the side of contemporary developments. Not that the classics were excluded from consideration, by any means; on the contrary, the student was encouraged to study the works of the old masters, but no attempt was made to co-ordinate ancient and modern practice. (...) There was no sense of direction in the methods of tuition employed; one was permitted, and encouraged, to do anything one liked. At one moment I would be studying strict counterpoint and harmony with that highly accomplished musician, Dr. W. H. Harris,^[88] and at the next I would be encouraged by the genial Principal to pay no attention to such outworn conventions and to write as the spirit moved me.'⁸⁹

84 One would need a longer discussion as to in how far Young was right; definitely, Bantock is in some respects more 'modern' than e.g. Quilter or Hurlstone.

85 Adrian Boulton/William Harris/Julius Harrison/Victor Hely-Hutchinson/Clarence Raybould/Jack Westrup/Christopher Edmunds, 'Sir Granville Bantock', in: *MT* LXXXVII (1946), pp. 376–377. Laurence Powell, not to be confused with conductor Claude Powell, emigrated to America and there composed his Second Symphony in 1943, which was premièred in Birmingham in 1947.

86 Granville Bantock/Frederick George Aflalo, *Round the World with 'A Gaiety Girl'*, London 1896.

87 Additional professors at the University of Birmingham were until today Anthony Lewis (first intensely active for the B.B.C.), Ivor Keys, Basil Deane, Stephen Banfield and Colin Timms.

88 William Henry Harris (London, 28 March 1883–Peterfield, 6 September 1973) studied with Parratt, Charles Wood and Walford Davies, and became the latter's successor at Temple Church. After various posts in London he became organist in Lichfield and then, after he had for a time been employed at the Birmingham and Midland Institute, followed Hugh Allen to New College Oxford before becoming organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

89 Cecil Gray, *Musical Chairs*, London 1948, p. 97. 'Bantock thought it was a pity that so many of our younger composers were making such a fetish of technique, though he had high hopes of Moeran and Lennox Berkeley,

As for over-sharp dissonances, Cecil Gray remarked that Bantock did not avoid these, but remained the distanced teacher who only proposed 'a few minor alterations here and there'⁹⁰ and did not interfere in the self-willed concepts of some of his pupils. Bantock's approach to teaching is probably rooted in his own early tendency to explore new ways: 'He was the first of the younger British school to develop choral unity beyond the usual four to eight parts, and I believe his Choral Symphony, *Atalanta*, was the first experiment in this direction.'⁹¹ Bantock at any rate later lost some of his innovative spirit (Trevor Ian Bray, presumably the best connoisseur of Bantock's music, wrote that Bantock had lost some of his 'distinction'⁹² in his later compositions) and once said: 'British music has made little progress since Elgar, and although there is plenty of music being composed to-day, none of it will compare with the works of Delius. I very doubt whether a lot of foreign music will last long – Schönberg and Honegger, for instance.'⁹³ In 1910, at the mere age of twenty, Neville Cardus wrote an article in which he argued that Bantock's style was derivative.

'I called him synthetic, and by quotation and musical notation I revealed how he skilfully assembled the latest current idioms. This was not a common view of Bantock in 1910, obvious as it is to-day. Newman and Langford discussed Bantock for a while as an important and creative figure in English music; he was ranked with Elgar or only a little lower. I have a high regard for the pioneer work done by Bantock in a period when our music was as dowdy as a pew-opener. But as a composer with things to say, he was not more important than William Wallace, another clever synthetic composer.'⁹⁴

Later Cardus wrote:

'Bantock's art (...) consists in finding tightly-fitting musical equivalents for multifarious subjects, and Bantock is amazingly clever at this. But he never makes his subject his own, never makes it a *new* thing for us, never clarifies it with the illuminating glow of personal genius. When Elgar, for instance, gives us a Falstaff it is a thing of independent life, no mere musical equivalent, – a Falstaff who, it is true, might be conceived as devoting as much time in his old age to Cardinal Newman as to sack; and the criticism levelled at the work because it is not Shakespeare's Falstaff is quite beside the point. The whole justification of the music is that it *is* Elgarian, unmistakably and inevitably. I can never bring myself to feel of a work by Bantock that he *had* to compose it or die, and I can easily imagine it taking a half-a-dozen other forms. One cannot talk like this of genius-art. (...) Technique may be three parts of artistic accomplishment but the fourth part is the main thing. And though it is impossible for anyone to survey Bantock's output without a sort of awe at such incredible skill,

to mention only a couple.' (Donald Brook, *Composers' Gallery*, London 1946, p. 15.)

90 Cecil Gray, *Musical Chairs*, London 1948, p. 98.

91 Dan Godfrey, *Memoirs and Music*, London 1924, p. 188.

92 Trevor Bray, *Bantock*, London 1973, p. 33.

93 Granville Bantock in conversation with Donald Brook, in Donald Brook, *Composers' Gallery*, London 1946, p. 14.

94 Quoted from Neville Cardus, *Autobiography*, London/Glasgow 1947, pp. 50–51.

without experiencing positive vertigo at the simple idea of such “fundamental brain-work,” yet some of us want a *man* in the style, a tangible presence that we can “go about” with, as Mr. Wells might put it. And this is why we are beginning to find ourselves unmoved already, when we think of, say, Moussorgsky – a composer in technique almost primitive compared with Bantock – yet in whose simple, elemental things we can always feel the power of a living, unique personality.⁹⁵

Havergal Brian’s account of 1936 is more positive:

‘Bantock, tremendously influenced by the new movements in pre-war days, has remained uninfluenced and unimpressed by post-war tendencies. But there is the old Bantock enthusiasm and warmth of expression, the passion for tonality, for clarity of texture and faultless workmanship, which together have made him a great master of the orchestra.’⁹⁶

Apart from Bantock’s great instrumentational abilities, Herbert Antcliffe pointed out his importance as a promoter of other colleagues, which lends credibility to the denotation of Bantock as an ‘English Liszt’.⁹⁷ Sadly, not even Frank Howes gave Bantock a just estimation; in his account on British folk music, he simply labelled Bantock an ‘oriental’ composer (which he was only in part) without even mentioning his penchant for ‘Celtic’ music or his close friendship with Marjory Kennedy-Fraser.⁹⁸

A different account was supplied by Sydney Grew in as early as in 1921, when some of Bantock’s large choral and orchestral compositions, most of his chamber music and the opera *The Seal-Woman* (1924) were still to follow:

‘It is, I think, by the nineteenth century that Bantock is chiefly to be explained and understood. His art is, in several respects, a synthesis of its romanticism, its pessimism, agnosticism, rebelliousness, its restless attention to remote things of interest, its impulsive passion and intense love of colour – I am thinking, of course, of one part only of the nineteenth century, and of only the larger productions of Bantock’s art. He is the last representative of the forces that first shaped the generation of Berlioz and then – greatly weakened – went in part to the fashioning of the unsettled generations of such artists as Liszt, Fitzgerald, Tennyson (in so far as Tennyson was a philosopher), Rossetti, Swinburne, and the rest. There was much of artificiality in

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- 95 Neville Cardus, ‘Bantock and Style in Art’, in: *MO* 40/471 (1916), pp. 158–159. Hugh Ottaway wrote: ‘Bantock at his zenith stood level with Elgar, but for all his virtuosity he lacked that original vision which alone keeps a public for the romantic artist.’ (Hugh Ottaway, ‘The Music of E. J. Moeran’, in: *Disc* 5/17, 1951, pp. 10–11.) One must, however, not succumb to the same fallacy as William W. Austin, who wrote: ‘He never paused to examine his fundamental pre-Wagnerian habits, and no matter what the medium of performance or what the literary association of his work, the rhythms are those of march and waltz, the harmonies are amateurish, and the sonorities are full.’ (William Austin, *Music of the 20th Century from Debussy through Stravinsky*, London 1966, p. 93.)
- 96 Havergal Brian, ‘Bantock and his “Pagan Symphony”’, 1936. Reprinted in Malcolm MacDonald (ed.), *Havergal Brian on Music I*, London 1986, p. 168.
- 97 Herbert Antcliffe, ‘Granville Bantock’, in: *The New Music Review* 9 (1910), p. 526.
- 98 Cf. Frank Howes, *Folk Music of Britain – and Beyond*, London/Southampton 1969.

on 9 December 1919 in Glasgow.) His next experience with a symphony was the piano reduction of Rubinstein's *Ocean Symphony* (1851/63/80),¹⁰⁴ whereby he became more strongly connected to symphonic conception.

In 1920, shortly before the First Symphonies of Bliss and Bax came into being, Sydney Grew wrote about Bantock: 'His *Hebridean Symphony* (...) is one of the most striking orchestral pieces of the present time.'¹⁰⁵ (This was in fact not saying much, given that the average annual symphonic production was still rather sparse then: Dieren's Choral Symphony was completed in 1914, but received its première performance only much later; the important symphony of Thomas Dunhill saw the light of day in 1916; young William Baines was hardly known at that time and W. H. Bell had emigrated to South Africa.) On the occasion of a performance on 12 March 1917 in Birmingham, Ernest Newman wrote: '[T]he symphony contains some wonderfully beautiful transcripts of the emotions imaginative men feel in the lone seas. So clearly has the vision been seen, and so clearly has it been realized, that without any hint to the effect, we should know that it sprang from the sea. At its best it is surely the most beautiful sea music ever written.'¹⁰⁶

The *Hebridean Symphony* was composed in 1914-16¹⁰⁷ and was included in the series of scores of British music published by the Carnegie Trust. Bantock had incorporated folk songs into the work without making them appear unfamiliar artistically. These songs had been collected by the symphony's dedicatee, Marjory Kennedy-Fraser. She had published three volumes of folk songs; the first of these was Bantock's main source, although he also consulted other sources.¹⁰⁸ W. Hayford Morris and the fifth edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* maintain¹⁰⁹ that *Sea Reivers* had originally been planned as a part of

104 Birmingham University Library: MS GB 4/3/43 (Barber MS 1189).

105 Sydney Grew, 'Granville Bantock', in: *The Chesterian*, new series 9 (1920), p. 258.

106 Ernest Newman, 'The "Hebridean" Symphony', in: *MT* LVIII (1917), p. 165. Reprinted in Donald Brook, *Composers' Gallery*, London 1946, p. 13.

107 Myrrha Bantock, *Granville Bantock*, London 1972, p. 100 and Michael Hurd date the symphony 1913; still, Bantock quotes in her book a memory of Sir Hugh Robertson (p. 96): 'In the early years of the First World War G.B. was working on his *Hebridean Symphony*. A tramp in the Highlands was regarded as a necessary stimulus.'

108 Marjory Kennedy-Fraser/Kenneth Macleod (eds.), *Songs of the Hebrides And Other Celtic Songs from the Highlands of Scotland*, Vol. I, London/New York 1909 (vol. II was published in 1917, vol. III in 1921). The *Kishmul Galley Song* can be found on p. 80, *The Seagull* on p. 84, *Harris Love-Lament* on p. 130. Furthermore, William Edmondstone Duncan, 'Ultra-modernism in Music', in: *O&C* XXIV/279, London 1916, p. 87 refers to a 'Highland pipe tune, the *Pibroch of Donuil Dhu*, in graphic description of the clansmen gathering to ward off the invaders' (Michael Hurd, Sleeve notes to the recording of Bantock's *Hebridean Symphony*, London 1991, p. 7). The melody is used in the great trumpet fanfare, but cannot be found in Kennedy-Fraser; it rather recalls Carl Nielsen's Fifth Symphony. Bantock also collaborated with Kennedy-Fraser on the opera *The Seal-Woman*; Kennedy-Fraser even sang the title-role in the first performance.

109 W. Hayford Morris, 'The orchestral work of Granville Bantock', in: *Fanfare* 3/4 (1954), p. 9. Morris, who obviously had insight into the manuscript, points out that the symphony contained four movements: 'The *Hebridean Symphony* is in four movements and the completed sketch is dated 20th June, 1915, while the dates for the scoring of the movements appear as: I, 23.xi.15; II, 14.ii.16; III, 19.ii.16, IV 27.iv.16. There were other sketches of movements rejected in the final assessment of the work. One, a scherzo, having quite an interesting history. It first appeared as an Orchestral Ballad – *Sea Reivers*, and was performed at the Queen's Hall in 1920.'

the symphony; Bantock himself clearly stated in a (much later) letter to Henry J. Wood that the small piece was the second of *Two Hebridean Sea-Poems* (both 1920), the first being *Cavistiona*.¹¹⁰

The general atmosphere of the *Hebridean Symphony* can be gathered from a quotation originally prefixed to the score. It comes from an anonymous poem¹¹¹ in the *Edinburgh Book of Scottish Verse*, and was quoted by Howard Orsmond Anderton in the programme notes he wrote for the first performance of the symphony in Glasgow in 1916:

From the lone shielding of the misty island
Mountains divide us and the waste of seas.
Yet still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.¹¹²

The motto in the autograph score was left out in the printed version, and like the initial title, *Among the Western Isles*, shows Bantock's Scottish origin and his close connection to his homeland (several visits to Scotland inspired Bantock to write the composition).

'Programme-related' though the *Hebridean Symphony* may be, Bantock's works are nevertheless quite interesting as compositions when considered from a purely formal point of view. As in the tone poems of Richard Strauss or Franz Liszt, in Bantock's symphonies the forms are 'far-reachingly modified'¹¹³ and the concepts of one and several movements are united in a highly surprising way (the first one-movement British symphony is apparently Frederic Austin's *Symphony in E major* of 1913, see pp. 318ff.). Bantock nonetheless composed numerous orchestral works in which the organic inner unity is weaker than in his symphonies – no doubt because Bantock often subordinated the music to the literary approach, which often progresses linearly.

The *Hebridean Symphony* manages to combine the concept of four movements and the one-movement symphony. The complex first movement especially makes use of the introductory theme

Ex. 21

Vlc. (1st half)

Cb. (1st half)

pp espress. *p sost.*

110 Granville Bantock to Henry Wood, 5 January 1944. British Library: Add. MS 65419, fol. 61.

111 According to William Edmondstoune Duncan, the verses were written by the Earl of Eglington (in *Ultra-modernism in Music*, in: *O&C* XXIV/279, 1916, p. 87).

112 Quoted from Josef Holbrooke, *Contemporary British Composers*, London 1925, p. 49. Bantock had stayed with Holbrooke for quite a while before the first performance.

113 Carl Dahlhaus, *Die Musik des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden/Laaber 1980, p. 305.

and two expository themes (the second of these is accompanied by a passage that recalls the beginning of Strauss's *Alpensinfonie* from [6] to [8] 6, and is presented splendidly and in Straussian upswing by the complete orchestra from 1 [11]),

Ex. 22: [2] 4

Ex. 23

and then the solo viola (4 [15]) begins the development with a rather chromatic solo. A brief recapitulation (from [26] 6) leads to a storm-ridden scherzo (from [29]) (occasionally recalling Tchaikovsky in its use of multiple modulations), and finally to the third movement, which is at first dominated by the brass (from [45]).

Ex. 24

The second half of this movement is ruled by an obstinately used motif (the trumpet fanfares nearly robbed one of the musicians of the ability to play his instrument later¹¹⁴) derived from the Scottish highlands bagpipe tune *Pibroch of Donnail Dhu*,¹¹⁵

Ex. 25

114 Josef Holbrooke, *Contemporary British Composers*, London 1925, pp. 47–48.

115 But note the relationship of the motif to the Prelude of Act I of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Snegurotchka* (1880–81).

while the finale is introduced by a theme from the first movement that is subsequently developed ([72]) and finally ([78] 4) recapitulated according to the textbook.

Harmony of fourths, a technique often used in England, figures in this work several times.

Ex. 26

Cantabile sostenuto
Arpa

Fine instrumentation, sometimes even combined with strongly advanced harmony, can be found for example in the use of the harp.

Ex. 27

Soave, lentando *p* *dolciss.*

Fl. I, Clar. I

Arpa

Cor *pp* 3

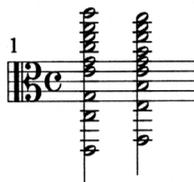
Archi, Bass Clar., Fg.

Ex. 28: [18] 4

Old age neither reduced Bantock's powers nor modified his tendency to proceed on a grand scale, though his techniques seemed somewhat dated to several authors: The First World War might have had a hand in this. The *Celtic Symphony*, composed some twenty-five years later (1940), at a time when several new generations of symphonists had 'taken over', once again showcases the Scottish side of Bantock's personality. He had meanwhile left stage and great choral music behind; in his last symphony, he asks only for partially divided strings and six harps (*ad lib.*).¹¹⁶ The work is shorter than his former symphonies as well; it is divided into five inter-linked sections. A comparison to the works of Bliss, Elgar, Vaughan Williams and Tippett for strings clearly reveals that Bantock failed to achieve their level; he used folk songs too superficially, particularly *Sea-longing* (collected by Kennedy-Fraser), hardly integrating them into the harmony and melodic concept of the remainder of the work. The *Celtic* is, however, comparable to Vaughan Williams's *Dives and Lazarus* for strings and two harps (1939), which may in part have served as a model in terms of the forces required and treatment.

Formally, the work is very similar in construction to Bantock's three 'great' symphonies. It links the form of a sonata principal movement with the four movements of a symphony, with the *Lento Sostenuto* representing the prologue and epilogue of the first movement, simultaneously characterizing the beginnings of the exposition and development of a large-scale sonata principal movement. The return of the harps in the *Largamente maestoso* ([43]) following their silence in the inner movements marks the beginning of the abridged recapitulation. The instrumentation of the 'scherzo' foreshadows Tippett's future style; other passages (in particular the rising and syncopic character of some themes) hint at Elgar, and the harp cadence in the final movement recalls the French school. The whole work arises from a nuclear motif (a connection of D minor with the decreased triad on B minor)

Ex. 29



that harmonically creates a density – particularly in the slow sections and the scherzo – that is rather uncustomary in Bantock and that he fails to maintain in this composition.

Although the 'Celtic spirit' obviously provided impetus for countless works (and of course not only for symphonies), it was by no means the only source of inspiration. Colin

¹¹⁶ On the title page of the score, it is actually written that all harps should play *ad libitum*; at the beginning of the score itself, 'Harp (or *pianoforte*; *ad. lib.*)' appears. In a letter to Clarence Raybould, Bantock commented: 'I thought 6 Harps could make a good show on a Concert Platform, but for the Studio one Harp of course would be sufficient.' (Granville Bantock to Clarence Raybould, 19 September 1941. BBC Written Archives Centre, Bantock file.)

Scott-Sutherland's pronouncement somehow rings false: 'Bax's greatest moments have very little to do with the Celtic image, and nothing whatever to do with Irish politics. They are inspired by that least mutable source of inspiration, Nature herself.'¹¹⁷ In his autobiography, Thomas Beecham wrote, perhaps more perceptively: 'The influence of the Celt has grown stage by stage in England so imperceptibly that the English themselves have failed to realize the meaning and consequence of it.'¹¹⁸

The *Pagan Symphony*, which Bantock dedicated to his son Raymond,¹¹⁹ covers a topic similar to the one in his choral symphony *Atalanta in Calydon*, his great ballet for chorus and orchestra *The Great God Pan* (whose quality reminded Norman Demuth of Strauss¹²⁰), the voluminous orchestral song-cycle *Sappho* and other works (including Arnold Bax's five-movement symphony *Spring Fire*,¹²¹ which had only just been preceded by an unfinished Straussian Symphony in F,¹²² and which shows similarities both to the *Pagan* and the *Hebridean Symphonies*): Greek mythology. Bantock was so enthralled by antiquity and the Orient that he on occasion even dressed himself (in England!) in Persian garb – a fairly unambiguous sign of his unconventionality. The Eastern influence on his music was relatively minor, however, and was largely superficial. Kaikhosru Sorabji, annoyed that Eastern music was often regarded as primitive,¹²³ felt compelled to issue a correspondingly sharp comment¹²⁴ – without, however, referring to Gustav Holst, whose 'genuine' Orientalism (for example in the Choral Symphony) was proven in detail by Edmund Rubbra.¹²⁵

Adrian Boult reportedly did not think much of the work in spite of its melodic merits: 'Dr. Boult had a private look at the above the other day, and feels that although he was not able to go very deeply into it, it looks [to be a] rather loosely constructed symphonic work that we have got to associate with the composer, hardly strong enough for placing in a public symphony concert. On the other hand, he would like to do it in a Sunday Symphony Concert.'¹²⁶ In fact, the *Pagan* links, as the *Hebridean Symphony* did before, the one-movement symphony with the traditional multi-movement symphony, although authors generally seem

117 Colin Scott-Sutherland, 'Arnold Bax 1883–1953', in: *MT CIV* (1963), p. 706.

118 Thomas Beecham, *A Mingled Chime*, London etc. 1949, pp. 150–151.

119 The relationship between father and son had clearly become more cordial since 1916 (according to British Library: Add. MS 69450); Bantock wrote to his son on 21 October 1926 (fol. 70) how much he estimated his poems (although he was unable to make sense of his plays).

120 Norman Frank Demuth, *Musical Trends in the 20th Century*, London 1952, p. 110.

121 Lewis Foreman, *Bax: A composer and his times*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1987, pp. 414–415.

122 *Ibid.*, pp. 47–49; Lewis Foreman, 'Bax, the Symphony and Sibelius', in: *MO* 93/1109 (1970), p. 245.

123 Kaikhosru Sorabji, 'Oriental Influences in Contemporary Music', in: *The Chesterian*, new series 3 (1919), p. 83. Reprinted in Kaikhosru Sorabji, *Around Music*, London 1932, pp. 148–149.

124 Kaikhosru Sorabji, 'Oriental Influences in Contemporary Music', in: *The Chesterian*, new series 3 (1919), p. 86.

125 Edmund Rubbra, *Gustav Holst*, Monaco 1947, p. 18: '(...) we find on page 8 of the vocal score a recitative the scale of which corresponds exactly with the Hindu Rag, *Bhairavi* (...)'.
 126 B.B.C. Internal Circulating Memo from Kenneth A. Wright to Edward Clark, 20 March 1935. BBC Written Archives Centre, Bantock file.

to be at odds as to when movements begin and end or even of how many movements the symphony contains. It is assumed here that the *Pagan Symphony* is a four-movement work with a slow movement and (designated in the score as such) a scherzo. The quasi first movement of the symphony (with slow introduction, exposition (from [3]), development (from [11] 2) and recapitulation (2 [21])) mainly deals with one theme and one further motif (some of which may be an indirect homage to Sibelius):

Ex. 30



Ex. 31



As the theme develops, hints of Ravel (before [6]), Dukas, Strauss (4 [18]) and Saint-Saëns ([16]) can be found. Modal harmony

Ex. 32



Ex. 33



and the use of the interval of the fourth refers instead to contemporary colleagues (Nielsen). By using these techniques and connecting traditional harmony with modal and harmony of fourths, Bantock had a considerable influence on his British contemporaries.¹²⁷

The slow movement (from 4 [23]) begins with a violin solo, but the main theme and the motif of the first movement find multiple re-use as well. The second half of the movement (from 2 [35]) is a fugue.

¹²⁷ Bantock appears as a model in the second movement of Alan Rawsthorne's Second Symphony (*A Pastoral Symphony*) of 1959.

Ex. 34



Two bars lead to the scherzo ('Dance of Satyrs') (from [39]),

Ex. 35



which proves to be another fugue. In its grotesque instrumentation, it equals Janáček and Shostakovich's opera *Nos* (1927-28). The 'battle-scene', as Havergal Brian called it, is a percussion section followed by fanfares.

The second scherzo (another dance section) and the finale are linked in that the second scherzo (from [50]), with the introduction of a new theme,

Ex. 36



is simultaneously the exposition of the finale. The theme returns in exactly its initial form in the recapitulation ([77] 3). In the development ([60]), which contains a section called 'Poikilothron athanat Aphrodita' ('Immortal Aphrodite on your elaborate throne') (the title is derived from a Sappho poem), the theme is developed according to the textbook. Echoes of Strauss, Korngold, Elgar and others can be heard in the recapitulation (Bantock calls it 'finale'), and numerous themes and motifs presented before recur and are developed in a somewhat abbreviated form.

The symphony carries a motto in Latin, 'Et ego in Arcadia vixi' ('I too lived in Arcady'); Bantock gives no further explanation. A programme note that probably came from Bantock (or was at least approved by him), refers to Horace's odes, in particular to the beginning of the XIXth:

“Bacchum in remotis carmina rupibus vidi
docentum – credite posteri – Nymphasque
discentes et aures, capripedum Satyrorum
acutas.”

(Bacchus I have seen on far-off rocks – if
posterity will believe me – teaching his songs
divine to the listening Nymphs and to the
goat-footed Satyrs with their pointed ears.)

The music may be described as a vision of the past, when the Greek god Dionysus (Bacchus) was worshipped as the bestower of happiness and plenty, the lover of truth and beauty, the victor over the powers of evil.

(Immortal Aphrodite of the brodered throne appears for a brief moment as the goddess of Love, to remind the world of her supreme power and glorious beauty.)¹²⁸

Bantock's Third Symphony, *The Cyprian Goddess*, begun in the autumn of 1938 and completed on 12 January 1939¹²⁹ on the Fiji island of Suva, is also based on Greek myth and displays a concept very similar to the one employed in the *Pagan Symphony*. The work first bore the title *Aphrodite in Cyprus* and was named a 'symphonic ode'; the later, more general title and the decision to call the work a symphony were probably based on considerations of a well-conceived programme. At the same time, the modifications clearly show the continuation of Bantock's tradition of linking the concepts of the one-movement and multi-movement symphonies. Again we have here a through-composed four-movement symphony (as a quasi second trio (from [33]), the slow movement is integrated into the scherzo (from [20])), to which the form of a comprehensive sonata principal movement is linked (the development begins with the first trio (2 [23]) of the four-movement symphony, the recapitulation at 4 [45]). W. Hayford Morris's comment, 'It is a somewhat unsatisfactory work, not truly Hellenic in feeling and not of full symphonic proportions'¹³⁰ is applicable with respect to the form; in the four-movement conception, the final movement does not have its own form. It mainly takes over the function of the recapitulation of the one-movement symphony (also beginning at 4 [45], respectively) and at the most could be described formally as an apotheosis epilogue.

The work's inner complexity is otherwise of clear symphonic structure. The first movement of the four-movement symphony is ruled by two themes

Ex. 37

1 *dolce espress.*

that are dealt with in the development (from [8]) in opposite order. Each of the three following essential new formal sections (scherzo, trio I, trio II=slow movement) contributes a theme to the final recapitulation of the one-movement symphony, in which two of the themes – those of the two trios – seem to have been derived from the development section of the one-movement symphony.

As he had done in earlier works, Bantock added to his symphony a number of Latin mottos and subtitles. The motto of the entire symphony comes from the first volume of Horace's odes (XXX) (with John Conington's translation, published 1863):

'O Venus regina Cnidi Paphique	'Come, Cnidian, Paphian Venus, come,
Sperne dilectam Cypron et vocantis	Thy well-beloved Cyprus spurn,
Ture te multo Glycerae decoram	Haste, where for thee in Glycera's home
Transfer in eadem.	Sweet odours burn.
Fervidus tecum puer et solutis	Bring too thy Cupid, glowing warm,
Gratiae zonis properentque Nymphae	Graces and Nymphs, unzoned and free,
Et parum comis sine te Juventas	And Youth, that lacking thee lacks charm,
Mercuriusque?	And Mercury?

Another quotation (from Theocritus) can be found during an expressive string melody in the development of the first movement ('Ay, but she too came, the sweetly smiling Cypris, craftily smiling she came, yet keeping her heavy anger.')

Ex. 39

The musical score for Ex. 39 is in 6/4 time and consists of five staves. The top staff is for Flute (Fl.), marked with a trill. The second staff is for Cor Anglais, Fagotto, and Contra Fagotto (Cor ingl., Fg., Contra Fg.), with dynamics *mf* and *cresc.*. The third staff is for Violin (Vln.), with dynamics *mf*, *espress.*, *cresc.*, and *f*. The fourth staff is for Viola (VI.), with dynamics *mf* and *f*. The bottom staff is for Violoncello and Contrabass (Vlc., Cb.), with dynamics *mf pizz.* and *cresc.*. The score is numbered 11 in the top right corner.

and another one (from Bion) in the recapitulation of the first movement (5 [18]) ('Mild Goddess, in Cypris born – why art thou thus vexed with mortals and immortals?'). Another Bion quotation appears in the first trio ([27])

Ex. 40

27 **Lentamente**

pp

Archi, Cor (con sord.)

Vln. solo (senza sord.)

sost.

‘Great Cypris stood beside me while still I slumbered.’

Only in the finale can another quotation be found, this time from Moschus: ‘His prize is the kiss of Cypris, but if thou bringest Love, not the bare kiss, O stranger, but yet more shalt thou win’ (3 [49], in the great *stretta* at the end of the symphony).

Both ‘Celtic’ and ‘Greek’ ‘programmatic’ music was largely based on legend and myth. Starting perhaps with Holst’s 1900 *Cotswolds* Symphony (see pp. 266ff.), ‘programmatic’ inspiration came from more down-to-earth sources, from Wales (Cowen) to Switzerland (Darke).

Cecil Armstrong Gibbs’s Third Symphony in B \flat op. 104, the *Westmorland*, took its title from a county in the Lake District skirting the area so rich in Celtic legends (as fate would have it, the county was dissolved in 1972). Composed in 1944, the symphony is harmonically deeply late-Romantic in its inspiration; it is Gibbs’s *Pastorale* in the Beethovenian sense. The work was scheduled for performance by the B.B.C. in 1945,¹³¹ but was cancelled by those in charge in Manchester, and was then forgotten for a long time, only to be rediscovered in 1992/93. The first movement carries the title ‘I will lift up mine eyes’, which evokes sacral as well as more mundane associations – fitting for a work inspired by the highest mountains in England. The sacred element is relayed by the prominent use of the horns, and the ominous threat lurking in the mountains finds its musical incarnation in the *ostinato* timpani roll.

According to Gibbs’s daughter, E. Ann Rust (a granddaughter of the poet Walter de la Mare, no less), the work was also rooted in personal tragedy: ‘In November 1943 there was fierce fighting at the River Sangro during the Italian campaign. There, my brother David Gibbs was killed by a shell which failed to explode. My parents never really got over his death and my father wrote the *Westmorland Symphony* as a tribute and a memorial.’¹³²

The horns present the first theme of the principal movement,

131 Victor Hely-Hutchinson decided to put the score into the programme – a gesture probably meant as a kind of reconciliation after the performance of the *Odysseus* symphony had to be cancelled at short notice due to the outbreak of the war.

132 Ann Rust, *Armstrong Gibbs – Symphony No. 3 in B \flat Westmorland*, in: *bms news* 64 (1994), p. 88.

Ex. 41: [D] 4



and the strings play a counterpoint. After the presentation of a second theme ([H] 8), the careful and somewhat short development begins (3 [O]). Formally, the movement proves to be exceptionally concentrated, with not a single note too many.

After a carefully composed and instrumentated slow movement, the scherzo follows, subtitled 'Weathers'. As in Beethoven's *Pastorale* or Strauss's *Alpensinfonie*, a tempest is depicted by relatively simple compositional means: a timpani theme introduces the movement and is answered with a rapid downward response first from the piccolo and the clarinet, and then from the high strings (ex. 42, p. 528). The tempest continues in different ways and then fades slowly. More so than even Beethoven's *Pastorale*, a 'description of feeling rather than painting' seems to be taking place; at times, the movement is distinctly dance-like, seemingly belying Gibbs's title. The final movement, 'The Lake', bears the subtitle 'A day of early June, without cloud or wind. At my feet the water lies mistily Blue'. The last two movements might indeed remind listeners of Mendelssohn's *Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt* – the atmospheric strands are distributed in a very similar way. A melody of the solo oboe above calm clarinet and horn *ostinati* represents great arches; the strings, flute and English horn take over before a violin solo finally enters, integrated very naturally (far better than in works by graduates of the Royal Academy of Music). However, Strauss's harmony is touched here even more strongly than in the Symphony in E, which is harmonically more independent. The length of the movements is again kept to a minimum – the work is almost brilliant in its formal compactness, although it may be a little old-fashioned in conception.

Harold Truscott (Seven Kings, Essex, 23 August 1914–Deal, Kent, 7 October 1992), who was active for a short time at the Guildhall School of Music (1934) and the Royal College of Music (1943–45), wrote numerous symphonic works, many of which are unfinished or missing. However, he was more important as a musicologist and pianist. After the *Grasmere Symphony*,¹³³ which like Gibbs's *Westmorland Symphony* was inspired by the Lake District, Truscott started a Symphony in A minor towards the end of the Second World War. This

133 Guy Rickards, Truscott's estate manager, spoke of six symphonies 'in varying stages of completion of which two are lost' (in the *Sleevenotes for the recording of Truscott's Symphony in E major*, l.n. 1994, p. 3) – one in E^b of c. 1936–37 dedicated to Franz Schmidt, on whom he wrote a book, and another in F of c. 1937–38. The *Grasmere Symphony* mentioned by Malcolm MacDonald, supposedly composed in c. 1939, is not found in the Royal College of Music collection (unless it is identical to the untitled beginning of a full score in B^b) – if it has survived, it might be identical with the Symphony in F; in the case of the Symphony No. 1 in E major of 1950, mention is often made of 1951 as the completion date, but 1944 and 1949 are also cited.

Ex. 42

1 Vivace con fuoco Picc., Fl. II, Clar. I

Timp. *ff*

Archi *ff*

8 A

Tbn., Bass Tb., Fg. *f*

Archi *ff*

14 Ob., Cor ingl., Cor

sf

21 B

sf

unfinished work, dedicated to Herbert Howells, consists of a mere 19 pages of a first movement. Unfortunately, only this fragment was available in Truscott's estate. Truscott's harmony and structuring of movements points in the direction of Brian (Truscott was an eager promoter of Brian) and Nielsen, Bruckner and Schmidt, and to a lesser extent Tippett, Tchaikovsky and Busoni. Truscott's earlier works probably possessed an even stronger nineteenth century influence, which might have led the composer to abandon or even destroy the works, probably including the symphonies dating from before 1940.¹³⁴

Alexander Brent-Smith's (see pp. 403ff.) Symphony in A minor, titled *The South Downs* (Stephen Lloyd called it an 'orchestral rhapsody'¹³⁵), was composed in 1920 and first performed in 1921 in Brighton. On 2 March 1922 Brent-Smith wrote in his diary:

(...) had to be at rehearsal by 10. Dan Godfrey very pleased – said it was “streaks above the *Worcestershire* Rhapsody”. Met Gordon Bryan, a high-pitched, kind but rather effeminate ass. He took me under his patronising wing. I had rather a good performance and reception. “Bravos” were shouted and the orchestra was pleased.¹³⁶

When Brent-Smith returned to Bournemouth early in 1923 to repeat *The South Downs*, he wrote in his diary: 'I think I conducted rather well.'¹³⁷ The short three-movement work was revised in 1930 for re-performance at Bournemouth and listed as No. 2; it has not been performed since then.

In the third movement after the slow introduction, a programmatic note can be found: 'Devils Peek' (not to be confused with 'Devil's Peak', a mountain in South Africa) or the 'Drunken Sailor' (the well-known sea shanty). Given the symphonic situation at the time, the work occupies an especially important position in the evolution of British symphonism (since 1914 only Bantock's *Hebridean*, Dieren's Choral Symphony, Baines' C minor Opus 10 and Dunhill's A minor Opus 48 are known to have been composed). The following year saw the completion of Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony*, one of the first British symphonies still known today. The symphony reflects Brent-Smith's memories of the south English hillscape, similar to Guy Warrack's *Edinburgh Symphony*. Sadly, neither of these scores was available to the author for scrutiny.¹³⁸

134 Several later symphonies were also not completed; according to Brian Morton/Pamela Collins (eds.), *Contemporary Composers*, Chicago/London 1992, p. 931 two of them came into existence as follows: Symphony in A minor: 1962-68; Symphony in A minor: 1967-72. In accordance with Morton/Collins, these three symphonies were also registered in appendix c). The Royal College of Music houses three more of Truscott's unfinished symphonies: one in E minor (formerly called No. 1, later assigned to the E major Symphony), composed from 1945 to c. 1949, one in D for Strings (probably composed in c. 1961), just like an undated Symphony in F minor numbered No. 2 as well as two beginnings of Symphonies in C. Studies of the handwriting, paper, etc. suggest that the F minor No. 2 was composed before No. II in D for Strings.

135 Stephen Lloyd, *Sir Dan Godfrey – Champion of British composers*, London 1995, p. 143.

136 Quoted *ibid.*

137 Quoted *ibid.*, p. 155.

138 Even Warrack's son does not know anything about the whereabouts of his father's score.

From the Sixth Symphony onwards, **Ralph Vaughan Williams** (Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, 12 October 1872–London, 26 August 1958; see also pp. 455ff., 575ff., 619ff. and 725ff.) consulted Roy Douglas in instrumentatoric matters,¹³⁹ a position that up to the *London Symphony* Gustav Holst and George Butterworth (also Arnold Bax and Donald Francis Tovey) had held, with Christian Darnton at the helm for the *Pastoral Symphony*.¹⁴⁰ But Vaughan Williams also admired Gordon Jacob's abilities,¹⁴¹ and it is not surprising that Jacob orchestrated not only several scores of Gustav Holst, but also Vaughan Williams's Variations for brass band (1957) in 1960.

Vaughan Williams's teachers included Parry and Stanford, Charles Wood and Max Bruch (who gave him the encouragement that he had been lacking¹⁴²); his fellow students at Trinity College in Cambridge and at the Royal College of Music in London were Hugh Allen, Cyril Rootham, Thomas Dunhill, John Ireland, Fritz Hart and Gustav Holst. Vaughan Williams then went to Ravel (because he still felt 'lumpy and stodgy (...) and [thought] that a little French polish would be of use'¹⁴³); in 1919 he joined the staff of the Royal College of Music. Receiving several honours, he refused the knighthood and the position of the Master of the King's Musick; he did, however, accept the Order of Merit in 1935 (other recipients of the O.M. include Elgar, Tippett, Menuhin, etc.). In 1938 Vaughan Williams gave up his position at the Royal College of Music and from then on taught only privately.

Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Sea Symphony* is usually considered his first; however, an earlier symphony was nearly finished by 1906, when the *Sea Symphony* was still under way: *A Norfolk Symphony*. It is conceptually close to McEwen's *Solvay* Symphony (1911; see

139 Douglas also prepared Walton's scores for publication and checked the revision of the scores of Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral* and Fifth Symphonies. It was Douglas who convinced Williams that having two symphonies in D (No. 5 in D minor and No. 8 in D major) would necessitate assigning numbers to them. (Cf. Roy Douglas, *Working with Vaughan Williams*, London 21988, pp. 81–82.) On 10 September 1951 Vaughan Williams wrote to Douglas: 'As there seem to be about to be a good many performances of my symphonies I think they ought to be overhauled. I am sending you *Pastoral* and No. 5 – Will you help me by going through them carefully and suggesting alterations in any places where in your opinion the texture (and especially the orchestration) does not 'come off'. It is often difficult to decide whether one ought to score for the wireless, the concert room or the Albert Hall – also I am getting deaf and things which are probably all right sound all wrong to me. e.g. No. 5 V 1 and 2 p. 2 figure (1). I often over the wireless have literally not *heard* the violins and even in the concert room I have only just heard it – yet it *looks* all right!' (Quoted from Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 41992, p. 318.)

140 On 17 December 1951 Vaughan Williams sent Darnton a note acknowledging his help. British Library: Add. MS 62763, fol. 280.

141 On 5 February 1943 Vaughan Williams wrote to Henry Wood: 'The orchestration may want a little revision (I am taking it to Gordon Jacob for that purpose, as usual).' Quoted from Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 41992, p. 403.

142 Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, p. 20.

143 Hugh Ottaway, *Vaughan Williams Symphonies*, London 1972, p. 13. Vaughan Williams took many years to shake off Stanford's grip; his term with Ravel was probably his salvation. It was Frederick Delius who organized Vaughan Williams's recommendation to Ravel (cf. Lionel Carley (ed.), *Delius. Letters of a Life*, Vol. I, Aldershot/Brookfield 1983, p. 306).

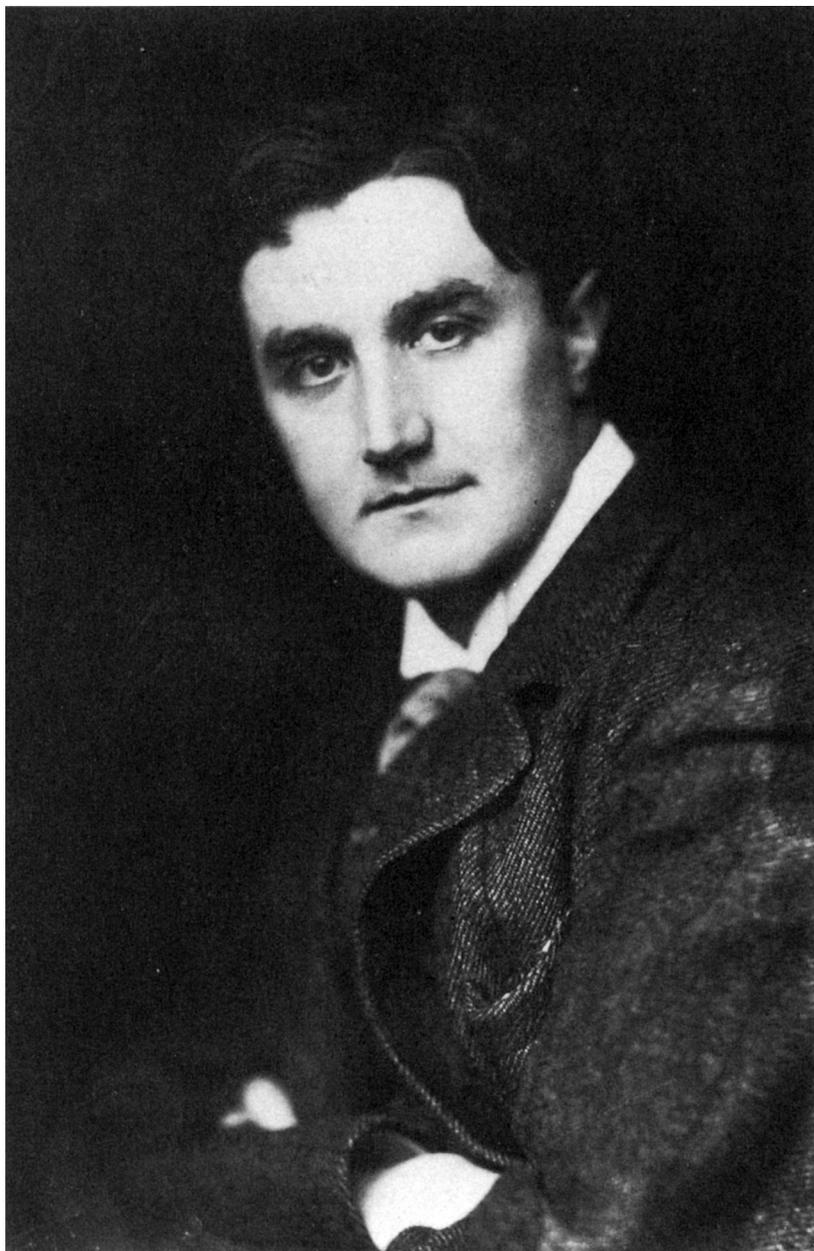


Illustration 48. Ralph Vaughan Williams, photograph by Scott & Wilkinson, Cambridge.

pp. 279ff.), and as Edwin Evans explained,¹⁴⁴ was meant to consist of the three *Norfolk Rhapsodies*, of which only the First in E minor (composed in 1905-06) has survived in its entirety. The Second *Norfolk Rhapsody* in D minor (like the Third, composed in 1906) was to be the slow and scherzo movement (the MS score has nearly fully survived; only two pages are missing), while the Third, a quick march and trio, would have been the finale. The separate Rhapsodies, however, seem never to have been performed together in the intended form,¹⁴⁵ since Vaughan Williams soon doubted whether a succession of three rather rhapsodic movements, largely based on folk songs, would be good enough for a symphony (other composers did not share his doubts; Moonie was confident in performing his *Deeside* Symphony, which was later to be renamed a suite; see pp. 411ff.). In 1914 Vaughan Williams revised the First *Norfolk Rhapsody* and withdrew the other two.

Vaughan Williams's own programme note for the première performance of the second revised version¹⁴⁶ of the *London Symphony* (written from 1911-13 and inspired by George Butterworth¹⁴⁷) on 4 May 1920 at the Queen's Hall under the direction of Albert Coates read thus:

‘The title *A London Symphony* may suggest to some hearers a descriptive piece, but this is not the intention of the composer. A better title would perhaps be “Symphony by a Londoner”, that is to say, the life of London (including, possibly, its various sights and sounds) has suggested to the composer an attempt at musical expression; but it would be no help to the hearer to describe this in words. The music is intended to be self-expressive, and must stand or fall as “absolute” music. Therefore, if listeners recognize suggestions of such things as the “Westminster Chimes” or the “Lavender Cry” they are asked to consider these as accidents, not essentials of the music.’¹⁴⁸

144 Edwin Evans, ‘British Composers. X. Ralph Vaughan Williams (contd.)’, in: *MTLXI/927* (May 1920), p. 305.

145 Michael Kennedy, *A Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 21996, p. 34 gives no information whether the score of No. 1 may also have been performed at the 1907 Cardiff Festival – which would indeed have been a complete performance of the symphony.

146 Revisions, especially to the movements II-IV, were made in 1918, 1920 and c. 1935. An extensive comparison of the 1914, 1920 and c. 1935 versions has been prepared by A. E. F. Dickinson, *The Vaughan Williams Manuscripts*, in: *MR 23* (1962), pp. 181–184 and A. E. F. Dickinson, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1963, pp. 202–207.

147 Vaughan Williams wrote: ‘(...) indeed I owe its whole idea to him. I remember very well how the idea originated. He had been sitting with us one evening talking, smoking, and playing ... and at the end of the evening, just as he was getting up to go, he said, in his characteristically abrupt way, “You know, you ought to write a symphony.” From that moment the idea of a symphony – a thing which I had always declared I would never attempt – dominated my mind.’ Vaughan Williams goes on to say that he showed him the sketches of it bit by bit as they were finished and received valuable criticism from him. Butterworth also helped to revise the score in readiness for the first performance and to shorten it. (Cf. Michael Hurd, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1970, p. 35.) Butterworth became the dedicatee after his untimely death at the age of thirty-one in 1916.

148 This note was already used for the 1915 Bournemouth performance. R. O. Morris, sharing a house in Cheyne Walk with Vaughan Williams for some time, wrote: ‘There is a questioning in it and a weariness – the weariness of one who is not quite sure whether he loves London or hates her, yet knows that, loving or hating, he is for ever a victim to her evil fascination.’ R. O. Morris, in: *The Nation* 27/7 (15 May 1920), p. 200.

'Hearers may if they like localize the various movements and themes, but it is hoped that this is not a necessary part of the work'.¹⁴⁹

Albert Coates himself, in contrast, supplied a much more detailed programme:

'The first movement opens at daybreak by the river. Old Father Thames flows calm and silent under the heavy gray dawn, deep and thoughtful, shrouded in mystery. London sleeps, and in the hushed stillness of early morning one hears "Big Ben" (the Westminster chimes) solemnly strike the half-hour.

Suddenly the scene changes (*Allegro*). One is on the Strand in the midst of the bustle and turmoil of morning traffic. This is London street life of the early hours – a steady stream of foot passengers hurrying, newspaper boys shouting, messengers whistling, and that most typical sight of London streets, the coster-monger (Coster 'Arry), resplendent in pearl buttons, and shouting some coster song refrain at the top of a raucous voice, returning from Covent Garden Market, seated on his vegetable barrow drawn by the inevitable little donkey.

Then for a few moments one turns off the Strand into one of the quiet little streets that leads down to the river, and suddenly the noise ceases, shut off as though by magic. We are in that part of London known as the Adelphi, formerly the haunt of fashionable bucks and dandies about town, now merely old-fashioned houses and shabby old streets haunted principally by beggars and ragged street urchins.

We return to the Strand and are once again caught up by the bustle and life of London – gay, careless, noisy, with every now and then a touch of something fiercer, something inexorable – as though one felt for a moment the iron hand of the great city – yet, nevertheless, full of that mixture of good humor, animal spirits, and sentimentality that is characteristic of London.

In the second movement the composer paints us a picture of that region of London which lies between Holborn and the Euston Road, known as Bloomsbury. Dusk is falling. It is the damp and foggy twilight of a late November day. Those who know their London know this region of melancholy streets, over which seems to brood an air of shabby gentility – a sad dignity of having seen better days. In the gathering gloom there is something ghost-like. A silence hangs over the neighborhood, broken only by the policeman on his beat.

There is tragedy, too, in Bloomsbury, for among the many streets between Holborn and Euston there are alleys of acute poverty and worse.

In the front of a "pub," whose lights flare through the murky twilight, stands an old musician playing a fiddle. His tune is played in the orchestra by the viola. In the distance the 'lavender cry' is heard: "Sweet lavender; who'll buy sweet lavender?" Up and down the street the cry goes, now nearer, now farther away.

The gloom deepens, and the movement ends with the old musician still playing his pathetic little tune.

In this movement one must imagine oneself sitting late on a Saturday night on one of the benches of the Temple Embankment (that part of the Thames Embankment

149 Quoted from Frank Howes, *The music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, London etc. 1954, p. 11.

lying between the Houses of Parliament and Waterloo bridge). On our side of the river all is quiet, and in the silence one hears from a distance, coming from the other side of the river, all the noises of Saturday night in the slums. (The “other” side, the south side of the River Thames, is a vast network of very poor quarters and slums.) On a Saturday night these slums resemble a fair; the streets are lined with harrows, lit up by flaming torches, selling cheap fruit, vegetables, produce of all kinds; the streets and alleys are crowded with people. At street corners coster girls in large feather hats dance their beloved “double-shuffle jig” to the accompaniment of a mouth-organ. We seem to hear distant laughter; also every now and then what sound like cries of suffering. Suddenly a concertina breaks out above the rest; then we hear a few bars on a hurdy-gurdy organ. All this, softened by distance, melted into one vast hum, floats across the river to us as we sit meditating on the Temple Embankment.

The music changes suddenly, and one feels the Thames flowing silent, mysterious, with a touch of tragedy. One of London’s sudden fogs comes down, making Slumland and its noises seem remote. Again, for a few bars, we feel the Thames flowing through the night, and the picture fades into fog and silence.

The last movement deals almost entirely with the crueler aspects of London, the London of the unemployed and unfortunate. After the opening bars we hear the “Hunger March” – a ghostly march of those whom the city grinds and crushes, the great army of those who are cold and hungry and unable to get work.

We hear again the noise and bustle of the streets (reminiscences of the first movement), but these now also take on the crueler aspect. There are sharp discords in the music. This is London as seen by the man who is “out and under”; the man “out of a job,” who watches the other man go whistling to his work; the man who is starving, watching the other man eat – and the cheerful, bustling picture of gay street life becomes distorted, a nightmare seen by the eyes of suffering.

The music ends abruptly, and in the short silence that follows one again hears Big Ben chiming from Westminster Tower.

There follows the Epilogue, in which we seem to feel the great deep soul of London – London as a whole, vast and unfathomable – and the symphony ends as it begins, with the river – Old Father Thames – flowing calm and silent, as he has flowed through the ages, the keeper of many secrets, shrouded in mystery.¹⁵⁰

These ‘popular’ elements, which Coates certainly exaggerated and perhaps reveal more about Coates himself than Vaughan Williams (the symphony was one of Coates’s favourite works by Vaughan Williams) and his work, do not necessarily relegate the symphony to the realm of bad music, as some critics contended. ‘Have not we all about us forms of musical expression which we can take and purify and raise to the level of great art?’, Vaughan Williams asked himself.¹⁵¹

150 Quoted from Robert Bagar/Louis Biancolli, *The Concert Companion. The Complete Guide to Orchestral Music*, New York 1947, pp. 779–781.

151 David Cox, ‘Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)’, in Robert Simpson (ed.), *The Symphony*, Vol. II, Harmondsworth etc. 1967, p. 116.

The first performance of the symphony was conducted by Geoffrey Toye at the Queen's Hall at one of F. B. Ellis's concerts (Ellis was an amateur who sponsored concerts of unfamiliar and adventurous music, and upon his death, his library formed the nucleus of the music library of the Faculty at Oxford). The performance provoked a chance comparison with Ravel's *Valses nobles et sentimentales* (1912). Holst, in an immediate letter to his friend, wrote: 'You have proved the musical superiority of England to France. I wonder if you realized how futile and tawdry Ravel sounded after your Epilogue.'¹⁵² In the meantime, numerous analyses and books on Vaughan Williams and his symphonies have been written,¹⁵³ and many authors, including Wilfrid Mellers and James Day,¹⁵⁴ note a confusion of styles in the first two symphonies – in part very probably resulting from the individual personalities of Vaughan Williams's recent composition teachers, Ravel and Bruch (who had been director of the Philharmonic Society in Liverpool from 1880 to 1883). The favourable comparison to Ravel may thus have been of special interest for Vaughan Williams.

Due to Elgar's reign in London (the London Symphony Orchestra, for example, devoted entire programmes to Elgar's music), Vaughan Williams felt forced to send his *London Symphony* to Fritz Busch in Aachen to get the work performed.¹⁵⁵ It was, according to the composer's own reports, under these circumstances that the MS score was lost – shortly before the First World War broke out.¹⁵⁶ Happily, it was possible to reconstruct the score from the surviving parts. 'I believe E. J. Dent, Geoffrey Toye and George

152 Gustav Holst to Ralph Vaughan Williams, 29 March 1914. Quoted in Ralph Vaughan Williams/Gustav Holst, *Heirs and rebels. Letters and occasional writings on music*, London etc. 1959, p. 43.

153 E.g. Donald Vincent D'Angelo, *The Symphonies of Vaughan Williams*, M.Mus. dissertation Ann Arbor, University of Michigan 1962; James Day, *Vaughan Williams*, London/New York 1961, ²1964; A. E. F. Dickinson, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1963; Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983; Frank Howes, *The music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, London etc. 1954; Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. ¹1992; Wilfrid Mellers, *Vaughan Williams and the vision of Albion*, London 1989; Hugh Ottaway, *Vaughan Williams Symphonies*, London 1972; Simona Pakenham, *Ralph Vaughan Williams. A discovery of his music*, London etc. 1957; Elliott Schwartz, *The Symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Amherst (Massachusetts) 1964, New York ²1982; Lorraine Smith, *Vaughan Williams, an English Composer*, M.A. dissertation New York, Columbia University 1933; Ursula Vaughan Williams, *R.V.W. A biography of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. ³1988; Lionel Pike, *Vaughan Williams and the Symphony*, London 2003.

154 Wilfrid Mellers, 'The English Renaissance', in Wilfrid Mellers, *Music and Society. England and the European Tradition*, London ²1950, p. 164; James Day, *Vaughan Williams*, London/New York 1961, ²1964, pp. 141–144.

155 Maurice Pearton, *The LSO at 70. A History of the Orchestra*, London 1974, p. 48. Many other sources, including Adrian Boult, reported that the score was sent to Germany for printing; if this was so, it may have been intended for publication by Breitkopf & Härtel, a firm that also published works by e.g. John Lodge Ellerton, Joseph Street, Frederic Hymen Cowen, Granville Bantock, Ernest Bryson and Havergal Brian; it eventually also published the original score of the *Sea Symphony*. Lewis Foreman stressed as early as on 28 February 1998 that the symphony was not yet ready when war was declared, meaning that it would have had to have been sent to Germany after the war had broken out.

156 This is very much doubted by Lewis Foreman, who presented a logical chain of clues indicating that this version cannot be correct.

Butterworth had each taken on a movement but I did not try to recognize their hands',¹⁵⁷ wrote Adrian Boult, who conducted the 1918 performance, then at the beginning of his career.

For publication (by the Carnegie Trust) and the 1920 London performance, the composer made considerable revisions (further revisions were made for the new edition after 1935), and with this performance Vaughan Williams became 'no longer the composer for a relatively few, but a great national figure',¹⁵⁸ and the *London Symphony* became equal in success with Elgar's *Cockaigne* London overture of 1900. It is recorded that Henry Wood had to repeat the entire symphony in 1935 in Rome.¹⁵⁹ Wood, who in numerous first performances proved his advocacy of contemporary music, for example in 1928 of Janáček's *Sinfonietta*, wrote in his autobiography about conducting the symphony at Newcastle:

I arrived for a rehearsal to find an inadequate orchestra for Vaughan Williams' *London Symphony*. When I interviewed the secretary he pointed to the publisher's note on the score: "This work may be performed without the following instruments." We were certainly without the instruments, yet the hall was new, large, and attractive. It was a case of *not* paying the piper and consequently of not calling the *complete* tune. Nobody could form an opinion of so great a work rendered under such conditions.¹⁶⁰

The scoring is for a large orchestra, including cornets; but Vaughan Williams, with his characteristic amenability, also provided for performance by a reduced orchestra. Like Holst, he was always rather free with orchestral cueing, so that here the third flute can be omitted, the second oboe and English horn parts can be performed by the same player, the trumpet and cornet parts can be condensed, and so on. It was typical for him to provide as pragmatic an approach as possible, rather than to merely cater to an elite audience – he rather felt like 'the people's composer', if one may say so.

A. E. F. Dickinson and Hugh Ottaway were quick to note Vaughan Williams's formal mastery¹⁶¹ in the *London Symphony*. They indeed silenced many authors' doubts as to the formal conciseness of the work, describing the first movement as 'the most developed structure', showing 'an almost classical balance of fertile exposition, imaginative development and a restatement compressed, expansive and increasingly sonorous'.¹⁶² The movement is in a more or less regular sonata form, though some authors stress its rhapsodic nature. 'I was quite unconscious that I had cribbed from *La Mer* in the introduction to my *London Symphony* until Constant Lambert horrified me by calling my attention to it,' Vaughan Williams wrote

157 Adrian Boult, 'Ralph Vaughan Williams, O.M. The Record of a Long Friendship', in: *RCMM* LXVIII/3 (1972), p. 74.

158 Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. 1949, p. 287.

159 Hubert Foss, *Ralph Vaughan Williams. A Study*, London etc. 1950, p. 131.

160 Henry Wood, *My Life of Music*, London 1938, pp. 102-103.

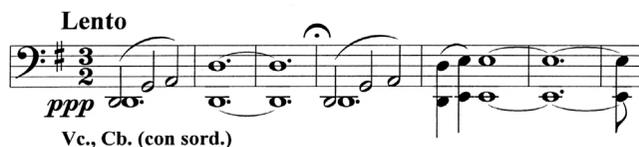
161 A. E. F. Dickinson, *An Introduction to the Music of R. Vaughan Williams*, Oxford/London 1928, pp. 34-42; Hugh Ottaway, *Vaughan Williams Symphonies*, London 1972, p. 21.

162 A. E. F. Dickinson, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1963, p. 191.

in 1949.¹⁶³ In 1934 he had written: ‘I do not consider that the opening of my *London Symphony* is a crib from the beginning of *Gerontius*, Part 2; indeed, my friends assure me that it is, as a matter of fact, a compound of Debussy’s *La Mer* and Charpentier’s *Louise*.’¹⁶⁴

The opening pentatonic phrase is a generating figure – a very characteristic one – pervading the whole work.

Ex. 43



(It indeed bears mentioning that pentatonic material was used in the *Sea Symphony*.) The composer makes extensive use of divided strings, and the great range of their sounds, even in pianissimo, makes an impression of enormous spaciousness. After the slow, mystical prelude (originally considered the introduction to the work as a whole and finding in Delius’s *Paris* a parallel conception), harp and clarinet intone the Westminster Chimes (the half-hour), the whole orchestra stirs, there is an expectant pause and then the main *Allegro risoluto* theme is stridently announced,

Ex. 44



seemingly owing its genesis to the ‘stirring bustle of every-day life, and the busy turmoil of the London streets. The melodic material is very abundant, and many of the tunes have a distinctly “popular” flavour about them there are, of course, contrasting sections of more restrained character, but the general mood is boisterous, and the close a perfect orgy of triumph.’¹⁶⁵ Tune swiftly germinates tune: the melodies in this work proliferate in a manner that makes disciplining them symphonically a constant menace for the composer. All of these melodies, some cheeky, others more subdued, are welded into a long exposition. ‘Noise and scurry’ are the composer’s own words for the basic mood of the movement. A *cantabile* ‘bridge passage’ leads to the declamatory second subject group, on wind and brass, which generates an episode of Hampstead Heath high spirits (this is the ‘American ragtime’

163 Ralph Vaughan Williams, ‘A Musical Autobiography’, 1950, in Ralph Vaughan Williams, *National Music and other essays*, Oxford etc. ³1986, p. 188.

164 Ralph Vaughan Williams, ‘What Have We Learnt from Elgar?’, in: *Me>L XVI* (1935), p. 16. Reprinted in Ralph Vaughan Williams, *National Music and other essays*, Oxford etc. ³1986, p. 252.

165 George Butterworth, ‘Vaughan Williams’s “London Symphony”’, in: *RCMM X/2*, London 1914, pp. 45–46.

section to which Butterworth and Capell called attention at the first performance).¹⁶⁶ After a brief return to the main theme and its attendants, followed by a woodwind dialogue, the flute, *tranquillo*, plays a new tune against a background of divided strings. The mood is changed gradually, first by solo strings and then by string *tremolandi*, into the recapitulation. The restatement begins quietly and is more compressed than the exposition, finally bursting out in a grand climax in which one of the themes combines with itself in augmentation (a procedure sometimes used by Brahms – notably in the *Deutsches Requiem*). Throughout the movement the emphasis is mainly melodic; harmony and harmonic subtleties are secondary. There is, however, one passage in the introduction where a chord of the dominant seventh arises out of the movement of the parts. It is not resolved in the conventional manner; the parts simply continue on their way, thus foreshadowing a practice used much more consistently in the *Pastoral Symphony*. The chord is an incident in a progression of themes, not a pivot for the harmony and key-relationships arising out of them. The principal tunes return. Grandeur sweeps into the music, driving to a climax with strings chiming like bells. Two high peaks of sound are reached, and the first subject is roared out by the brass. The second subject, broadened in G major, and now affirmatory rather than declamatory, has the last word. Hugh Ottaway stresses the importance of the movement's overall structure, which has also been analysed extensively by A. E. F. Dickinson:¹⁶⁷ 'The sonata tensions are genuine, and there is mastery in the way the composer uses them. (...) Broadly speaking, there are plenty of precedents; what is so original, and so typically Vaughan Williams, is the absorbed, lyrical nature of most of the development.'¹⁶⁸

The slow movement – a hushed, deeply-felt meditation subtitled 'Bloomsbury Square on a November afternoon' – foreshadows the later Vaughan Williams (especially the Fifth Symphony), with its bare harmonies and gently flowing melodies. The strings set the scene with a series of widely-spanned chilly chords against which the cor anglais, *misterioso*, has an evocative solo, vaguely similar in outline to *I will give my love an apple*.

Ex. 46



166 Frank Howes, *The music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, London etc. 1954, p. 14 mentions one of the second subject group themes as being 'something suggestive of *Searching for lambs*' in the oboe:

Ex. 45



167 A. E. F. Dickinson, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1963.

168 Hugh Ottaway, *Vaughan Williams Symphonies*, London 1972, p. 21.

This melody is repeated, scored for harps and trombones. The strings then resume the theme, more richly harmonized and with a horn pendant. Another theme is introduced by flute and trumpet while the horn sounds the rising-fourth motif (here again we find harmony of fourths) from the symphony's first bar. This music is developed and repeated until, after a pause, the solo viola, in a melody strongly marked by triplets, begins a conversation with the woodwind and breaks off to play a variant of the lavender-seller's street-cry. (There is mention of a 'Lavender Cry' in Vaughan Williams's notebooks; Chelsea, 21 July 1911.)

Ex. 47



Clarinet and other woodwind echo the cry. The music becomes momentarily restless and foreboding – note the strong and sinister rhythm from timpani – and then rises with passion to a *largamente* climax for full orchestra, obtained by the favourite use of widely separated treble and bass. The fact that it is not complete allows a certain amount of development and variation over an increase of animation in the orchestra – harps, jingles and drums being prominent contributors to the bustle, which is kept up long enough to produce a climax. Then quiet is restored and ex. 46 returns with its introductory triads. The recapitulation is abbreviated – page 95 of the 1920 score has been excised, but there is an allusion to the triplets. The viola tune has the last word in this movement, as a sort of afterthought in an indeterminate key, the last chords suggesting C and the tune itself veering to A minor.

‘Although most scherzos are quick and most nocturnes are slow, the Scherzo of this symphony is specifically described as a Nocturne – an unusual conjunction of ideas, which does, however, carry out the composer’s intention – to depict London at night.’¹⁶⁹ The scherzo section contains two groups of ideas. After a setting of a dance rhythm in 6/8 time, the clarinets give out a snatch of a quasi-folk-dance tune:

Ex. 48



A guide to the harmonic structure of this movement is given by the following notes:

Ex. 49



169 Frank Howes, *The music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, London etc. 1954, p. 17.

These occur frequently all over the orchestra, either in single notes or in chords. Three-bar phrase-lengths are common, alternating with other lengths to give a short-breathed effect. Ex. 48 in the Aeolian mode produces variants and developments. While the first trio starts as a fugato, the second trio begins, a kind of street-tune

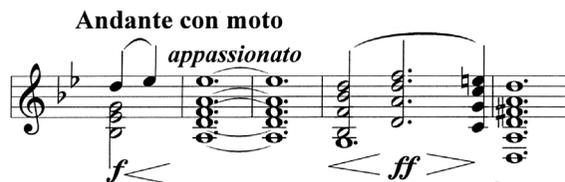
Ex. 50



for the accordion or even possibly a mouth-organ solo commences, but is inflated on repetition to the size of a fair-organ. Elgar, it may be recalled, wove a similar episode into his *Cockaigne* overture. That the two composers regarded street music as an essential ingredient in their portraits of Edwardian London furnishes evidence to the social historian that the Cockney's cheerful, endearing vulgarity and verbal wit found expression in music of that era as well. Just before the end there is a short harp solo, which Frank Howes has poetically likened to the 'nocturnal striking of a distant church clock'.¹⁷⁰ The movement is, as described by Day, a nocturne 'like one of Whistler's rather than one of Chopin's. (...) The themes whisk by with much less bustle than in the first movement; the whole scene is softer and more nebulous'¹⁷¹, the movement's sub-title is an evocation of dim lighting – 'Westminster Embankment at night' was the official suggestion. The highly inspired instrumentation, combined with the strongly modal (Aeolian, Dorian and pentatonic) harmony¹⁷² represents the pinnacle of Vaughan Williams's orchestral art before the First World War.

The finale opens with an eruptive *appassionato* cry from the full orchestra,

Ex. 51



dying away until nothing is left but a solo cello. As the main theme in the ternary form that follows, we come to know a solemn march tune in D Phrygian mode, described by Day as being rather Parryesque, by Shore as typical Vaughan Williams:

170 Frank Howes, *The music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, London etc. 1954, p. 19.

171 James Day, *Vaughan Williams*, London/New York 1961, 21964, p. 143.

172 For the modal references cf. A. E. F. Dickinson, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1963, pp. 199–202.

‘Light after light goes down. England and the Kingdom, Britain and the Empire, the old prides and the old devotions, glide abeam, astern, sink down upon the horizon, pass – pass. The river passes – London passes, England passes ...’¹⁷⁸

To end with Michael Kennedy:

‘Perhaps *A London Symphony* is diffuse, overburdened with tunes, but it is also highly concentrated and organized. (...) The scoring in the work is nothing short of masterly; each mood is limned by instrumental “colour” as surely as in a Monet painting. Yet the legend began hereabouts of the “clumsiness” of this composer. Even Butterworth wrote of “not infrequent failure” by Vaughan Williams to express his “beautiful and original ideas” because of “some inherent incapacity for perfecting a technique”. Fox Strangways wrote of “hammering beauty out of ugliness” in the symphony. In the *London Symphony* Vaughan Williams said what he wanted to say exactly as he wanted to say it. It is the natural successor to Elgar’s two brilliantly scored symphonies; and a certain opulence and richness of sound place it within its period. None of the subsequent symphonies is as copious in invention nor as colourful in its expression.’¹⁷⁹

Harold Edwin Darke (London, 29 October 1888–Cambridge, 28 November 1976) studied with Stanford, Wood and Parry at the Royal College of Music and alongside George Dyson, Frank Bridge and others. Similar to Walford Davies, it was his efforts for the organ and choral music (from 1916 to 1966 he was organist of St. Michael’s, Cornhill) that made him stand out. In 1919 he received an Oxford D.Mus., and then became a lecturer at the Royal College of Music, where he remained as an organ professor until 1969; from 1940 to 1941 he was also president of the Royal College of Organists, and from 1941 deputised for Boris Ord at King’s College Chapel during the Second World War. His Symphony Op. 12, completed in 1914, was very probably sidelined by his main occupation as an organist and has apparently never been performed. Like Hart’s or Bell’s symphonies, it is a carefully built three-movement symphony (in this respect resembling Dyson’s Symphony). The first movement is a carefully structured sonata principal movement with the following main theme:

Ex. 53



As later in the (partially very chamber-musically composed) final movement, development and recapitulation are introduced by a literal recapitulation of the beginning of the movement. At this juncture, Darke’s mastery of instrumentation (ex. 54) is already apparent.

178 H. G. Wells, *Tono-Bungay*, London 1908, p. 490–491.

179 Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 41992, p. 140.

The slow middle movement of the symphony, a kind of slow scherzo, like the first movement carries a kind of programmatical note, and like the whole symphony does, a motto; the final movement contains neither. The movement's motto comes from Samuel Taylor Coleridge:

‘O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought; entranced in prayer
I worshipped the invisible alone’

The dedication ‘~~To Mr. + Mrs. H. Bernard Calkin~~ in remembrance of a holiday in Switzerland – August 1910 (Zermatt – Gornergrat – Riffelalp)’ (the couple's name was crossed out by Darke) and the motto of the entire symphony, which comes from the ninth stanza of Robert Browning's *Saul*:

‘Oh, our manhood's prime vigour! no spirit feels waste,
Not a muscle is stopped in its playing, nor sinew unbraced.
Oh! the wild joys of living! (...)
How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy!’

are the only programmatical references that Darke gives – one searches in vain in the score for the ‘given’ title *Switzerland Symphony*. The organization of the main theme can of course be understood graphically – as a succession of mountain silhouettes – but this seems rather far-fetched. The work apparently took a long time to compose: in the score one finds the dates 22 August 1910 for the first movement, when the score was outlined in Riffelalp, and 6 August 1914, when the full score of the movement was completed; for the second movement, the dates 7 October 1911 (behind the movement title the note ‘Gornergrat’) and 8 July 1914 are given, again designating the sketching and completion of the score. This shows that the second movement was orchestrated before the first one, and the last movement, perhaps from earlier rough drafts is marked ‘Oct 7th 1914’ at the end, so that a real connection to the perhaps attributed title is by no means obvious.

William Henry Bell's (see pp. 384ff.) *A South African Symphony* (1927) was broadcast on British radio in July 1929 after the first performance, conducted by the composer, had taken place on 18 March 1928. The work contains six ‘Kaffir Melodies’ that Bell had himself collected and worked into the composition. In this matter, John Joubert is mistaken in thinking that the African material was provided by Percival Kirby, Professor of Music at Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg. (Kirby had been at the Royal College of Music as a pupil of Stanford and was himself something of a composer. He was South Africa's first ethno-musicologist and with his pioneering work in this field laid the foundations on which the later work of Hugh Tracey and his son Andrew is based.) Similar to Williamson's *Australian Symphony* (No. 6, 1982), Bell has here completely left the British tradition behind – although his abilities are undeniably rooted in the school

of the Royal Academy of Music and Corder's influence. The work begins with a motif from one of the Kaffir 'folk songs' – similar techniques can be found in compositions by Josef Holbrooke and Granville Bantock. A comparison of the treatment of 'folk tunes' in Bantock's *Hebridean*, Bell's *South African* and Holbrooke's *Ships* symphonies shows that even if the degree of development as thematic material may differ (Bell employs the material at the most thematically), the material does not (as for instance in Vaughan Williams and to a smaller extent E. J. Moeran) influence tonality but is rather 'tacked on'. In other words, the disposition of the 'folk tunes' only determines the disposition of the symphony in a very limited manner – rather programmatically than musically in any case. Like all of Bell's later symphonies, the *South African Symphony* is in four movements, and scored for a large orchestra including triple wind, 'a curiously impractical specification', as Bell's pupil John Joubert noted,

'considering that the Cape Town Orchestra, which gave the premieres of all of them, could not have consisted of more than 30, at most 40, players. (...) I know nothing of Bell's reasons for adopting African motifs in this work, or whether there is any extra-musical significance in his doing so. I can only think that as a man of vision he must have seen the issue of unity as of crucial importance to the future of his adopted country, a unity implying the integration not only of the two main white groups, Afrikaner and British, but of the indigenous black population as well. (...) The work as a whole is cyclic, with an African 'motto' theme, or *idée fixe*, first appearing in the slow introduction to the first movement, and subsequently in the later movements as well. The slow movement, placed third in the work as a whole, introduces new African material, which is re-introduced in the *finale*. This *adagio* is an extended outpouring of expressive lyricism, eloquently embodying the principle of melodic expansion which lay at the heart of both his composing style and his teaching.'¹⁸⁰

The development of material shows great skill in the counterpoint, the formal construction and the instrumentation (ex. 55). The scherzo, whose instrumentation is extremely delicate at times (ex. 56), is exceptionally lively. The increases are carefully integrated and the development of material is just as it should be.

The slow movement begins almost chamber-musically; the orchestrational climax is built extremely skilfully. The voluminous finale, whose harp part was modified to a large extent, takes up material of earlier movements and develops it even further.

For the Britons it must have been distinctly regrettable that so talented a composer – albeit not as talented as Vaughan Williams or Holst – had left his land of origin.

180 John Joubert, 'W. H. Bell and South Africa', in: *bms news* 68 (1995), p. 177.

Ex. 55: William Henry Bell, *A South African Symphony*, MS full score, p. 7. University of Cape Town Libraries; reproduced by kind permission.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for a symphony. The score is organized into systems of staves. The instruments listed on the right side of the page are Oboe (Ob), Bassoon (Bsn), Horns (Hns), Trumpets (Tpt), Trombones (Tbn), Triangle, and Violins (Vcl). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Key annotations include a circled 'C' at the top, 'acc' (accents) above the Oboe staff, 'p' (piano) and 'mf' (mezzo-forte) dynamics, and 'accel' (accelerando) markings. There are also performance instructions like 'Sungasud' written above the Horns and Trumpets staves. A section is marked 'D to C#'. The bottom of the page features the instruction 'pno. a. pno. accel'.

Ex. 56: William Henry Bell, *A South African Symphony*, MS full score, p. 63. University of Cape Town Libraries; reproduced by kind permission.

The image displays a page of handwritten musical notation, likely a manuscript for a symphony. The score is organized into several systems of staves. The top system includes a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a lower staff with a bass clef, possibly for a cello or double bass. The middle system features a grand staff and a lower staff with a bass clef, with the label 'w.A.' written to the left. The bottom system consists of multiple staves, including a grand staff and a lower staff with a bass clef, with the label 'w.B.' written to the left. The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings like 'p' (piano) and 'mp' (mezzo-piano). There are also some handwritten annotations and markings, such as 'Cov' and 'stacc', and some numbers like '5', '3', and '7'. The overall appearance is that of a working manuscript or a score with some corrections and additions.

b) Other ‘programmes’

In addition to the direct inspiration from landscapes, which find expression in the use of folk songs, other aspects of everyday life and culture will be discussed here as possible sources of inspiration for programmatic symphonies.

British symphonies have also been inspired by fabulous figures plucked from myths, legends and literature, such as Deirdre (see Boughton’s *Deirdre* Symphony, pp. 500ff.). Similar works also abound on the European continent, the most famous undoubtedly being Beethoven’s *Eroica* – but Alfred Holmes’s symphonies *Jeanne d’Arc* (1867) and *Robin Hood* (1870) are other important examples, not to mention Albert Coates’s *Lancelot* and *Guenevere Symphonies* (see pp. 553ff. and pp. 688ff.). But let us start with a slightly earlier work.

After the completion of the *Gothic Symphony* (see pp. 656ff.), **Havergal Brian** was so exhausted that he did not begin any new projects from 1927 to 1930. Only in June 1930, while his family was on vacation, did he write music again, this time the clearly organized four-movement Symphony in E minor, whose rough draft was finished on 1 September. On 2 November Brian began scoring and finished by 6 April 1931. The score was even accepted by Crazz, which had printed the score of the *Gothic Symphony*, but never published. This symphony, like the following three, was composed in Upper Norwood, near London – it is striking how clearly these four works stand apart from the symphonies Brian composed before and afterwards.¹⁸¹

The Second Symphony raises the question of ‘literary influence’ in Brian’s work. When Reginald Nettel interviewed Brian for his biography, the composer explained that Symphony No. 2 had been inspired by Goethe’s drama *Götz von Berlichingen*,¹⁸² and that the four movements corresponded to the character’s ambitions, loves, battles and death. Towards the end of his life, however, Brian disclaimed this attribution, and made clear that he wished all his works to be treated as pure music, ‘just like Brahms’s symphonies’.¹⁸³ In the discussion of the works to follow, however, it will become clear that programmatic underpinnings and musical ‘purity’ are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Brian’s programme music was not ‘superficial’ (nor, for that matter, were the works of many other composers commonly regarded as ‘programme-symphonists’). His symphonies demonstrate his mastery at the highest and most sophisticated level of pure musical invention. Romantic literature was undoubtedly one of his great passions in life (especially Goethe, Blake and Shelley), and *Götz von Berlichingen* was indeed much in his mind when he wrote his Symphony No. 2. In his last years Brian was fond of referring to No. 2 as ‘MAN in his cosmic loneliness’¹⁸⁴ – a

181 Reginald Nettel, *Havergal Brian and his Music*, London ²1976, p. 127.

182 Earlier, Brian had planned a ‘symphonic drama’ called *Razumoff*, which he initially wanted to explore in the Second Symphony. (Cf. Havergal Brian to Granville Bantock, 16 December 1916. Quoted in Kenneth Eastaugh, *Havergal Brian – the making of a composer*, London 1976, p. 221.)

183 Havergal Brian in interview with Malcolm MacDonald.

184 Havergal Brian to Graham Hatton, 1972.



Illustration 49. Havergal Brian, 1928, photograph, published in an advertising sheet by the company Cranz & Co. Ltd. Lewis Foreman collection; reproduced by kind permission.

description that needs no further elaboration, as it indicates the tragic atmosphere that pervades the work.¹⁸⁵

The symphony's first movement already signals compositional differences compared to the *Gothic Symphony*: the counterpoint has become more complex, occasionally maybe even too complex (an effect also present in the following two symphonies):

Ex. 57

Musical score for Ex. 57. The top staff is for Piccolo, Flute, Violin, etc. and the bottom staff is for Trombone, Trumpet, Cymbal, etc. The score features complex counterpoint with various dynamics including *ff* and *fff*. There are markings for *fz* and *fff*. The score includes a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff and a triplet of eighth notes in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

Brian's use of canonic entries as a contrapuntal technique produces astounding results by comparatively simple means:

Ex. 58

Musical score for Ex. 58. The top staff is for Violin, Viola and the bottom staff is for Horn. The score features complex counterpoint with various dynamics including *fff* and *fz*. There is a marking for *fz* and *fff*. The score includes a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff and a triplet of eighth notes in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The instruction *sempre pesante possibile (each note hard and heavy)* is written below the lower staff, followed by *etc.*

Brian combines clear forms and formal freedom: only the first movement of the symphony proves to be a sonata principal movement with slow introduction, exposition (from 5 [5]), development (from c. [12] 1) and recapitulation (from 1 [20]); the other movements cannot be so easily analysed formally. The beginning of the symphony is amazingly tonal for Brian; the harmony is expanded little by little later in the process.

The second movement (composed of all movements first) follows immediately. It is in ternary form, but these three sections are largely independent of one another. The

185 Cf. Malcolm MacDonald, *The Symphonies of Havergal Brian*, Vol. I, London/New York 21983, pp. 58–59.

movement is strongly retrospective and marked by frequent late-Romantic turns (Strauss and Schoenberg haunt the second movement, while the scherzo contains hints of Walton and Britten's much later *Sinfonia da Requiem*); in the finale, Brian frequently echoes Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*.

After a break, the so-called 'battle' scherzo follows,¹⁸⁶ probably the best movement of the symphony, described by Malcolm MacDonald as

'one tremendous indivisible musical organism, conceived in one pounding, unyieldingly fast tempo, built out of a single theme and a multitude of ostinato patterns. Ex. 59a-f gives a selection of these ostinati from different parts of the movement, and it can be seen that most adhere to the simplest tonic-dominant formulae. The material of the scherzo is in fact the most diatonic in the symphony, as befits a movement dominated by the characteristic sounds of the French horn. Nevertheless, Brian maintains tonal ambiguity by a method already suggested in the slow movement's final cadence: bitonality. Straightforward the material may be, but much of it appears in 2 keys at once, causing a tension and violent tonal conflict that is not easily resolved.'¹⁸⁷

Ex. 59

Ex. 59 consists of six musical examples (a-f) showing ostinato patterns from different parts of the 'battle' scherzo. Each example is in 3/4 time and features a simple tonic-dominant formula.

- a Vln. con sord.**: Violin with sordina, playing an ostinato pattern starting on G4, moving to A4, B4, and C5. The pattern is marked *arco* and *pizz*.
- b Timp.**: Timpani playing a rhythmic ostinato pattern of eighth notes, marked *pp*.
- c Arpa, Vlc. pizz.**: Harp and Violoncello playing a rhythmic ostinato pattern of eighth notes, marked *pp*.
- d Cor IIIrd Group**: Third Cor Anglais group playing a rhythmic ostinato pattern of eighth notes.
- e Cor IVth Group**: Fourth Cor Anglais group playing a rhythmic ostinato pattern of eighth notes, marked *mp*.
- f Vln., Vl.**: Violin and Viola playing a rhythmic ostinato pattern of eighth notes, marked *f*.

186 Due to the scherzo, Brian himself sometimes referred to the work as his "Battle Symphony" (...) even though in the next breath he would say that it is not programme music.' (Reginald Nettel, *Havergal Brian and his Music*, London ²1976, p. 127.)

187 Malcolm MacDonald, *The Symphonies of Havergal Brian*, Vol. I, London/New York ²1983, pp. 65–66.

After the first two of these recurring elements have occurred, the only real theme of the movement is heard in the first group of four horns in unambiguous C major.

Ex. 60

The other three horn groups are again only assigned *ostinato* elements. The first group is finally heard in ex. 60 again, this time in canon (but still in C major), over an ostinato of piano and timpani in D minor.

Up to this point the music was comparatively calm, but now all 16 horns erupt in a sharp clash of C and D \sharp for a *ostinato* movement against ex. 59c in bassoon and strings. Momentum now builds continuously, and 'the movement sweeps inexorably towards its culmination as the textures grow more complex, *ostinato* is piled on *ostinato*, and the rhythms take on an insistent, hypnotic quality that proclaims kinship with the great *ostinato* build-up of the third movement of *The Gothic*. As tension mounts the horn-writing becomes wilder and ever more taxing, gravitating into remote keys and providing plenty of opportunities for stereo antiphonal effects.¹⁸⁸

When yet another *ostinato* (ex. 59f) appears on the scene, the music seems to be careening into a wild Dionysian frenzy. At this point the organ makes its debut in the score; amid the furious activity ex. 60 returns, 'shared for once between Groups I and II of horns in a heroic canon, rock-like in C Major, while all around the rest of the orchestra swings from key to key with weird effect. Yet at length all instruments seem to agree on C major for a final drive to the climax. The unanimity is short-lived. The next 20 bars metamorphose previous *ostinati* in a crescendo of frightening intensity; and the climax, when it comes, is simple yet shattering. Four times the organ, trumpets, trombones and tuba blazon forth superimposed chords of B \flat minor and D \flat , each time contradicted by a whiplash-like D major from pianos, harps, woodwind and strings; until the music, relaxing at last, subsides via E \flat towards C.¹⁸⁹

Ex. 60 sounds for the last time, on a last horn, ending with the final note D. The movement closes with a soft but dissonant chord, almost a cluster, which combines elements of at least 4 keys. 'Woodwind spell it out, note by note, from the top downwards; violins flicker momentarily against it with ex. 59a, and the movement vanishes. Abruptly, the finale breaks in.¹⁹⁰

This finale is a grave funeral march that does not in fact reconcile the conflicts of the preceding movements; instead, it intensifies and thus somehow ennobles these conflicts,

188 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

189 *Ibid.*

190 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

and by virtue of its close connection with the first movement ‘brings to fulfilment much which was only latent there.’¹⁹¹ Not only *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is repeatedly evoked in this movement – in particular Siegfried’s funeral march from *Götterdämmerung* – but the final movement of the *Sinfonia da Requiem* (also a funeral march)¹⁹² and Wagner’s *Tristan* are also reflected.

Like the conductors Leslie Heward and George Weldon, **Albert Coates** (St. Petersburg, 23 April 1882–Milnerton, Cape Town, 11 December 1953) migrated to South Africa, albeit for a longer period. Heward returned to Great Britain before his death, while Weldon died in South Africa after an arduous examination tour for the Associated Board. Coates, of Russian origin and with ‘stronger Russian characteristics than English’¹⁹³, had fled the Russian Revolution in 1919, settling in London and becoming in the same year a regular conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra. When he emigrated to South Africa in 1946 to take up residence in his wife’s birthplace, he was already sixty-four years old. He nonetheless took it upon himself to establish a South African opera and ballet company (thanks to Erik Chisholm’s later efforts, the company was united with the newly founded Opera Company of the South African College of Music).

In 1924 Cyril Scott reported: ‘My friend Mr. Albert Coates, although he is not so very much younger than I am, has retained a captivating boyishness; I have even known him to exhibit the characteristics of an *enfant terrible*.’¹⁹⁴ Only a few years later Coates started writing symphonies, supposedly four in all, including a Sinfonia concertante. His far-too-long forgotten *Lancelot Symphony* (1929–31) was his first. Guinevere, Lancelot and King Arthur and the knights of the round table figure in several of Coates’s works, for the second time in his *Guinevere Symphony* for dramatic voice and orchestra (1935–39, see pp. 688ff.). The earlier work has four movements, with sketches and the elaborated score side by side. The short slow first movement symbolizes Lancelot, who is born in a castle by the sea later to die as a monk in this very castle, which has since become a monastery (at the end of the movement, Coates suggests the sound of bells). The same material is used as in the *Guinevere Symphony*, with the symphony beginning with a theme in bassoon, contra bassoon and low strings,

Ex. 61

Lento aber fließend

pp legato

191 *Ibid.*

192 Britten’s *Sinfonia da Requiem* came into being several years after Brian’s work; Britten had not known Brian’s work, however.

193 Bernard Shore, *The Orchestra Speaks*, London etc. ¹³1946, p. 77.

194 Cyril Scott, *My years of indiscretion*, London 1924, p. 268.

and a second theme follows after the contrapuntal elaboration of this theme, but the first theme remains persistent throughout nearly the entire movement.

The second movement, an *Allegro non troppo ma furioso* with interspersed *Andante* sections (amended after the première performance, the movement evolves to be highly complicated), is supposed to describe the love between Lancelot and Guinevere, King Arthur's wife. Coates has thinned out the scoring considerably, probably in connection with the early performances: 'clarity of texture' was one of his most cherished maxims. Canonic and imitative techniques are of huge importance in the movement, as are changes of metre. A variation of the first section of the movement (from [12]) opens the movement's development, and the movement increasingly remains in an *Andante quasi lento tempo*. The second theme is, in a transformed version,

Ex. 62



recapitulated before ([27]) the first theme ([32]). But this recapitulation is only temporary, because a fugue soon appears ([38A]), followed by a long coda ([39]). With this movement Coates proves to be a true symphonist, not only a highly accomplished conductor, with a unique conception of movement that is rather unconventional and complicated.

The third movement, named 'Elaine', is concerned with the 'lily maiden of Astolat' who dies from her love for Lancelot; the largely woodwind scherzo (*Allegretto comodo*) is incorporated in the basic tempo *Lento* (or *Lento assai*), depicting Elaine as she lies on her deathbed, a lily in one hand, a farewell letter to Lancelot in the other (ex. 63). Like the preceding movement, this one is highly dramatic and passionate (in more than one tempo inscription one finds *appassionata*). The short scherzo section seems to depict happier times, when Elaine was still an innocent young girl, 'engrossed in careless game';¹⁹⁵ the movement ends with the atmosphere of the beginning, or perhaps even more tragically (the tempo inscription is *Andante quasi Lento tragico (fragile)*). This ending has also been amended, but even in the original version we find the trumpet call '(Lancelot)' in the score, as Elaine's last longing thought.

Strongly oppressive percussion rhythms (the only time that Coates uses such an extensive percussion section) open the fourth movement (*Allegro furioso (agitato)*).

195 Everhardus Pauw, *Die leve van Albert Coates (1882–1953)*, M.Mus. dissertation Stellenbosch 1969, p. 133.

Ex. 63: Albert Coates, *Lancelot Symphony*, MS full score, p. 70. Stellenbosch University, Documentation Centre for Music; reproduced by kind permission of Elizabeth Wallfisch.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for the *Lancelot Symphony*. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with staves for various instruments. At the top, the instruments listed are Piccolo, Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Trumpet (Trp.), Trombone (Tbn.), Percussion (Perc.), Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), Violoncello (Vcllo), and Double Bass (Cb). The tempo is marked as *Lento in 6/8* at the beginning and *Lento in 6* later in the piece. A large section is circled and labeled *Lancelot Movement*. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are some handwritten annotations and corrections throughout the score, including a circled *Lento in 6/8* at the top left and a circled *Lancelot Movement* in the upper middle. The page number 70 is visible in a box at the bottom right.

Ex. 64

Allegro furioso, agitato
Timp.

pp *cresc.* *poco a poco* *ff*

pp *cresc.* *poco a poco* *ff*

pp *cresc.* *ff*

p *cresc.* *ff*

Tamb. milit.
p *cresc.* *ff*

Contra Fg., Pos., Tb.

p *cresc.* *ff* *cresc.* *fff*

‘The secret love affair of Lancelot and Guinevere has been discovered and both are forced to flee. The queen finds refuge at the monastery of Amesbury while Lancelot returns hastily into his castle.’¹⁹⁶ No descriptive text can convey the intensity of what is going on. Thematic material from the first movement is of huge importance (from [68]), and another thematic section is given to the woodwind (from [71]). The development proper resumes ([74]); the instrumentation is more colourful here than in the previous movements. A fugue has been added (from [78] 10). After a section of further motivic transformation and development (from [79] to [84]), the recapitulation eventually starts. Even more than before, the main theme is recognized as that of the first movement, and the themes of Guinevere and Elaine are taken up again. The movement ends with the bell-ringing of the end of the first movement.

Norman Demuth’s (see also pp. 382ff.) Sixth Symphony (1937) is, apart from the *Mystical Symphony* (see p. 677), with chorus and baritone solo, the only one with a programmatical title. The complete title reads: ‘*Symphony (No 6) ‘The Temptation of St. Anthony’* for Choreography & Orchestra. Curtain, Scenery & Costumes devised by Dorothy Buller’, and the following note explains:

‘Although this work (the first – 1937 [corrected from 1936] actual Choreographic Symphony) was originally devised for stage production, Concert Performance is not

196 *Ibid.*, p. 134.

Ex. 67

The musical score for Ex. 67 consists of two staves. The upper staff is for the Cor Anglais, marked 'pp' (pianissimo). It contains six measures of music, each beginning with a triplet of eighth notes. The lower staff is for the Archi (strings), marked with a double bar line and a wedge-shaped dynamic marking. It contains six measures of sustained chords, each corresponding to a measure of the Cor Anglais part. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

The seduction through the deadly sins is represented by sequencings and the developing of the two themes through different spheres. The head of the first and elements of the second theme build the recapitulation of the movement (p. 84).

The second movement of the work begins with St. Anthony's pangs of conscience – he prays in front of his cave before a statue of the Holy Virgin (inner struggles are symbolized by high violin and flute tones occasionally becoming shrill). 'Spiritual Beings' – 'beautiful but sinister' (the statue of the virgin livens up at this point) appear, and they manage to bring St. Anthony to join in their tantalizing dance (p. 111, [7] 2 – here we find frequent alternations between 3 and 4 metre) and to hold the scourge over his head. St. Anthony manages to break loose, however, and conquer the beings (p. 130, [16] 5). The movement ends as it began, in a contemplative mood.

Scherzo and trio unfurl a Bacchanalian orgy (the theme of the seven deadly sins emerges again, this time containing eight, not seven notes). The 'Queen of Sheba' appears in a procession and tries to seduce St. Anthony with a dance. St. Anthony follows her, and the orgy is recapitulated. In the coda of the movement, the Devil laughs triumphantly, almost as if he had 'caught' St. Anthony.

An *Adagio* interlude takes up the themes of the Devil, St. Anthony and the virgin, and introduces the final movement, about which Demuth wrote: 'For Concert performance a cut is suggested from [p. 192, [5] 5 to 197, [8]]', which is actually the beginning of the movement.

Steps of a second and ornamented tones characterize Death in the procession of Death (p. 197, [8]), who seems poised to try to tempt St. Anthony. This movement is the best constructed of the symphony: in the development, the themes of St. Anthony, the Devil and Death are developed carefully, and after the recapitulation of the death theme (p. 240), St. Anthony's theme recurs (p. 244) and the Devil is defeated (*Adagio ma non troppo* epilogue, p. 246).

Above all, it was through the *Eisteddfod Competitions* (developed in 1789 from the *Eisteddfods*, renamed *National Eisteddfod Competitions* in 1880 and in 1947 raised to the international level) that Welsh music came into existence. The National Council for Music in Wales (established in 1919 with Walford Davies as first president; Davies also contributed considerably to the emancipation of Wales in other respects, in particular through his

activity for the B.B.C.¹⁹⁸) and the installation of the music department at the University of Aberystwyth,¹⁹⁹ arranged by Henry Walford Davies, followed in the twentieth century. In part through public support, and later also from the B.B.C., the National Orchestra of Wales was founded (1928-31), re-founded in 1935 as the B.B.C. Welsh Orchestra, now the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. The orchestra's activities came to a halt even before the outbreak of the Second World War, however, due to the generally prevailing material hardship. And furthermore, through 'the pressure of anxiety, the whole of Britain then became permeated with an atmosphere of futility which undermined belief, disencouraged sustained effort, and devitalized art and artists.'²⁰⁰ Still, in 1951 Daniel Jones was able to write: 'The history of music in Wales has had its ups and downs, but I am afraid it has been mostly downs (...). The tragedy of the Welsh composer is that he has no tradition on which to rely. There is a lot of talk about tradition in Wales, but if you examine it closely you will find that the vital thread has been broken. There is actually nothing handed down except the folk-song (...).'²⁰¹

Grace Mary Williams (Barry, 19 February 1906-Barry, 10 February 1977) was, like Cecil Armstrong Gibbs, Stanley Bate, Ruth Gipps, Patrick Hadley, Imogen Holst, Ivor Gurney and Elizabeth Maconchy, a pupil of Ralph Vaughan Williams's at the Royal College of Music, and his influence,²⁰² like that of the Royal College of Music (Gordon Jacob), can be sensed extensively. Williams also studied in Cardiff with David Evans, however, and became, apart from John Thomas, Edward German and Henry Walford Davies (if one can call Davies Welsh), one of the first well-known Welsh composers – together with Daniel Jones, who followed slightly later.²⁰³ Williams eventually went for some time to study with Egon Wellész in Vienna. Her friendship with Benjamin Britten dates from their studies at the Royal College of Music.

One of Vaughan Williams's most essential teaching principles was that pupils should always write what they actually felt, and not what they thought they were expected to feel. 'If a musician thought and felt like another composer, he would write exactly like him; but no people feel alike, and so if one of them writes like the other it is a proof that he is not putting his true self into the music.'²⁰⁴ Accordingly, Vaughan Williams corrected,

198 Ronald Pearsall, *Popular Music of the Twenties*. Newton Abbot etc. 1976, p. 129.

199 Daniel Jones, *Music in Wales*, London 1961, p. 27.

200 *Ibid.*, p. 30.

201 Daniel Jones, 'Swansea Composer Tells of Poverty of Welsh Music', in: *South Wales Evening Post* (18 September 1951).

202 William W. Austin wrote that Bliss, Howells, Benjamin and Goossens 'were affected by Vaughan Williams to some degree. All surpassed him in facility, but fell short of his approach to the *mot juste*.' (William Austin, *Music in the 20th Century from Debussy through Stravinsky*, London 1966, p. 491.)

203 Daniel Jenkyn Jones studied after a time in Swansea from 1935 to 1938 at the Royal Academy of Music. His First Symphony was composed from 1944 to 1947 and premièred on 6 August 1948 at Liverpool (incomplete) and 1 February 1949 (complete) (augmented B.B.C. Welsh Orchestra).

204 Quoted from Michael Mullinar, 'Dr. Vaughan Williams as Teacher', in: *The Midland Musician* 1/1 (1926), p. 9.

more indeed than Bantock, his pupils' harmonically weak turns, but always endeavoured to preserve their intentions. Another basic principle of his was held by several of his colleagues as well: 'Never try to be an original. If you are original you needn't try. If you aren't, no amount of trying will make you so.'²⁰⁵ Williams developed correspondingly – she remained relatively conservative. 'Yet conservatism or radicalism alone is no more accurate a guide to quality of achievement than being right- or left-handed: and while it may well be harder to say something completely new in a wholly traditional idiom, it is perfectly possible to justify conservative tendencies, however unfashionable, by expressing them in a distinctive personal way. This is what Grace Williams did. If she was a good composer, it is because her chosen idiom suited her: she used it sensitively and imaginatively, and she is therefore able to communicate even to those whose favoured style is a good deal more forward-looking.'²⁰⁶ (One could say the same about Erik Chisholm.)

Williams's first attempt at the symphonic form was her *Sinfonia Concertante* for Pianoforte and Orchestra, composed in 1941 and first performed by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra under Clarence Raybould. The complete title of Williams's Symphony No. 1 reads, 'Symphony No. 1 in the form of Symphonic Impressions of the Glendower scene in *Henry IV Part 1* [Act 3, Scene 1].'²⁰⁷

Each of the movements has a title, but only the first three are endowed with quotes from Shakespeare's play:

I. Glendower as a powerful warrior.

Glendower: 'At my nativity
The front of heavens was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning cressets: and at my birth
The frame and huge foundation of the earth
Shaked like a coward.

The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds
Were strangely clamorous to the frightened fields.'

The movement contains some of the most dissonant and aggressive music that Grace Williams had thus far composed,²⁰⁸ and its impact is reinforced by the large, Romantically proportioned orchestra.

Ex. 68: First movement, first theme



205 Michael Hurd, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1970, p. 40.

206 Arnold Whittall, 'Grace Williams 1906–1977', in: *Soundings* VII (1978), p. 19.

207 Malcolm Boyd, *Grace Williams*, Cardiff 1980, p. 24.

208 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 24.

A smoothing occurs, and then a trumpet melody from the distance follows that recalls Mahler, especially during the repetition with counterpoint of strings:²⁰⁹

Ex. 69



The movement's tonal centre is D, beginning in D major and ending in D minor – perplexing insofar as the symphony itself ends in C# minor (with the final movement beginning in B^b minor).²¹⁰ Later works, Malcolm Boyd writes,²¹¹ have more tonal strength and unity – it is obvious, however, that Williams composed this work around the tonal centre of C.

II. Glendower the dreamer

'She bids you on the wantern rushes lay you down
 And rest your gentle head upon her lap.
 And she will sing the song that pleaseth you
 And on your eyelids crown the god of sleep,
 Charming your blood with pleasing heaviness,
 Making such difference betwixt day and night
 The hour before the heavenly-harness'd team
 Begins his golden progress in the east.

 And those musicians shall play to you
 Hang in the air a thousand leagues from hence
 And straight they shall be here; sit and attend.²¹²

This movement (in B), which was probably composed before the others, is in simple A–B–A form and is typical of Williams in its oscillation between minor and major thirds.²¹³ The thematic conception is derived from material from the first movement, and we find carefully conceived counterpoint. Even more than in the first movement Williams has tried to cut down the movement, but the proportions are still not right.

III. Scherzo barbaro e segreto. Glendower as magician

Glendower: 'I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

209 *Ibid.*, p. 24.

210 *Ibid.*, p. 25. D^b can already be found at the symphony's beginning, however.

211 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

212 The last three lines were omitted from the ink-written score.

213 *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Why, I can teach you, cousin, to command the devil.’

Hotspur: ‘Sometimes he angers me
 With telling me of the moldwarp and the ant,
 Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies,
 And of a dragon and a fireless fish,
 A clip-wing’d griffin and a moulton raven,
 A couching lion and a ramping cat,
 And such a deal of shimble-shamble stuff
 As puts me from my faith. I tell you what;
 He held me last night at least nine hours
 In reckoning up the several devils’ names
 That were his lackeys.’

The scherzo (in E^b major) is ‘high-powered, agitated music with little or no respite for lyricism’.²¹⁴ Later revisions and cuts in the entire symphony in the end left only this movement as intact and nearly untouched. All other movements, although characterized by fine orchestration, were withdrawn for their lengths and because of the obvious influence of Mahler.²¹⁵

IV. Epilogue. Funeral March

‘The first three movements of the Symphonic Impressions’, Williams writes in a programme note attached to the MS score, ‘were inspired by the three aspects of Owen Glendower presented by Shakespeare in Henry IV, Part I: Glendower the warrior, dreamer and magician. The Epilogue (4th movement) is a retrospective impression of Owain Glyndwr, great figure of Welsh history.’ An ‘elegiac chord’ that was important in the 1936 *Elegy* for strings is central in this epilogue too.

Ex. 70



Anthony Frederick Leighton Thomas wrote: ‘The score contains plenty of full-blooded themes and effective climaxes but there remains the impression that such things do not come easily to the composer and that other modes of expression would be more congenial to her.’²¹⁶

With this symphony we leave works inspired by figures from legends or sagas and turn to those inspired by the more mundane experiences of everyday life. These include political

214 *Ibid.*

215 *Ibid.*

216 Anthony Frederick Leighton Thomas, ‘Grace Williams’, in: *MT* XC VII (1956), p. 241.

tendencies or religious ideas as well as treatments of actual events, war for instance, but also more common subjects, such as Christmas carols or the children of relatives.

Henry Walford Davies's (see pp. 256ff.) *Children's Symphony* in F Op. 53 for small orchestra was composed in 1927, the year he became organist at St. George's Chapel in Windsor, a position he held up to 1932. Given his aversion to opera, the distinctly dramatic conception of his symphony is something of a surprise. The movements' titles resemble those from his earlier symphonies:

- Introduction. "Announcements" (in which, if you wish, you may hear two good children and one naughty one).²¹⁷
- I. "At work?"
- II. "At play?"
- III. "Thoughts?"
- IV. "Here we go!"²¹⁸

The work shows careful craftsmanship, although the movements are perhaps too predictable in construction. In the scherzo, the first part is repeated note for note, the *Andante* is more or less in sonata form and the first movement contains an abridged recapitulation. The vivacity of the work is nonetheless striking (particularly in the introduction and the scherzo), as is the melodic of fourths, which recalls works of Holst, Walton and others:

Ex. 71

Introduction: Vivo

As in so many works, the final movement of the symphony falls apart, above all due to its length (32 pp. compared to 22²¹⁹ pp. for the Introduction-first movement and 11 pp. for the scherzo). The use of the dulcitone, a predecessor to the celesta, and the alternation between harp and piano are also striking.

Children's symphonies also included 'toy symphonies' that used children's instruments, i.e. pipes, children's drums, mechanical birds etc. This tradition goes back as far as the late eighteenth century; in the nineteenth century Bernhard Romberg's Toy Symphony (*Symphonie burlesque* Op. 62) was well known (a photograph of a performance by many well-known

217 Originally: '... hear about four people and a crowd, and some things).'

218 Walford Davies, *A Children's Symphony in F for Small Orchestra (...) op. 53*. Royal College of Music, London: MS 6354, pp. 1, 6, 25, 36 and 45.

219 Initially, the first movement was not slightly longer; the introduction was for example 5 pages long, and then cut down to three pages.

British musicians is known to have survived). This was followed by Richard Blagrove's work, which was performed in the Queen's Hall on 28 October 1918, featuring Frederick Bridge, Elgar, Cowen, Myra Hess, Muriel Foster and Benno Moiseiwitsch.²²⁰ (Blagrove, who died in London on 21 October 1895, studied at the Royal Academy of Music; a well-known concertina and viola player, he was principal viola of the Philharmonic Society orchestra from 1856 to 1894.) In the twentieth century, two British Toy Symphonies are known to have existed, by Algernon Ashton and Malcolm Arnold (written around 1912-20 and in 1957, respectively).

A similarly lightweight piece was created by **Victor Hely-Hutchinson** (Capetown, 26 December 1901-London, 11 March 1947), his *Carol Symphony* (its initial title seems to have been *A Christmas Symphony*²²¹), a somewhat obscure work in which numerous Christmas carols are used (a successor work is Patric Stanford's *A Christmas Carol Symphony* of 1977). Hely-Hutchinson, son of the governor of the Cape colony, received his education at Eton, Balliol College Oxford and the Royal College of Music before becoming employed by the B.B.C.; he later succeeded Bantock as Peyton Professor in Birmingham. His *Variations for Orchestra* was published in 1927 by the Carnegie Trust, but apart from his compositions to nonsense verses by Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll, his best-known work was the *Carol Symphony*.²²² Written in 1929, it is a clearly third-rate piece of light music (similar to Anthony Collins's *First String Symphony*, see pp. 752f.) – Benjamin Britten called it 'utter bilge'.²²³ The four-movement work shows solid, although not highly inspired workmanship. D. Millar Craig described the work aptly:

'The symphony is in four movements, played continuously: all are based on Christmas tunes, and the work sets forth different aspects of the festival – its solemn grandeur, the mystery and romance of the manger, and its rollicking joy as Dickens shows it to us. The first movement, Prelude, built up on "Adeste, fideles," is modelled closely on Bach's hymn-tune preludes. The scherzo – "God rest ye merry, gentlemen" – though composed without any definite picture in mind, might easily be identified with the waits. The core of the symphony is the Romance, based on "Lullay, lullay," and "The First Nowell"; its significance is clear to the listener throughout, and both tunes are used with a mastery of orchestral effect. The finale, after its fugal opening, which reappears later, blends "Here we come a-wassailing" with "Adeste, fideles," to close the symphony in a mood of triumphant happiness. That is the spirit of nearly all Hely-Hutchinson's music: gloom does not appeal to him. But youth's good spirits are held in check, and a fastidious restraint as well as an instinctive sense of shapeliness sees to it that exuberance and gusto do not break bounds.'²²⁴

220 Cf. Percy Young, *Elgar O. M. A Study of a Musician*, London/Glasgow 1955, p. 193.

221 The title was corrected on the title-page.

222 Michael Hurd, 'Hely-Hutchinson, (Christian) Victor', in: *Grove6* vol. 8, London etc. 1980, p. 471.

223 Benjamin Britten's diary, 22 December 1932. Donald Mitchell (ed.), *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters and Diaries of Benjamin Britten 1913–1976*, Vol. I, London 1991, p. 297.

224 D. Millar Craig, 'The younger English composers – XV. Victor Hely-Hutchinson', in: *MMR* LX/717 (1930), p. 259.

In 1921 Edward Elgar commissioned from Herbert Howells, Eugène Goossens and **Arthur Bliss** (Barnes, London, 2 August 1891-London, 27 March 1975) (Bliss became acquainted with Elgar in 1912²²⁵) works for the Three Choirs Festival. Bliss wrote most of his contribution in the house of Ralph Vaughan Williams and R. O. Morris in Chelsea²²⁶ (Bliss studied in Cambridge and at the Royal College of Music with Wood, Rootham, Dent, Stanford, Vaughan Williams and Holst, and his fellow students were Herbert Howells, Arthur Benjamin, Eugène Goossens and Leslie Heward). A Symphony in B minor was composed under the supervision of the two professors, and at the behest of Percy A. Scholes, later re-titled *A Colour Symphony*²²⁷ (however, the work was completely independent

- 225 After the première performance of the *Colour Symphony*, Elgar kept his distance, but later became the dedicatee of Bliss's *Pastoral* for chorus, mezzo-soprano and orchestra (1928). (Cf. Gregory Roscow (ed.), *Bliss on Music*, Oxford etc. 1991, p. 45.)
- 226 Bliss recalled this period in his autobiography thus: 'I did a lot of preliminary work on this Symphony in the home of Vaughan Williams in Cheyne Walk (...). There was a wonderful atmosphere of quiet sustained work in that house. Vaughan Williams lived on the top floor, then below came R. O. Morris' study, whilst I had the room on the ground floor. Morris, who was a quiet worker (...) compiling his scholarly work, *Contrapuntal Technique in the XVth Century*, acted as a sound-proof barrier between Vaughan Williams and myself (...). I loved working there in so sympathetic and creative an atmosphere.' (Arthur Bliss, *As I Remember*, 1970, London ²1989, p. 74.)
- 227 Percy Scholes, 'The title of Bliss's "Colour Symphony"', in: *MT* LXXIII (1932), p. 416. Ernest Newman commented ironically: 'I am sure he has been wise in a worldly, if not in an aesthetic, sense; by calling his work a "Colour symphony," and giving the musical critics something more definite to write about than music, he secured an amount of publicity that a mere "symphony in Q" might not have done. And if this publicity means more performances of a very personal work by a very promising young man, we can only be grateful to Mr. Bliss for thinking of the device.' (Ernest Newman, 'The association of colour with music', in: *The Graphic* CVI/2755, 1922, p. 424.) To the painter George Dannatt, who had inspired the composer 1971-72 to write the *Metamorphic Variations*, Arthur Bliss replied to an enquiry: 'You pose difficult questions, as I haven't the technical knowledge to indicate the exact colours in my mind – they were all quite primary and fairly crude. First movement – a funereal or ecclesiastical shade of deep purple. Second movement – a real scarlet, or the hue of embers hotly glowing. Third movement – what I should call a Picasso blue – not a deep Prussian blue, but one observes it in the sky early and late in the year. Fourth movement – a spring green gradually deepening through yellow green to a fierce dark green. Colours were very vivid in my mind during the composition, though not in the sense that Trumpets might be red, and Flutes blue. I think I concentrated on colours of a rather primitive kind, as my own colour sense is not actually very sure – sometimes I find it difficult, for instance, to pick out red berries in green foliage! That's why I had no colour sheet before me – the colours were simply in my "mind's edge", and I do not think any painted cards would come near my vividly imagined ones.' (Arthur Bliss to George Dannatt, 15 October 1970, in George Dannatt, 'Introduction', in Lewis Foreman, *Arthur Bliss. Catalogue of the Complete Works*, Sevenoaks 1980, pp. 13–14.) In this explanation, he reiterated what he had underlined time and again – the subjectivity of the colours and the lacking programme. In a chimney conversation with his conductor friend Vernon Handley, on the other hand, Bliss said: 'No, I don't like the word static because I was really – and I put it down in a programme note that in the movement *Blue* – I was thinking of a punt, or of some boat that is tied up to a wharf in a lake and all you hear is just the slapping of waves against the boat and that gives the rhythm; and that is fairly static, and the boat is more or less static. But the first thing that I demand in music is flow, and I've said this before, that I think music ought to be rather like sitting in a plane and seeing the landscape pass gradually before your eyes as you look down until you arrive at your logical destination. I don't like the music that stops and starts again and so on, and also I think, and this I suppose is because one is old, that I demand from music not what I demanded as a young man which was sound and sound only: let's get three or four instruments together and we make some very amusing sounds and it'll be simply an aural titillation. I now demand something very much better than that. You talk about enhancement of life: I do demand enhancement of life, by which I mean I want to feel behind this music a great personality telling



Illustration 50. Arthur Bliss, 1922, photograph.

of the colour theories of Scott,²²⁸ Scriabin and Rimsky-Korsakov²²⁹). Its first performance in 1922 in Hereford (the dedicatee was then the young Adrian Boult, who noted that it was the first work that had been dedicated to him) was very soon followed by performances in New York, Boston and Cincinnati. The third performance of the work at the London Queen's Hall (with the New Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by the composer) on 10 March 1923 brought Bliss a huge success,²³⁰ and with it Bliss is thought to have revived British symphonism.²³¹ For the Decca recording of the work (revised in 1931-32 – only the slow movement remained unchanged²³²) – conducted by the composer and issued in 1956, Bliss wrote:

'The name *Colour Symphony* resulted from my accidentally coming across a book on heraldry in which I read of the symbolical meaning associated with the various colours, purple, red, blue, green, etc. Influenced by this I gave each movement of the symphony a character corresponding to a particular colour and its heraldic significance.

First Movement: Purple – the colour of Amethysts, Pageantry, Royalty, and Death

The first movement is slow in pace and ceremonial in character. Its shape is of the simplest: three short sections, each with its own theme; a rise to a climax in the centre of the movement, and then a return of the themes, slightly varied, in reverse order. A procession, in fact, the audience as onlooker watching the approach and later seeing the disappearance. The final chord is ominous.

Second Movement: Red – the colour of Rubies, Wine, Revelry, Furnaces, Courage, and Magic

A scherzo, rhythmical, gay, glittering, percussive. The sparkling opening is followed by two trios, one in flowing 6/8 time, the other a rough outburst in irregular bar rhythm. A reprise of the scherzo leads to a riotous coda. In 1932, ten years after the first performance, I revised the codas of both the first and second movements, and it is these revisions which are always played now.^[233]

me something about experience that I haven't had before. That's what I want. I mean Beethoven is the obvious case of a man who when you first hear him – well! when I walked out of the Queen's Hall having heard the Fifth Symphony [one of the works Bliss generally admired most] – why, I was two feet taller in every way!' (Quoted from Trudy Bliss, 'May 1966-March 1975', in Arthur Bliss, *As I Remember*, London 1989, pp. 285–286.)

228 Cyril Scott, 'The occult relationship between sound and colour', in Cyril Scott, *The philosophy of modernism (in its connection with music)*, London 1917, pp. 111–118.

229 Cf. Wilson Lyle, 'Colour and Music: An Introduction', in: *MR* 43 (1982), p. 263.

230 In 1923 Bliss's reputation grew through a performance of his Rhapsody for flute, English horn, string quartet, bass and two voices at the Salzburger I.S.C.M. Festival, in 1932 through a performance of the Oboe Quintet in Vienna. In 1922 *Rout* was performed in Salzburg.

231 Norman Frank Demuth, *Musical Trends in the 20th Century*, London 1952, p. 123. A. J. Sheldon wrote in the *Birmingham Post* 20048, 8 September 1922, p. 6: 'Certainly it is the most remarkable work of symphonic proportions produced in recent years. It is a work of a live force, a composer to be reckoned with.'

232 The finale movement of the original version was recorded under the title *Pyaneption*, under which it was published separately, by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Douglas Bostock in 2001 (ClassicO CLASSCD1501).

233 Bliss wrote at this time that 'the revision mostly refers to touches of orchestration and harmonic clarity. The only really new things will be codas for the 1st and 2nd movement. The pruning-knife has been used judiciously

Third Movement: Blue – the colour of Sapphires, Deep Water, Skies, Loyalty, and Melancholy

The main slow movement of the symphony. At many places throughout is heard a rhythm of chords that I liken to the lapping of water against a moored boat, or stone pier:

Ex. 72

Archi

The musical score for the strings (Archi) consists of two staves: Violin (Vln.) and Cello/Bass (Cb.). The music is written in a series of time signatures: 9/8, 6/8, 9/8, and 6/8. The rhythm is characterized by a steady, lapping pattern of chords, primarily using eighth and sixteenth notes. A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is indicated at the beginning.

Above this rhythm there appear arabesques on the flute, and then a long descending chromatic line for the trumpet. Later both arabesques and chromatic descent are heard together, the latter no longer played by the shrill trumpet, but on a solo violin which quietly comes from the heights. In the centre of the movement the cor anglais plays a melancholy little tune below the trillings of flutes.

Fourth Movement: Green – the colour of Emeralds, Hope, Youth, Joy, Spring, and Victory

The finale can roughly be described as a double fugue. The first subject is given at the outset to the violas, and the exposition is mainly on the strings:

Ex. 73

VI.

The musical score for the Viola (VI.) and Violin (Vln.) shows a melodic line. The Viola part is on the upper staff and the Violin part is on the lower staff. Both parts feature a series of notes with triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over the notes). The key signature has one sharp (F#).

The second subject, in contrast, is a light, rapid theme given first to the clarinet, and then developed mainly by the woodwind section of the orchestra:

Ex. 74

Clar.

The musical score for the Clarinet (Clar.) and Oboe (Ob.) shows a light, rapid theme. The Clarinet part is on the upper staff and the Oboe part is on the lower staff. Both parts feature a series of notes with a light, rapid character. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

throughout the whole work, but the material remains as it was, and the whole spirit of the work is untouched. It is in no way a re-composition – simply a revision in the light of more mature years' (Quoted from Robin Hull, 'Bliss's "Colour Symphony" Reconsidered', in: *MMR* LXI/727, 1931, p. 200).

Later both subjects are combined, and the entrance of six timpani playing the rhythm of the second fugue subject heralds the climax of the symphony.²³⁴

A contemporaneous critic for the London *Times* was not certain whether the new, more serious Bliss, who had left behind the witty elements of former works, could be adequately appreciated in this work: ‘Whether the title, “A Colour Symphony,” and the description of the four movements as purple, red, blue and green, is a happy way of bringing his hearers into touch with him [the new, earnest Bliss] is an open question.’²³⁵ Arthur Eaglefield-Hull, on the other hand, wrote that the work ‘made a sensation (...) by its daring harmony, polyphony and orchestration. It is a very virile work, in the Neo-classical style’.²³⁶ On the slow movement Scott Goddard wrote:

‘The rippling arabesques for woodwind and the restless soft-stretched chords for strings and harp, these were ancestors of many works that were to come later on, and it is in that respect that the movement now appears as a link between early and late work. Such a combination of discipline and freedom, the simultaneous use of contemplation on the one hand and action on the other which is in this third movement, has become one of the hall-marks of Bliss’s manner of expression. The movement is intrinsically lyrical.’²³⁷

And Ruth Gipps, who did not know the work until about 1958, but subsequently became a good friend of Bliss’s, wrote:

‘There are three emotions that Bliss’s music expresses outstandingly well. One is that rarity in good music, pure joy, more radiant and exhilarating than any since Dvořák’s. Another is terror – the death of the Red King in *Checkmate* arouses a personally involved fear to which the only parallel I can think of is the climax of the scherzo (entitled Rondo) of Elgar’s 2nd Symphony. The third, in which I regard Bliss as supreme, is a mood of feminine enchantment. The naiads of the *Pastoral*, Blue in the *Colour Symphony*, the Black Queen, the *Enchantress* – each has a sort of magical fragrance; not the hibiscus-scented languor of Debussy or Ravel, but the enticement of youth itself, as heady and fresh as wet honeysuckle. In the words of Charles Morgan, some of whose books have a similar atmosphere, it has power “to work my deep magics.”’²³⁸

According to Foulds, Bliss was ‘a somewhat less highly concentrated musical intelligence’.²³⁹ The *Colour Symphony*’s power is in fact rather meditative, less vigorous than say Moeran’s

234 Quoted from Gregory Roscow (ed.), *Bliss on Music*, Oxford etc. 1991, pp. 227–229.

235 ‘The Three Choirs Festival. New works by Bliss and Goossens’, in: *The Times*, London 8 September 1922, p. 13.

236 Arthur Eaglefield-Hull (ed.), *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, London etc. 1924, p. 64.

237 Scott Goddard, ‘Arthur Bliss’s “Colour Symphony”’, in: *Tempo* 2 (1939), p. 5.

238 Ruth Gipps, ‘Sir Arthur Bliss: 75th birthday’, in: *Composer* 20 (1966), p. 14.

239 John Foulds, *Music Today*, London 1934, p. 277. Cecil Gray writes: ‘Arthur Bliss once accused me of seeking refuge and escape from reality in an ivory tower; the artist’s place today, he said, was the market-place. On the contrary, I answered, it is in the market-place that one escapes from reality, the only reality one can ever know, oneself. It is in solitude, in the wilderness – we can leave out the ivory tower which conveys a false suggestion of preciosity – that one encounters reality face to face.’ (Pauline Gray, *Cecil Gray – his life and Notebooks*, London 1989, p. 192.)

or even Vaughan Williams's more-or-less contemporaneous symphonies – corresponding perhaps to the commission: only at the end of the work does Bliss return to the lively, exuberant style exhibited in *Rout*.

Similar in programmatical conception to Alan Bush's First Symphony (see pp. 776ff.), albeit on a much lower intellectual level, is **Josef Holbrooke's**²⁴⁰ (Croydon, 5 July 1878-London, 5 September 1958; see also pp. 614ff., 690ff., 735f., 752 and 759f.) Third Symphony (his first purely orchestral²⁴¹), whose succinct title is *Ships*. This title is absent in the printed version of the score, which means that the programmatic content – as is frequently the case with Holbrooke – must be handled cautiously.

Holbrooke had been pressed at the age of fifteen into the Royal Academy of Music (where his fellow students were Neville Flux, Christopher Wilson and W. H. Bell), but did not care for the method of musical education right from the very beginning (Corder was one of his teachers). He nonetheless won several awards and the Sterndale Bennett Scholarship for piano and composition. His first successes took place at the Crystal Palace, where one or the other work was first performed under August Manns. His first two symphonies were choral symphonies (see pp. 614ff.), which, like Holbrooke himself, were controversial during his lifetime and remain so today, although some of his compositions are slowly becoming available to the public.²⁴²

From comparatively early on, Josef Holbrooke was regarded as a composer whose works were not easy to perform. Even at the peak of his career, he failed to become a really popular composer (the penetrating praise from some lone critics only served to provoke a backlash among those who felt that he was often overestimated; on the other hand, his obstinacy, strong opinions²⁴³ and sarcasm, qualities described by his son as not especially

240 Actually, the composer's given name was Joseph Charles Holbrook, but he added the 'e' at the end and later changed the 'ph' to 'f' 'to perform more internationally' (according to the composer's son in a conversation with the author on 20 May 1993), mistakenly thinking that the German spelling was more international. Today his first name is usually spelled with 'ph'.

241 Sometimes, even in the printed score, *Les Hommages* Op. 40 (1899, supposedly then *Bohemian Suite* Op. 37 for strings, rev. 1904 as Symphony No. 1, first performed in 1906 under and dedicated to Henry J. Wood) is designated as Holbrooke's First Symphony; it is, however, doubtlessly a suite in rather loose order of keys, as Holbrooke himself noted when re-naming it Suite No. 3 (it should be noted that the titles of later works were also changed from symphony to suite or *vice versa*). The cast for the two outer movements (homages to Wagner and Tchaikovsky) is rather monstrous, the Wagnerian movement indeed being a very concisely conceived sonata movement. The Griegian movement is of rather chamber-musical transparency, while the Dvořákian movement is infused with a softness caused by *divisi* strings and harp.

2421 William Austin, *Music in the 20th century*, London 1966, p. 93: 'With very little recognition and very great assurance and energy he progressed from songs and chamber music through mammoth orchestral poems and choruses to a trilogy of operas based on Celtic myths [...]. His energetic progress never brought him so far as he supposed from his earliest models, Sullivan, Rossini, and Spohr, though he used dissonance more continually, and though he regarded himself as a great innovator comparable to Debussy and Scriabin.'

243 George Lowe, *Josef Holbrooke and his work*, London/New York 1920, p. 33: 'Neither Shakespeare nor Bach appealed to him in many great degrees.'

pronounced²⁴⁴, offended many²⁴⁵). As a result, insufficient rehearsal time was usually accorded to his works, so that the performances tended to be characterized by orchestral breakdowns. Holbrooke's harmony, rejected at the turn of the century as 'hyper-modern' or as being 'The English Strauss',²⁴⁶ evolved little over time, and Holbrooke himself must have realized by the mid-1930s that the well had run dry. 'He is old-fashioned', wrote Stanley Bayliss, 'because his music does not follow the paths of atonality and polytonality, but rather is of the pre-War period, the period of Richard Strauss' ascendancy and of programme-music.'²⁴⁷ As early as 1925, Holbrooke had completed his Opus 90 – this very symphony – which was premièred in Budapest, and by 1937, he had written most of his remaining thirty or forty compositions. (Accordingly, Frank Howes counts Holbrooke among the late-Romantics, a group that included Delius, Harty, Ireland and Bax, who rarely composed after 1939.²⁴⁸)

Holbrooke's son, the bassoonist Gwydion Brooke (1912–2005), agreed with Norman V. Dagg's assessment that the 'music of Josef Holbrooke is original, packed with life and feeling, and voluminous. More than that of any other composer his music is unequal in material and quality.'²⁴⁹ Dagg, however, went on to suggest that this quality would fade with maturity and that the music might never be important. Brooke himself found several of his father's works unconvincing and disallowed performances of some of them, and even musicological research on them. Nonetheless, even after 1937, Eugène Goossens believed Holbrooke to be 'the most prolific, and alas! to-day the least played of all that older generation of living composers.'²⁵⁰ (Goossens was apparently referring to the chamber music rather than the orchestral works.²⁵¹) Hamilton Harty agreed with this assessment at least until 1934.²⁵² Ralph Vaughan Williams, like many others, highly praised Holbrooke's choral orchestral *Queen Mab*.²⁵³ Gwydion Brooke esteemed the large choral work *The Bells*, based on

244 From a conversation between Gwydion Brooke and the author, 20 May 1993.

245 Gwydion Brooke described his father as a dear, calm (although according to numerous contemporary reports, he could be at least temporarily volatile) and humorous (a trait evident in some of his compositions) man who got on fairly well with many of his contemporaries (among others with Richard Strauss and Granville Bantock) and befriended Grainger and Scott. Percy Young, however, observed in *Elgar O.M.*, London/Glasgow 1955, p. 120 that 'Holbrooke, like many composers, suffered from persecution mania.'

246 Hannen Swaffer, 'People I know: Joseph Holbrooke, the Cockney Wagner', in: *The Graphic* 106/2762 (1922), p. 659.

247 Stanley Bayliss, 'Joseph Holbrooke', in: *MM* XI/1 (1931), p. 23.

248 Frank Howes, *The English Musical Renaissance*, London 1966, pp. 225–229.

249 Norman Dagg, 'Josef Holbrooke and his Music', in: *The Search* I/1 (1931), p. 65.

250 Eugène Goossens, *Overture and Beginners*, London 1951, p. 137.

251 Cf. Eugène Goossens, *Modern Tendencies in Music*, London 1919, p. 18.

252 Cf. Lewis Foreman (ed.), *From Parry to Britten*, London 1987, pp. 169–170.

253 'I venture to write to you on the subject of Josef Holbrooke. I cannot help feeling that he is being neglected unjustly. I believe that *Queen Mab* and the pianoforte quintette are big works and ought to be revived frequently. I admit that a great deal of his work is very dull, and that he has made a great nuisance of himself to all and sundry over his music, but so did Wagner! But I think you will agree with me that we ought to judge a man's artistic work on artistic grounds only.' (Ralph Vaughan Williams to R. J. F. Howgill, B.B.C., 20 December 1953. BBC Written Archives Centre, Holbrooke file.) Not only Holbrooke himself, but also his publisher Edith Meredith



Illustration 51. Josef Holbrooke, photograph.

the poem of the same title by Poe, and generally considered far better than Rakhmaninov's version, though, sadly entirely unknown today.

The only two composers who seem to have dealt with the actual score of Holbrooke's Third Symphony are Arthur Bliss, who tried to promote a performance when he was head of music at the B.B.C.²⁵⁴ (the B.B.C. performance in 1938 was cancelled when Holbrooke demanded to have the score and parts back because Bantock was supposed to perform the work), and Havergal Brian, who wrote:

'Holbrooke's mentality is of the Weber-Wagner type, in that elemental things seldom fail to inspire him. Had Holbrooke been a materialist, he would never have written the Poe symphonic poems or the mystical Welsh opera trilogy. There is even a suggestion of the elemental world in his three-movement Symphony No. 3: a journey through the first and second movements is as passing through an entangled forest. Beauty spots are to be found, particularly in the elusive impressionism of the slow movement. There is also the feeling of anticipation; and if so much that is novel tends to make for impatience the opening to the brilliant Finale makes its arrival worth the waiting for. Here all is activity and bustle, with bouncing gay tunes of a popular type.'²⁵⁵

'The nautical symphony (No. 3) has the subtitle *Nelson*; the three movements are inspired by British shipping and named "War Ships", "Hospital Ships", "Merchant Ships". Here is a work particularly suitable for the present hour; the score and parts are published, so conductors have no excuses for ignoring a work so pronouncedly English in mentality and score for showing off or putting an orchestra on its mettle.'²⁵⁶

Apart from the secondary title *Nelson* the possible title *Navy Symphony* can be found (on the MS score).

After the Third Symphony's lack of success, Holbrooke dedicated himself to the composition of smaller symphonies.

In spite of Brian's appraisal of the first two movements of the symphony as 'entangled', they can in fact be analysed: the first movement is a carefully formed sonata principal

of the Modern Music Library (which nearly exclusively distributed Holbrooke's music) behaved suspiciously in dealings with the B.B.C. (which often needed to be pressed into positive decisions). The striking similarity between Meredith's and Holbrooke's rather moody, chaotic, erratic and distrusting character in letters has led some authors on British music to the assumption that Mrs. Meredith was simply a pseudonym for Holbrooke himself.

- 254 Another composer promoted by Bliss was Havergal Brian. Bliss requested that two sections of *The Tiggers* be performed by the B.B.C. (performed 13 February 1944). Gwydion Brooke wrote in a letter to the author, 13 August 1998: 'I remember when Bliss was at the B.B.C. He was known in some quarters as the blissful idiot – probably because he always looked more like an Army colonel than a composer. Of course he was very far from being an idiot – probably the reason he didn't stay long in that establishment.'
- 255 Havergal Brian, 'The Neglect of Holbrooke', in Malcolm MacDonald (ed.), *Havergal Brian on Music I*, London 1986, pp. 276-277.
- 256 Havergal Brian, 'Josef Holbrooke, English Composer', in Malcolm MacDonald (ed.), *Havergal Brian on Music I*, London 1986, p. 284.

movement with three main themes,

Ex. 75



Ex. 76: 4 [4]



Ex. 77: [7] 4



clearly recognizable development (from 1 [10]) and recapitulation (from [19] 6). The slow movement is quite extensive, but it can also be analysed as a sonata movement with development (from [9] 1), recapitulation (from 1 [14]) and coda (from [19] 3). In addition to independent thematic material, the piece also makes use of the third theme of the first movement. The humorous finale, very densely and fluidly composed (though often criticized for its use of sea-songs), can also be analysed as a sonata movement, with two motifs or themes as the main structuring elements.

Ex. 78



Ex. 79



As formal sections, the development (from [16] 6) and recapitulation (from [41] 3) hardly bear mention: the movement continues on so quickly that such structuring aids are almost superfluous.

In consequence of the Second World War, a lot of score material of works by **Christian Darnton** (see also pp. 431ff.) was lost and widely scattered, as shown wonderfully in some

of Darnton's letters at the British Library.²⁵⁷ Darnton's Second Symphony, *The Anagram*, either fell victim to the same fate (which seems probable on account of the available rough drafts) or was simply never finished (on the other hand, Darnton later continued numbering his symphonies, with no No. 2 to replace *The Anagram*). Darnton composed his *Triptych: Variations for String Orchestra* simultaneously to the symphony (from 15 May 1939 to 8 April 1940) – perhaps because he realized that the symphony, begun on 9 December 1939, did not measure up to his own qualitative standards. Unfortunately, Darnton never revealed exactly what the title of his composition meant.

Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony* was probably named after Beethoven's Sixth Symphony (1808), although the title is quite misleading to both performer and audience in several respects. One might assign the work to the group of nature-inspired symphonies, which includes many of Raff's symphonies (for instance *Im Walde*, 1869, or *In den Alpen*, 1876), Lodge Ellerton's *Wald-Symphonie* (1845; see pp. 112ff.) or Liszt's *Berg-Symphonie* (1848–54; the first two orchestrations of the latter work were Raff's). Eventually (and wrongly) this work became known as the prototype of the so-called 'English Pastoral School', which was thought to revere an idealized country-side by collecting and using folk songs in art music.²⁵⁸ Through his *Pastoral Symphony* and other compositions from the same period (some of them quite wrongly), Vaughan Williams came to be considered the father of the school that actually largely used folk-song-based modes as a both harmonic and melodic means for composition; additionally, 'idyllic' titles were used to underscore the tradition, which was in reality only a very tiny part of Vaughan Williams's artistic personality.²⁵⁹

Collecting folk songs, a practice already in vogue in the eighteenth century,²⁶⁰ and in fact done even earlier (albeit unsystematically in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), was quite popular in Great Britain. Folk music and art music continually pollinated each other, with the result that new 'folk' songs came into existence (for example Robert Burns' *Auld Lang Syne* or Henry Bishop's *Home, sweet Home* – though the latter is not Bishop's own invention) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Great Britain and on the European continent alike.

The 'golden age' of the agricultural industry spanned the 1850s and 1860s²⁶¹, and from 1870 up to the beginning of the First World War, when protectionism was finally re-

257 Correspondence of Christian Darnton. British Library: Add. MS 62765, fol. 232–233.

258 Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, 'Suche nach nationaler Identität und pastoraler Idylle im industriellen Britannien nach dem Tod Königin Victorias', in *Verflechtungen im 20. Jahrhundert. Komponisten im Spannungsfeld elitär – populär*, ed. by Walter Salmen and Giselher Schubert, Mainz etc. 2005 (Frankfurter Studien, X), pp. 48–58.

259 See pp. 581f.

260 In 1812 R. Topliff published *Twenty four Popular Songs of Tyneside*, 1843 John Broadwood *Old English Songs as now sung by the Peasantry of the Weald of Surrey and Sussex*.

261 M. St. John Parker/D. J. Reid, *The British Revolution 1750–1970*, London 1972, p. 258ff.



Illustration 52. Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst walking in the countryside, 1921, photograph.

introduced, a downturn ensued.²⁶² This slump might have spurred nostalgia for the erstwhile pastoral idyll, resulting in more avid collection of folk songs, the revival of folk dance and so on.²⁶³ Unemployment surged in the 1930s (Erik Chisholm left Great Britain for South Africa for this reason) before the Second World War claimed its victims. Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony*, begun in 1916 and completed in 1921, embodies this nostalgia for folk songs and is infused with 'pastoral character'.

'(...) the function of the great composer is to take up and transform into his own personal idiom (or mode of musical speech) what has been communally experienced. This idiom must be a common possession, but broad enough to allow a personal vocabulary to the composer. The basis of Vaughan Williams's idiom, which owes much to his love and understanding of our great heritage of Tudor and folk music, provides him with a universal musical language which he uses in a characteristic personal way, and drawing inspiration from his music of the soil, his own has the very essence of things in it.'²⁶⁴

The *Pastoral Symphony* can be understood as a successor work to the *London Symphony*, even though it was completed a good nine years after Vaughan Williams's first surviving purely orchestral symphony. The *London Symphony* (see pp. 532ff.),²⁶⁵ which was widely described as a townscape 'painting' (similar to Richard Strauss's *Alpensinfonie*²⁶⁶ or Bantock's *Pagan Symphony*; see pp. 521ff.) but also compared to Schumann's Third (*Rhenish*) and Mendelssohn Bartholdy's Fourth (*Italian*),²⁶⁷ forged Vaughan Williams's reputation, however. But similar to Strauss, Vaughan Williams broke the expectations placed upon him with his successor work and turned his back on external effects, abstaining from using even literal quotations of folk songs.

'The first question which people will ask about this symphony is, why "Pastoral"? Dr. Vaughan Williams has made no attempt to answer it in words. He supplied a note to the Philharmonic programme which seemed to take almost a malicious pleasure in saying nothing: "The mood of this Symphony is, as its title suggests, almost entirely quiet and contemplative – there are few fortissimos and few allegros. The only really quick passage is the coda to the third movement, and that is all *pianissimo*." Some twenty scraps of tune were then quoted without comment, save

262 *Ibid.*, p. 265ff.

263 Despite the title of Rolf Gardiner's article, 'Musik in englischer Landschaft', in: *Musica* 12 (1958), pp. 424–427, the piece does not deal with the influence of folk music on art music.

264 Harriet Cohen, *Music's Handmaid*, London 1936, p. 148. Gustav Holst shows his interest in Tudor music e.g. with his article in *The Midland Musician* 1/1 (1926), pp. 4–5, in which he cites as his favourite Tudor composer Thomas Weelkes, whose inferior works do not, unlike Byrd's, become third-rate.

265 Bernard Shore, *Sixteen Symphonies*, London etc. 1949, pp. 284–285 considers neither the vocal *Sea Symphony* nor the *Pastoral Symphony* as genuine symphonies; of the earlier works, only the *London Symphony* meets his criteria (Shore's concept of the symphony is almost identical to Carl Dahlhaus's).

266 Cf. also on this matter Jürgen Schaarwächter, *Richard Strauss und die Sinfonie*, Köln 1994.

267 Donald Jay Grout, *A History of Western Music*, London 1962, p. 621.

the assurance that they occur in the music in the order shown, like the cast on a theatre programme. But the cast of this symphony is relatively unimportant. These scraps of tune are not individual characters, since the scheme is not dramatic; nor are they features in a landscape, since the scheme is not pictorial. To make a list of them is no more illuminating than to jot down salient images or turns of expression, such as “summer’s day”, “rough winds”, “darling buds of May”, “the eye of heaven” in the hope of making a synopsis of [Shakespeare’s] *Sonnet xviii*. Complete the list as you will, but nothing of the sonnet has been caught in it.²⁶⁸

The question of the folk song and folk dance revival was heatedly debated, and positions ranged from intense devotion to vehement refusal. Guy Warrack for example is reported by Arnold Bax to have said: ‘You should make a point of trying every experience once, excepting incest and folk-dancing.’²⁶⁹

Vaughan Williams in fact furnishes no clear programme; like Beethoven, he felt that giving the listener too detailed a ‘programme’ was detrimental to the music – Boulton, E. E. F. Dickinson and others correspondingly thought it ‘unwise’ to even title a symphony.²⁷⁰ Vaughan Williams indeed avoided the hollow folksiness that he and some of his contemporaries were frequently accused of, and succeeded in lifting the topos of the nature-inspired symphony to a more absolute, abstract level, though some interpreters see this differently. They rather think that the symphony evokes the loneliness of the countryside, the feeling of being cut off from the world. The work is also touched with a little wistfulness, which dissolves into the sad scream of the curlew in Norfolk²⁷¹ as for instance reflected in *In the Fen Country* or the *Norfolk Rhapsodies*. J. B. Trend, Professor of Spanish at Cambridge University and a keen musician, wrote that it was ‘music which reflects the lovely monotony of the mists and fens of Cambridgeshire’²⁷²; Colles saw the South Downs in Sussex. ‘The meditative, idyllic pages of the *Pastoral Symphony* [...] enshrine the very heart and soul of English countryside – the landscapes of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and Shropshire come naturally to mind – and those who feel at home with Vaughan Williams here will agree that he is absolutely supreme on this ground.’²⁷³ ‘Occasionally there is a sudden flare, as though dry brushwood had been thrown onto an expiring flame, lighting up the countryside. Then it expires and we are again amongst the silent night shadows and the stars.’²⁷⁴ Constant Lambert wrote: ‘We can appreciate Debussy’s *Rondes de Printemps* without knowing or liking French landscape, but it is clearly difficult to appreciate either the mood or the form of the *Pastoral Symphony* without being temperamentally attuned to the cool greys and greens, the quietly luxuriant

268 Henry C. Colles, “A Pastoral Symphony”, 1922, in Henry C. Colles, *Essays and Lectures*, London etc. 1947, p. 92.

269 Quoted from Arnold Bax, *Farewell, My Youth and other writings*, Aldershot/Brookfield 1992, p. 12.

270 A. E. F. Dickinson, *Vaughan Williams*, London 1963, p. 208.

271 See Warlock’s song cycle *The Curlew*.

272 John Trend, ‘Introduction to Contemporary Musicians. III. Dr. Ralph Vaughan Williams’, in: *MB V/3* (1923), p. 79.

273 Robin Hull, ‘Music of our time. I. From Elgar to Britten’, in: *Hinrichsen’s Year Book 1944: Music of our Time*, London 1943, pp. 10–11.

274 Quoted from Malcolm MacDonald (ed.), *Havergal Brian on Music I*, London 1986, p. 25.

detail, the unemphatic undulation of the English scene. Beautiful as this work is, one feels that it is too direct a transcription of a local mood and that the material has not undergone that process of mental digestion, as it were, which can make the particular into a symbol of the whole and can, as in Sibelius's symphonies, give to local and individual characteristics the quality of universality.²⁷⁵ And Josef Holbrooke concluded: '[H]is *Pastoral Symphony* is really too pastoral.'²⁷⁶ Ursula Vaughan Williams, however, reported:

'It was here at Ecoivres [in 1916] that the *Pastoral Symphony* began to take shape in Ralph's mind; he wrote, long after: "It's really war-time music – a great deal of it incubated when I used to go up night after night with the ambulance waggon at Ecoivres and we went up a steep hill and there was a wonderful Corot-like landscape in the sunset – it's not really lambskins frisking at all as most people take for granted."²⁷⁷ A bugler used to practise, and this sound became part of that evening landscape and is the genesis of the long trumpet cadenza in the second movement of the symphony: "les airs lointains d'un cor mélancolique et tendre." (...) So it was in rooms at the seaside that Ralph settled down [in 1919] to revising the *London Symphony* and *Hugh the Drover* and there that he started to shape the quiet contours of the *Pastoral Symphony*, recreating his memories of twilight woods at Ecoivres and the bugle calls: finding sounds to hold that essence of summer where a girl passes singing. It has something of Rossetti's *Silent Noon*, something of a Monet landscape and the music unites transience and permanence as memory does.'²⁷⁸

And Christopher Palmer wrote:

'The *Pastoral Symphony* is a landscape, not so much the Cotswolds as the wastes of wartime Flanders. Here human figures recede from the scene; we are closer to the pantheistic spirit of *The Song of the High Hills*, in that landscape is viewed divorced from its function as a background to human activity, yet further away in that there is no element of "man in nature". There is a world of difference between music depicting human figures in a landscape (as for instance in d'Indy's *Summer Day on the Mountain* or Britten's *Peter Grimes*) and music depicting the reactions of humans in the face of natural beauty – Delius's *Song of the High Hills* or Carl Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva*.²⁷⁹

After works on the sea and the city, the *Pastoral Symphony* (which received enthusiastic applause in the U.S. after its London première in 1922, and was later given under Boult at the

275 Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!*, Harmondsworth 1948, pp. 108–109.

276 Josef Holbrooke, *Contemporary British Composers*, London 1925, p. 95.

277 Ralph Vaughan Williams to Ursula Wood, 4 October 1938.

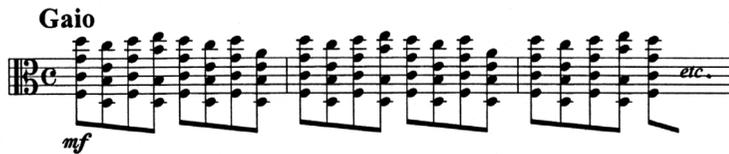
278 Ursula Vaughan Williams, *R.V.W.*, Oxford etc. 1988, pp. 121 and 134.

279 Christopher Palmer, *Delius*, London 1976, pp. 148–149. Percy Young pointed out that the *Pastoral Symphony* and Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva*, composed nearly contemporaneously, are interesting to compare (cf. Percy Young, *Symphony*, London 1957, p. 64).

1925 I.S.C.M. Festival in Prague²⁸⁰) defined another important aspect of Vaughan Williams's life, and this is very unquestionably a weighty argument *for* the title and *against* the denotation of a specific landscape as described in the first half of this chapter.²⁸¹

Vaughan Williams's thematic material is generally not strongly differentiated, and yet A. E. F. Dickinson's analysis of the first movement clearly shows how well Vaughan Williams meets expectations formally and musically.²⁸² John Foulds noted the similarity that exists between the beginning of Malipiero's *Variazioni senza Tema* and that of the *Pastoral Symphony*:²⁸³

Ex. 80: Gian Francesco Malipiero, *Variazioni senza Tema*



Ex. 81: A *Pastoral Symphony*



The other movements are formed strictly according to the textbook, though by no means in an unadventurous or uninteresting way. A special feature is the use of a soprano (or tenor) solo in the final movement, which crowns this essentially lyrical work with a transcendent quality. Robin Hull wrote: 'In those concluding pages the composer touches, it seems to me, mystic regions whose "pure and endless light" affords a fleeting glance of some inimitable beauty which must ever remain, even to the greatest, an incandescent but unattainable vision.'²⁸⁴ (The *Pastoral Symphony* is found in this chapter because it is the only solo vocal symphony that uses the textless singing voice purely as an instrument – the vocal part may also be taken over by the clarinet; correspondingly, the interpretation of the soprano solo as a girl who is wandering through a cornfield is rather inappropriate. Additionally, the 'programme' is super-ordinate to the means, in opposition to, say, Sorabji's First Choral Symphony.)

280 Edward Dent reported: 'We were at Prague again in 1925, and England was represented by that profoundly moving and impressive work the *Pastoral Symphony* of Vaughan Williams. Paul Stefan said it was no good for Vienna – there was no erotic element in it, and Schnabel dismissed it contemptuously – "all that *Jewish* style is quite played out now".' (Edward Dent, 'Looking backward', in: *Music Today* I, 1949, p. 16.)

281 Cf. also Frank Howes, *The music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, London etc. 1954, pp. 22–23.

282 A. E. F. Dickinson, *An Introduction to the Music of R. Vaughan Williams*, Oxford/London 1928, p. 54.

283 John Foulds, *Music Today*, London 1934, p. 278.

284 Robin Hull, 'The Symphonies of Vaughan Williams', in: *MO* 57/677 (1934), p. 406.

Edward Macan wrote that the work, in its dependence on Holst, refrains from having a clear main key.²⁸⁵ Indeed, the first movement alternates between the keys of G and A,²⁸⁶ both used in a strongly modal way – Mixolydian, Dorian,²⁸⁷ Lydian, pentatonic and other scales can be found.²⁸⁸ The use of such scales, often blurring the relationship between major and minor,²⁸⁹ is very typical of Vaughan Williams's compositions that stand in some proximity to the Tudor²⁹⁰ or folk music tradition (folk songs are often based on modal scales).²⁹¹ An extremely important personality for Vaughan Williams was Cecil Sharp, who was not only one of the most prolific folk song collectors but also wrote epoch-making books that were invaluable aids to the composer finding his or her sound language.²⁹² Tonal peculiarities of the folk songs²⁹³, such as the minor seventh, found their way into the music of Vaughan Williams (and others) – so much so that his teacher Max Bruch²⁹⁴ complained: 'You have a passion for the minor seventh.'²⁹⁵ Lutz-Werner Hesse is concerned at length with scale formation that, derived at first from folk songs²⁹⁶, changed after 1930 to tonally free scales (for example Fourth Symphony, 4th movement, [6]: B \flat -D-E-F-B \flat -F-A \flat -E \flat -G \flat -D \flat ; Fifth Symphony, 2nd movement, 2 bars after [17]: C-D \sharp -E-F \sharp -G-A \sharp).²⁹⁷ Vaughan Williams uses

285 Edward Macan, 'Block Juxtapositions', in: *BM* 15 (1993), pp. 96–97 and 103.

286 The technique of dual keys can also be detected e.g. in Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* and *Sinfonia domestica* (cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, *Richard Strauss und die Sinfonie*, Köln 1994, p. 109), in Rubbra's Second (see pp. 426f) or in Brian's *Gothic Symphony* (see pp. 656ff).

287 A. E. F. Dickinson, *An Introduction to the Music of R. Vaughan Williams*, Oxford/London 1928, p. 69.

288 In this case it must be stressed that in spite of the occasional claim that the opening violin solo of the symphony was a folk song, not a single piece of folk music is used in the symphony. The large importance of modal scales may cause this impression, however. (Cf. Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 1992, p. 169.)

289 Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music*, London etc. in 1959, pp. 63 and 77–78. Correspondingly, Robin Hawthorne's interpretation of this ambiguity in the *Pastoral Symphony* from Ravel's composition instruction in 1907 is rather far-fetched (Robin Hawthorne, 'A Note on the Music of Vaughan Williams', in: *MR* 9, 1948, pp. 271–274).

290 Wilfrid Mellers, *Vaughan Williams and the vision of Albion*, London 1991, p. 68 refers to the close connection between the *Pastoral Symphony* and the *Mass*, which might be comparable to that of *A Lark Ascending* and the *London Symphony*. Arthur Hutchings writes that the Kyrie of the *Mass* could, set for strings, be valid as a movement of *Flos campi* or of the *Pastoral Symphony* (Arthur Hutchings, 'Vaughan Williams and the Tudor Tradition', in: *The Listener* XLV/1146, 1951, p. 276).

291 Modal scales also have great importance in Borodin and Brahms. Cf. Kurt Blaukopf (ed.), *Lexikon der Symphonie*, Köln 1952, pp. 70 and 82.

292 Cecil Sharp, *English Folk-Song. Some Conclusions*, London/Taunton 1907 was e.g. concerned extensively with considerations to scales and modes.

293 Arthur Henry Fox Strangways stressed the local origin of scales (Arthur Henry Fox Strangways, 'Scales', in: *M&L* VII, 1926, p. 295).

294 Bruch was, simultaneously with Saint-Saëns and Tchaikovsky, given an honorary doctoral degree at Cambridge in 1893, when Vaughan Williams was studying at Trinity College.

295 Quoted from Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, p. 10.

296 Cf. Herman Reichenbach, 'The Tonality of English and Gaelic Folksong', in: *M&L* XIX (1938), pp. 268–279. Bertrand Bronson, 'Folksong and the Modes', in: *MQ* XXXII (1946), pp. 37–49. Elsie Payne, 'Vaughan Williams and folk-song', in: *MR* 15 (1954), pp. 103–126.

297 Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, pp. 93 and 98.

the scales (until c. 1925²⁹⁸) harmonically, too, so that any parallels to musical impressionism are rather coincidental.²⁹⁹ However, his harmony generally remains rather retrospective, in contrast for instance to Stravinsky or Bartók, who derived new rhythmical qualities from folk music.³⁰⁰

Numerous critics condemned the *Pastoral Symphony* as too contemplative. In fact all of the movements end *niente*, and the thematic material also receives no actual development. ‘The tunes of the *Pastoral Symphony* are not “developed” as the classical symphonist understands the term. There are few examples of sequences or diminutions; instead there is a free evolution of one tune from another, a process of regeneration, like streams flowing into each other, coalescing and going on their way. There is much ingenious use of rhythm to bind these elements together, and marvellous diatonic counterpoint which has proved to be inimitable, though many have tried to imitate it.’³⁰¹ Only through the almost always free counterpoint do often apparently new harmonic elements occur in Vaughan Williams.³⁰²

Benjamin Britten’s (Lowestoft, 22 November 1913–Aldeburgh, 4 December 1976) *Sinfonia da Requiem* is actually his first symphony composition proper – his *Simple Symphony* (see p. 751) was a composition essentially for school orchestra³⁰³ and the reprocessing of youthful follies rather than an independent symphony for strings, and his *Sinfonietta* (following the model of Schoenberg’s First Chamber Symphony) was clearly a work for chamber ensemble. Britten first received private composition instruction from Frank Bridge (who lived in his neighbourhood in Norfolk), but had already written an extensive Overture in B^b minor. Bridge eventually referred Britten to the Royal College of Music, where John Ireland accepted him on Bridge’s recommendation as a composition pupil;³⁰⁴ from Arthur Benjamin he received piano lessons. It may have been his liberal teachers Ireland and Benjamin, and later W. H. Auden (librettist of, among others, *Paul Bunyan*, *Our Hunting Fathers* and the *Hymn to St. Cecilia*) and Christopher Isherwood (who together with Auden wrote the text for two plays; Britten composed the incidental music for these in the

298 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

299 *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.

300 Cf. Donald Mitchell, *The Language of Modern Music*, London 1963, pp. 109–110. According to Mitchell, it was rather Holst who (also harmonically) went in new directions, although his reliance on folk music (e.g. in *Egdon Heath* or in *Hammersmith*) limited his reach.

301 Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Oxford etc. 41992, p. 170. Cf. also Lutz-Werner Hesse, *Studien zum Schaffen des Komponisten Ralph Vaughan Williams*, Regensburg 1983, pp. 85–88.

302 John Foulds, *Music Today*, London 1934, p. 275.

303 Cf. Humphrey Carpenter, *Benjamin Britten*, London 1992, p. 53.

304 John Ireland said in Murray Schafer, *British Composers in Interview*, London 1963, p. 30: ‘Benjamin Britten was very industrious. When he came to the Royal College of Music I knew that his was one of the finest musical brains the College had seen for many years. Frank Bridge, whose friend he was, wrote me asking if I would accept him as a pupil. I attempted to secure a scholarship for him. The other two adjudicators were against it and one of them even went so far as to say, “What is an English public school boy doing writing music of this kind.” But eventually I managed to convince them and I don’t think the academic world ever quite forgave me for it.’

1930s, when he began to admire Shostakovich) who influenced Britten's sexual orientation. Britten's compositions received few performances at the College; only his *Sinfonietta* received a second performance there on 16 March 1933 after Iris Lemare had conducted the première performance two months previously.

Britten's mother died in 1938, and shortly afterwards, he started living with Peter Pears – their long-term relationship began in June 1939 and lasted until Britten's death.³⁰⁵ The *Sinfonia da Requiem*, Britten's second fully valid orchestral work after the Violin Concerto (the Piano Concerto and other works are generally considered to show Britten still 'on his way'; the *Sinfonia*, on the other hand, is even better than the Violin Concerto, which nonetheless strongly resembles the *Sinfonia* in architectural respects³⁰⁶), is dedicated to the memory of his parents, although Britten delivered the work to Boosey & Hawkes as a work for the celebration of the 2600th Anniversary of the Japanese Empire. Britten said in an interview:

I'm making it just as anti-war as possible (... [The British volunteers who fell in the Spanish civil war are according to Michael Kennedy also mourned in the *Dies Irae*, not only in the *Ballad of Heroes*.³⁰⁷ Elements of the *Sinfonia* are also taken up again in the *War Requiem*.³⁰⁸]) I don't believe you can express social or political or economic theories in music, but by coupling new music with well known musical phrases, I think it's possible to get over certain ideas. I'm dedicating this symphony to the memory of my parents, and, since it is a kind of requiem, I'm quoting from the *Dies Irae* of the Requiem Mass. One's apt to get muddled discussing such things – all I'm sure [of] is my own anti-war conviction as I write it.³⁰⁹

The complaints of the Japanese government did not come as a surprise, but took the form of a refusal of 'purely religious music of Christian nature' having nothing to do with Japan.³¹⁰ Britten described the work in a letter as 'a short Symphony – or Symphonic poem. Called *Sinfonia da Requiem* (rather topical, but not of course mentioning dates or places!) which sounds rather what they would like.'³¹¹ To Peggy Brosa he wrote: 'Personally, I think it is the best so far, although to me it is so personal & intimate a piece, that it is rather like those awful

305 Cf. Donald Mitchell (ed.), *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters and Diaries of Benjamin Britten 1913–1976*, Vol. I, London 1991, p. 20.

306 Peter Evans, *The Music of Benjamin Britten*, London 1989, p. 57.

307 Michael Kennedy, *Britten*, London 1993, p. 136.

308 Cf. Peter Evans, *The Music of Benjamin Britten*, London 1989, p. 454 etc.

309 Benjamin Britten in an interview, reprinted in the *New York Sun*, 27 April 1940. Quoted from Donald Mitchell (ed.), *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters and Diaries of Benjamin Britten 1913–1976*, Vol. II, London 1991, p. 705. In a letter dated 21 April 1940 Lennox Berkeley wrote to Britten: 'that they [the Japanese Government] should commission an anti-war work seems a piece of disconcerting irony' (p. 705). Cf. Jürgen Schaarwächter, 'as anti-war as possible': Versuch einer Annäherung an Benjamin Britten's Pazifismus', in: *Die Musikforschung* 59/2 (2006), pp. 152–153.

310 Prince Konoye to Hans Heinsheimer, translated into English, in Donald Mitchell (ed.), *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters and Diaries of Benjamin Britten 1913–1976*, Vol. II, London 1991, p. 881.

311 Benjamin Britten to Ralph Hawkes, October 1939, in *ibid.*, p. 703.

dreams where one parades about the place naked – slightly embarrassing!³¹² The work was written ‘in a terrible hurry’:³¹³ he only received the official commission in late April 1940 – after agreement upon the concept³¹⁴ with the Japanese government – and the work was ready by early June. Other compositions for this occasion were Richard Strauss’s *Festmusik zum 2600jährigen Bestehen des Kaiserreichs Japan* and Jacques Ibert’s *Festive Overture*. Britten had his breakthrough in England in 1942 (the British first performance of the symphony took place on 22 July 1942 at a Promenade Concert under Basil Cameron), after his disappointed return from the USA, where he had emigrated with Pears (who had gone there before him). ‘His letters suggest that the frenzy of the symphony (...) was intensified by his isolation in North America from the European catastrophe, and the eventual return to England can appear an inevitable outcome of his mounting agony of mind as an impotent observer from afar.’³¹⁵

Numerous important conductors and composers were (and are) players of instruments other than the piano or organ over the course of their careers (Hans Richter, Edric Cundell, Daniel Jones, Edward Downes, Cedric Thorpe Davie and Norman Del Mar were hornists, Malcolm Arnold and Elgar Howarth trumpeters, Gustav Holst and George Alexander Macfarren trombonists, Simon Rattle a percussionist, Christian Darnton a bassoonist, Arthur Nikisch, Basil Cameron, Eugène Goossens and George Lloyd violinists, John Barbirolli, Charles Lucas, Havergal Brian and Arturo Toscanini cellists, and Benjamin Britten and Frank Bridge were violists). The intimate knowledge of the orchestra one gleans as a player is very valuable for conducting a symphony orchestra or writing orchestral compositions. Benjamin Britten never played professionally in an orchestra, which might in part account for his occasional difficulty in managing large orchestral forms. At the same time, there is a strong verbal element behind Britten’s melodic and therefore also formal organization. *Young Apollo*, *Sinfonia da Requiem*, *Lachrymae*, *Canadian Carnival*, *Diversions*, the *Scottish Ballad* and perhaps even the Second and Third String Quartets owe their inspiration and some aspects of their form to literary models. ‘Britten’s imagination pivots on nodes of value which if not necessarily verbal are sited in poetical humanism. And he never profanes the spirit of poetry, never uses it as merely a vehicle for more transcendent things’³¹⁶ – he was instead interested in an intensification of the word. In the *Sinfonia da Requiem* the individual movements also seem to be variations on individual lines of the text of the *Missa pro defunctis* – and it is telling that Britten often based instrumental compositions on the concept of variations.

Like Stevens’s *Symphony of Liberation*, which unambiguously follows Britten’s model, Britten pays homage to the three-movement form. The first movement, *Lacrymosa*, is a

312 Benjamin Britten to Peggy Brosa, April 1941, in *ibid.*, p. 909.

313 Benjamin Britten to Beth Welford, 11 June 1940, in *ibid.*, p. 818. In this letter Britten calls the work ‘My Japanese Symphony’. If anybody calls Dieren’s choral symphony the ‘Chinese Symphony’, then the *Sinfonia da Requiem* may with equal right be called a Japanese symphony.

314 Michael Kennedy, *Britten*, London 31993, p. 29. The interest thereby awakened in Japan later inspired *The Prince of the Pagodas* and *Curlew River*.

315 Peter Evans, *The Music of Benjamin Britten*, London 31989, pp. 553–554.

316 Christopher Palmer (ed.), *The Britten Companion*, London/Boston 1984, p. 284.

sonata principal movement funeral march, ‘conceived as an integral unit’³¹⁷; the second, *Dies Irae*, a scherzo in the clear form A–B–A²–C–A that takes up the *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* (and as a symphonic movement, utterly lacks sufficient concentration); and the third, *Requiem aeternam*, a calm prayer in free sonata form that resumes the funeral march metre of the first movement but also fails here to develop a strict conciseness. The *Sinfonia* in fact recalls Walton’s Viola Concerto of 1929³¹⁸ (which, however, exhibits stronger concentration) – apparently Britten was incapable of filling the form of the symphony with sufficient – as described by Sibelius – ‘profound logic’,³¹⁹ i.e. the inner stringent musical logic behind which this or that programme may fade.

Like Richard Arnell, Ruth Gipps and Cedric Thorpe Davie (see pp. 748 and 588–590), **Bernard George Stevens** (London, 2 March 1916–January 1983) submitted symphonies to the 1945 competition hosted by the *Daily Express* awarding £250 for a symphony ‘inspired by thoughts about the late war’³²⁰ and open to all composers born after 1911.³²¹ Stevens, taught by Rootham, Tovey, Morris, Benjamin, Jacob and Lambert, won the first prize, and Davie (with his only symphony) took the second (£150). After the four works that had made it to the final round received a play-through at Covent Garden, the three judges, Malcolm Sargent, Constant Lambert and Arthur Bliss, made their decision. Sargent summed up Stevens’s work succinctly: ‘It has poignancy and great emotional sincerity.’³²²

317 Erwin Stein, ‘The Symphonies’, in Donald Mitchell/Hans Keller (eds.), *Benjamin Britten: a commentary on his works from a group of specialists*, London 1952, p. 249.

318 Colin Mason (‘Modern British Music’, in: *MG* 32742, Manchester 28 September 1951, p. 5) and Peter Evans (*The Music of Benjamin Britten*, London 31989, p. 62) also point to the influence of Stravinsky. Peter Pirie (*The English Musical Renaissance*, London 1979, p. 174) and Evans (*ibid.*) cite Mahler’s and Berg’s imprint; Scott Goddard (‘Benjamin Britten’, in Alfred Bacharach (ed.): *British Music of our Time*, Harmondsworth 1946, p. 214) notes Verdi’s impact. Pirie (*ibid.*) identifies Purcell’s influence and Humphrey Carpenter observed the effect of Bridge’s Suite *The Sea*. Apart from these, Arnold Bax’s symphonies deserve mention; their spirit can occasionally be felt in Britten’s œuvre (for example in his writing for brass). However, Bax’s works sometimes show no more inner unity than Britten’s.

319 Lionel Pike, *Beethoven, Sibelius and the ‘Profound Logic’: Studies in Symphonic Analysis*, London 1978, p. 1: ‘The title of this book refers to a remark made by Sibelius during a well-known conversation with Mahler. Talking of the symphony, Sibelius said that what interested him in the form was “the profound logic that created an inner connection between all the motives”. Mahler disagreed, saying that the symphony must be like the world, and thus should include everything. In this book I have tried to give some idea of the nature of the “profound logic” which was so much admired by Sibelius. It is too easy to imagine that a composition, like a good performance, is something spontaneous. But in order to achieve a musically expressive work, the composer has to obey the formal dictates of the musical material he has chosen, just as in his turn the conductor must pay heed to the minutiae of playing technique in order that the effects intended by the composer shall be realized. It is with the labour of composition that this book is concerned. Just as the composers discussed have developed their material in musical terms, so I have tried to trace that development in words and, wherever possible, indicate the structural (not necessarily thematic) links by which a composer has integrated his music so as to make it intelligible to his listeners.’

320 G. A. H., ‘Two prize-winning symphonies’, in: *MG* 31103, Manchester 17 June 1946, p. 3.

321 Quoted from: ‘£250 symphony written in the Blitz’, in: *Daily Express* 14293, London 29 March 1946, p. 1.

322 Quoted from *ibid.*, p. 1.

‘Both composers’, ‘G. A. H.’ writes, ‘achieve many of their best effects by a clear economy of line and colour. There is an astringent quality in the music that springs from a determination to reject material that would be merely decorative. Much earnestness is revealed, but sometimes the music flags beneath the burden of a too conscious thought process. (...) We believe Mr. Stevens and Mr. Davie are excellent musicians who would show more originality in works of lighter form than that of the symphony. In these days great freedom of symphonic style is allowable, but the voice of a mere commanding and less scholastic spirit is needed than we heard in the new music given last night. (...) Each composer favours throbbing rhythmic effects that suggest something of the strangeness of incantation.’³²³

(In his Second Symphony of 1964, employing his own adaptation of the twelve tone technique, Stevens indeed displayed more originality than in his First Symphony, and it should be borne in mind that Davie wrote no further symphony.)

Like Alan Bush, Stevens had a pronounced affinity for the region then known as the Soviet Union,³²⁴ and it was in fact Stevens’s proximity to Marxism that resulted in the boycott of his music (Boughton’s and Bush’s music suffered the same fate). Stevens’s interests were quite diverse, however; he was, for example, a member of the Teilhard de Chardin Society.

The symphony was composed between 1940 and 1945 while Stevens was serving in the army (a B minor Symphony, possibly an earlier version of this symphony, had been rejected by the B.B.C. Music Panel in 1943³²⁵). The first two movements were composed in Bloomsbury. He then composed the Piano Trio and finished the symphony, dedicated to the poet and painter Clive Branson (1907–1944), only after the end of the war.³²⁶ Edwin Roxburgh observed:

‘The three movements recall the events of the war, and are appropriately called *Enslavement*, *Resistance* and *Liberation*. These characteristics also define the spirit of man and (in the composer’s words) “the dialectical process”. (...) The experience of enslavement is evoked in a continuous slow melody throughout the first movement. Set against a melodic bass line, this travels with restraint, at first building slowly and gradually with tremendous control towards the climax near the end. A continuous chain of melody, built on the first three notes of the minor scale and hinged by shifting triads, creates a moving impression of an unyielding spirit locked in bondage.’³²⁷

323 G. A. H., ‘Two prize-winning symphonies’, in: *MG* 31103, Manchester 17 June 1946, p. 3.

324 Cf. Bernard Stevens, *The Soviet Union*, in Howard Hartog (ed.), *European Music in the Twentieth Century*, London 1957, pp. 204–231.

325 In a letter dated 23 February 1999, Bertha Stevens wrote that she did not remember any notice of an earlier symphony (she was married to Stevens from 1941), nor has any bit of the score survived; the B.B.C. rejection is documented in the BBC files, however (BBC Written Archives Centre).

326 Cf. ‘£250 symphony written in the Blitz’, in: *Daily Express* 14293, London 29 March 1946, p. 1.

327 Edwin Roxburgh, ‘Orchestral Works’, in Bertha Stevens (ed.), *Bernard Stevens and his Music*, London/New York 1989, p. 82.

Harmonically, the influence of Vaughan Williams and Bartók³²⁸ is obvious: Stevens likes to use continuous triad concatenations that are characterized by the interval of the minor third. The climax in the first movement is a good example of this, showing the oscillation between A minor and C minor, not unlike the axis relationship that Bartók used. ‘Taking A as the diminished fifth centre of the E^b octave (the tonic of the movement) and as the horizontal axis of Bartók’s system, this climax represents the organic centre of the movement’s harmonic structure. The sense of yearning is achieved at the very beginning of the movement when the subdominant is heard in the bass with a final resolution on to E^b only at the close. The *piano* coda, far from evoking resignation, seeks bitonal conflicts as an anticipation of the second movement, entitled *Resistance*. The subtitle “Scherzo” applies to the spirit rather than the form. It is a phrenetic and energetic display of biting rhythmic motifs, demonstrating a release from the sustained passion of the first movement.³²⁹ The theme of the movement is based on the horizontal axis G-C#.

Ex. 82

Allegro risoluto

The final movement presents the scale motif in a fugato beginning in B minor that is none other than the slow introduction of the movement.

Ex. 83

Adagio sostenuto

The theme of the fugato is transformed as follows in the *Allegro maestoso* of the main section of the movement:

Ex. 84

328 Stevens stressed that he was very much interested in harmonic proportions and the ‘geometrics of music’; Bartók was in this respect a special model for him. (Cf. Edwin Roxburgh, ‘Orchestral Works’, in Bertha Stevens (ed.), *Bernard Stevens and his Music*, London/New York 1989, pp. 84–85.)

329 Edwin Roxburgh, ‘Orchestral Works’, in Bertha Stevens (ed.), *Bernard Stevens and his Music*, London/New York 1989, pp. 82–83. It may be recalled that Bartók died in 1945.

Material development is comparably intense until a little, hollow apotheosis (including a fugato) concludes the symphony in a highly unconvincing manner.

'G. A. H.' allowed that Stevens was a highly gifted contrapuntist, the scholar being 'servant of the artist'; even more impressive, however, was the slow introduction of the finale.³³⁰ In any case, Stevens's harmony is actually always very much a product of its time and occasionally comparable to other lesser-known masters (Bainton, Chisholm, etc.). The *Symphony of Liberation* follows in its formal basic conception Britten's *Sinfonia da Requiem*. Nonetheless R. O. Morris, Stevens's teacher at the Royal College of Music (for a short time he had also been Ralph Vaughan Williams's pupil), described the work as 'clear in texture, well-sounding, and lucid in construction'.³³¹ The *Fugal Overture* Op. 9 following in 1947 underscores Stevens's tendency towards polyphonic development and clearly reflects Morris's teachings. From 1948 to 1981, Stevens himself was a teacher at the Royal College of Music, where Michael Finnis, John Barstow and Malcolm Lipkin were among his pupils.

Cedric Thorpe Davie (Blackheath, London, 30 May 1913–Dalry, Ayrshire, 18 January 1983) was of Scottish origin and spent the greater part of his life in Scotland, but he studied with Ralph Vaughan Williams at the Royal College of Music, with Egon Petri and Zoltán Kodály. In 1950 he became a professor of composition at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music; his estate is to be found at the University of St. Andrews, where he worked from 1945 to 1978. His book on *Musical Structure and Design* received an excellent review by Arthur Hutchings. 'Openly declaring his admiration for Tovey, Mr. Thorpe Davie treats each classical organism as having a general anatomy (his own felicitous word) as has the human skull; but he recognizes that every example has its own character, like the human face. No face recurs and no work of character can repeat a form. Still more important is his insistence on the need to judge music, which takes place in *time*, by the ear and in time, not by the eye perusing the score.'³³² Correspondingly high was Davie's renown as a university lecturer and a creative force in the Scottish musical landscape. After Erik Chisholm's departure and Tovey's death, Davie even managed to overshadow William Beatton Moonie.

If Stevens's *Symphony of Liberation* won the first prize, it is all the more surprising that the winner of the second prize, Davie's *Symphony in C*, has no first-class qualities. The work, considered by the head of B.B.C. Scotland as 'a fine product of a thinking brain',³³³ and by Colin Scott-Sutherland as 'a powerful work'³³⁴ is in three movements, like so many of the era (Stevens, Bax, Bush, etc. also wrote three-movement symphonies), and formally unambiguously embraces the great model of Tovey's teaching, so that nothing less than perfect

330 G. A. H., 'Two prize-winning symphonies', in: *MG* 31103, Manchester 17 June 1946, p. 3.

331 R. O. Morris to Bernard Stevens, 9 June 1946. Kaikhosru Sorabji expressed similar sentiments in a letter to Stevens, 7 June 1946. Both letters collection Bertha Stevens.

332 Arthur Hutchings, "'Musical Structure and Design". By Cedric Thorpe Davie', in: *MT* XCIV (1953), pp. 459–460.

333 Herbert Wiseman, *Some Notes on Cedric Thorpe Davie's Symphony in C Major (1945)*, in: *Con Brio* 1/2 (1949), p. 16.

334 Colin Scott-Sutherland, *Cedric Thorpe Davie (1913–1982)*, in: *British Music* 21 (1999), p. 54.

form is to be expected. Davie also offers careful although not very inspired instrumentation, and his form proves to be not entirely as perfect as expected – smaller forms obviously suited him better. The recapitulation of the first movement is too short overall, although with its deep brass and timpani in the gloomy slow introduction, it begins in a distinctly promising way. It nevertheless borders on the absurd to maintain that ‘Mr. Davie is rather aggressive in his use of dissonance’³³⁵: Davie’s music is quite firmly anchored in tonality. Davie himself said on the work: ‘There are no bombs, guns or sirens in my symphony. It was meant to be cheerful and I hope that is how it sounds.’³³⁶ The symphony was written ‘In honour of my brother’ – which, however, does not mean that he died in the war: ‘On the contrary, he is very much alive after sharing the torments of war with millions of others. It is his particular kind of aliveness that I hold so highly.’³³⁷ The score is further inscribed, ‘1945 – the end and the beginning’, and when the composer was asked what was in his mind, he replied, ‘With the coming of victory, I could not help contemplating the fearful tasks ahead, and consequently the work is, I hope, considerably restrained in its rejoicings. I should think thanksgiving for the end of the fighting, contemplation of the awful wreckage of humanity and its works, and resolution for the future are as accurate guides to the underlying moods of the three movements as one could find.’³³⁸ The composer considered the work ‘more of a milestone than an achievement’³³⁹, and his assessment certainly rings true – whether he wrote more important music remains to be seen.

The first performance of **Ruth Gipps**’s Second Symphony Op. 30, was, just as the première of her First had been (see p. 382), organised by George Weldon in Birmingham.³⁴⁰ Like Stevens and Davie, Gipps had written the work for the ‘Victory Symphony’ competition (at break-neck speed), but won no prize. Weldon was a bachelor whom Gipps looked after a bit – in return, he conducted her two symphonies (the First is dedicated to him) and transferred to her the post of the head of the City of Birmingham Chorus. In a letter to the author, the composer wrote:

‘However, the 2nd. Symphony is the only work I can remember beginning. In the summer of 1945 my husband had come home after three years Overseas in the R.A.F. (later he was sent away again) and the conductor George Weldon treated us both to a holiday in Cornwall, staying at Holywell Bay. One evening I was walking by the sea with my husband when I heard one distant boom of a gun out to sea. This was mildly surprising as the war was over in Europe, but I didn’t think about that, as immediately after the boom I heard the beginning of the 2nd. Symphony; I raced back to the hotel and wrote out a whole page of short-score which later was written out in full

335 G. A. H., ‘Two prize-winning symphonies’, in: *MG* 31103, Manchester 17 June 1946, p. 3.

336 Quoted from: ‘£250 symphony written in the Blitz’, in: *Daily Express* 14293, London 29 March 1946, p. 1.

337 Herbert Wiseman, *Some Notes on Cedric Thorpe Davie’s Symphony in C Major (1945)*, in: *Con Brio* 1/2 (1949), p. 17.

338 *Ibid.*

339 *Ibid.*, p. 19.

340 Weldon also conducted the première performance of John Veale’s First Symphony in Cheltenham in 1951.

without a note altered. So the work starts with one soft boom on a bass drum and then repeated timp notes. The odd thing was that I discovered later that my husband hadn't heard any gun at all.³⁴¹

David C. F. Wright lamented that the work suffers from a lack of blatant tempo contrasts – there is no dramatic grip. This may indeed be one of its shortcomings – although the work is hardly too long for its beautifully structured one-movement form. It can easily be analysed as a sonata principal movement: scherzo (from [M] 7) and slow movement (from [T] 13) form the development; even the coda can be clearly discerned (from 10 [DD]). The *Birmingham Gazette* wrote that the composer ‘handles one-movement form convincingly though one feels that the material is too derivative and immature; there is no positive sense of urgency about her utterances despite its pleasantness’. The *Birmingham Post* reported that ‘this short, complex and highly original work has something positive to say (...) it is finely wrote in texture and design. The key-plan is wholly satisfying despite its long desertion of its nominal tonality. The sharp, brief contrast of frivolous *scherzo* and restful *adagio* as a central dramatic turning point is very telling; and the thematic material is decisive and characterful.’³⁴²

So much for the topos of the ‘victory symphony’ in Great Britain; the genre was basically built upon the tradition of the ‘battle symphony’, its most famous example being Beethoven’s *Wellingtons Sieg*. On the other hand, there is also of course the tradition of the pacifist symphony. Arthur Bliss stressed in his own description of *Morning Heroes* (see pp. 669ff.) that he ‘cannot express war except in a general (timeless) sense’.³⁴³ He employed various approaches in order to develop more prototypical and universal works. His selection of texts could just as well have led in other directions. Others, such as Gordon Jacob (Symphony No. 1, see pp. 380f.) or Stanley Wilson (1942, see p. 684), consciously used other conceptions, including purely orchestral representation and a choral finale (see Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony). As for the identity of the fourth composer chosen for the final round of the 1945 competition sponsored by the *Daily Express*, the newspaper’s archive has no information on this matter.

With the advent of the ‘new simplicity’ (see pp. 731ff.), the kind of programme that was hitherto commonly attached to a work also became displaced – works were instead moulded more abstractly and more humanistically.

341 Ruth Gipps to the author, 7 February 1993.

342 Quoted from David Wright, ‘Ruth Gipps’, in: *BM* 13 (1991), p. 7.

343 ‘Arthur Bliss’s “Morning Heroes”’, in: *MMR* LX/718 (1930), p. 291.