



News

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Centre for the History of Music in Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth

CHOMBEC is based at the Department of Music, University of Bristol

A Message from the Director

Welcome to the first issue of *CHOMBEC News*, which we plan to produce twice yearly. Particularly if you have joined CHOMBEC as a Friend, we hope you will find its contents interesting and your membership worthwhile and will come to events whenever you can.

The launch was exciting and immediately revealed what a lot of work needs to be done on Bristol's musical history. Take Joseph Roeckel as just one example. He was the brother of one of Wagner's closest friends, August Röckel, one of the people responsible for Wagner's manning the barricades in Dresden in 1849 and becoming an exile for years thereafter. It seems extraordinary that Joseph should have come to live in genteel Clifton, married the composer daughter of Bristol's pre-eminent painter, published (as did she) a large amount of music in a variety of genres, then sunk without critical trace. We still have a lot to learn about the 19th century. There was a third musician brother, too, Eduard, who settled in Bath. Does correspondence between the three of them survive?

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The CHOMBEC Launch



Prof Stephen Banfield speaking at the launch of CHOMBEC on 20 March 2006.

On 20 March 2006 CHOMBEC was officially launched. The occasion was marked by a lecture-recital in the Victoria Rooms, given by CHOMBEC's Director, Prof Stephen Banfield, and the University Singers, directed by Dr Glyn Jenkins. Over 100 people gathered to hear the illustrated talk, which was followed by a drinks reception and an opportunity to view an exhibition of letters drawn from the university archives. The launch event clearly illustrated that CHOMBEC represents a significant new undertaking within the work of the Department of Music, University of Bristol which aims to have an impact far beyond the walls of the Victoria Rooms.

Audience members came from within the University itself and the wider community. Staff elsewhere in the Faculty of Arts were interested by the Centre's promise

of interdisciplinary research on the theme of colonialism. The event was also a must-see for independent historians from Bristol and the surrounding areas.

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CHOMBEC Receives Its First Archival Donation

In June 2006, CHOMBEC was able to offer a new home to the collected manuscripts of 20th-century English song composer, John Raynor (1909-70). This acquisition will be safely archived in the University's Special Collections and made available to interested scholars in the field. It contains hundreds of songs from this prolific yet little-known composer. See <http://www.kcedensor.freereserve.co.uk/raynor/index.htm#Raynor's Home Page>.

A Message From the Director (continued)

The success of CHOMBEC will depend partly on the active enthusiasm of its Friends, honorary associates and corresponding members. We are delighted to announce our first honorary associate, Professor Kerry Murphy of the University of Melbourne, well known for her work on Berlioz, on the French-Australian composer and pianist Henri Kowalski, and for developing and co-ordinating an amazing hub of research activity around the Centre for Studies in Australian Music, much of it linking Britain with Australia. Kerry invited me to Melbourne for a three-month fellowship at the university in 2000, and must thereby take a good deal of responsibility for this whole Empire thing in my life. We hope to announce further honorary associates in due course. In the meantime, we shall be looking for corresponding members in all parts of the anglophone world, and hope that Kerry's 'Letter from Australia' is the first of a regular series from various contributors. Do let us know of anyone we might approach for news from other cities, other countries.

CHOMBEC is drawing up a strategic plan and mission statement and will certainly highlight 'Music and locality' as one of its themes. For a variety of reasons, the history of music even more than that of other disciplines has been bedevilled by the tentacles of the metropolis, and it applies above all to the history of British music. CHOMBEC hopes to do what it can to combat this. We believe that the continuum between region, nation and empire is a most fruitful axis on which to place historical research, and although there are many topics within CHOMBEC's remit that will not require any particular geographical alignment, we are pleased to welcome in this issue of *CHOMBEC News* the first of a series of articles on 'Music and locality' and very grateful to Wyndham Thomas, honorary research fellow in the Department of Music at Bristol, for providing it. It just shows what you find once you start digging, in this case all the way to New Zealand. Quite by chance in this newsletter we also stumble across singing societies in Bristol from an 18th-century glee club (evidenced in one of the launch examples) through Pearsall and the Bristol Madrigal Society to the Clifton Singers by way of Australia.

CHOMBEC has not been idle since the launch. April saw the arrival of our part-time Development Officer, David Manning, taking over the post from Philip Lancaster, who had initiated our administration and organised the launch with great flair and dedication. We are very grateful to Philip for getting us off to such a good start; he remains on the management committee while pursuing his work as a research student in the Department of Music (see his contribution below). David comes back to us (he was an undergraduate at Bristol) from a doctorate at Cardiff followed by a job at HEFCE, and his ongoing research focuses on the music and writings of Vaughan Williams. His position lasts until the end of January 2007. Funding for comparable staffing after that will be CHOMBEC's first big challenge.

Between January and April, 'Music research in focus' took place as a series of free lunchtime lectures in the Victoria Rooms on Music Department staff

research. Three of the four lectures were on British topics and represented CHOMBEC. Earlier this month we co-hosted with CSCPS (Centre for the Study of Colonial and Postcolonial Societies) two interdisciplinary workshops, back-to-back, at the university. The first was on 'Shanghai's soundscapes, 1917-1946'. Two professional historians, an eminent ethnomusicologist and a music research student from the universities of Bristol, the West of England, Sheffield and Stirling spent the afternoon finding threads between a fascinating wealth of musical culture in the world's unique city. Amongst other things, we ascertained that the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra *did* perform Vaughan Williams's Pastoral Symphony after the British Council had sent out some parts ambassadorially in the late 1930s! (And 'The laughing policeman' made an unexpected appearance in the historical scheme of things.) The following day, the CSCPS annual workshop took as its theme 'Arts and culture in the colonial city', and the topics ranged from amateur operatics in the Empire (John Lowerson), through orientalism in metropolitan nightclub depictions (Sarah Street on the film musicals of Jessie Matthews, Jacqueline Maingard on South African cinema), to watercolour cityscapes of 19th-century Cape Town (John McAleer of Bristol's British Empire and Commonwealth Museum). I workshoped my current piece of research, on anglophone music in Jamaica in the 1830s, the decade of slave emancipation.

Then we got an email from John Henderson, librarian of the Royal School of Church Music, asking us if we'd like the John Raynor archive. (At 680 songs, Raynor's output may hold the record for English song of the period. Bantock, Gurney and Fritz Hart wrote fewer.) The RSCM is moving from Dorking to Salisbury, where we hope its relative proximity will occasion fruitful links with CHOMBEC, and has to tighten its archival remit. We were delighted that our own university library Special Collections were able to accept the donation. We are developing an archival policy for CHOMBEC, but for the moment, if you know of a collection wanting a home, let us know. We may be able to help.

What next? 2007 marks the 300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley, who lived in Bristol for many years and raised his two composer sons in the city, at least until their musical precocity proved one reason for relocating to the metropolis. CHOMBEC hopes to organise or co-host a conference every year or so, and after our first, which was on *The British and American Musical* (Victoria Rooms, 8-10 March 2006), we are planning for the second to commemorate Wesley in July 2007. See the conference listing below for provisional details. The forthcoming Pearsall dayschool is also mentioned below. So is the autumn 2006 series of research seminars. But our big effort over the next six months must be to bid and hopefully secure funding for a major research project or two. We'll tell you about those in the next issue.

Stephen Banfield

The CHOMBEC Launch (continued)

Many forgotten figures from the history of music in Bristol were highlighted during the lecture-recital. Perhaps the most well-known composer to feature was Robert Lucas Pearsall (1795-1856), whose music was represented by the performance of extracts from his Requiem mass setting. However, the more unfamiliar names included Edward Hodges, composer of an attractive 'Cantate domino', and Thomas Howell, whose 'An address to Echo' (ca. 1820) received an entertaining performance.

The lecture highlighted the fact that the musical history of Bristol has received little attention from historians or musicologists, and never in book form. This is surprising, as the research undertaken to date reveals that the city has boasted a lively concert life over the last 200 years, enriched by composers, performers and impresarios who surely deserve greater attention.

A rousing performance of 'Hail Canada!' brought the lecture-recital to an end. This celebratory piece drew attention to CHOMBEC's international remit, which will focus on the musical history of the British Empire and Commonwealth. Discussions continued informally afterwards among participants and audience, who also looked with interest at the exhibition of letters from the university's Arnold Barter collection.

David Manning

A version of the lecture-recital, with music examples, will be published in *British Music, the journal of the British Music Society*.

Over the centuries, the historic Wiltshire market town of Corsham has been home to a variety of creative artists—from the staff and students of the Bath Academy of Art, which occupied part of Corsham Court (the family seat of Lord Methuen)¹ until its relocation in 1986, to Pink Floyd's drummer, Nick Mason (who now lives in the Duchess of Cornwall's former home). Indeed, one of the many fine houses in the High Street bears a plaque recording Sir Michael Tippett's residence there between 1960 and 1970.² Today, the town can boast an excellent music festival (professionally directed) and a thriving amateur culture that includes a choral society, brass band, and various church choirs—all of which date back to mid-nineteenth century foundations when a single family provided the talent, inspiration and leadership to revitalise local music-making.

The Spackmans were drapers and grocers by trade. Henry (Senior) (1824-1914), having been apprenticed to his uncle (also Henry) in 1838, eventually became sole owner of the firm's High Street premises in 1868 and it was there that he raised his nine children. By all accounts the musical genes seem to have come mainly from Henry's two wives: Sarah (née Goold) who bore two children before her untimely death in 1852, and Eliza (née Hawkings) (1829-1899) who

¹ Even before Sir Paul Methuen was elevated to the Peerage in 1838, the family had been discerning collectors of art. A significant proportion of the collection is still on public view at Corsham Court. Lord Paul Sanford Methuen (1845-1932) was a keen amateur violinist, onetime pupil of Joachim, and President of the Choral Society from 1884 until his death. His son, also Paul (1886-1974), was a professional artist, a pupil of Sickert, and a Royal Academician.

² See M. Tippett, *Those Twentieth Century Blues* (London, 1991), p.231, for some amusing anecdotes.

Music and Locality:1

The Spackman Family: Domestic and Professional Music-Making in Corsham and the Colonies (c.1860-1940)

Wyndham Thomas

produced seven further children between 1858 and 1870. The table below (see page 4) lists the Spackman children and indicates their main musical skills as revealed in contemporary concert programmes, letters and diaries.³

With the exception of Sarah (by then Mrs Kenway), all the children were included in the 1881 census as living at the family home in the High Street. There is substantial evidence that the Spackmans enjoyed regular sessions of impromptu music-making around the piano as well as a structured scheme of musical education, derived in the first instance from parental example, followed by more formal instruction at Mr Hull's Classical and Commercial School at the Mansion House. Both Harry and Lewin were sufficiently talented keyboard players to have directed music at the Priors Street Baptist Church (at the ages of ten and eleven respectively) before moving on to officiate at the newly installed 'Sweetland' organ in the parish church of St Bartholomew (where Lewin was to serve for over fifty years). Concert programmes of the Choral Society in the census year give solo prominence to Mrs (Eliza) Spackman, Harry, Lewin, Clara and Herbert as well as to Sarah L. Goold (a niece, living with the Spackmans).⁴ Lest this should be thought a mere flash in the pan, it is worth noting that virtually every extant concert programme between

³ Some of Herbert Spackman's diaries (originally written in Pitman's shorthand) have been published by his daughters Faith Sharp and Heather Tanner as *A Corsham Boyhood, 1887-1891* (Chippenham, 1981).

⁴ I am indebted to local historian, Ernest Hird, for providing me with access to his unpublished treatise, *The Old Corsham Choral Society (c.1867-1932)*. This together with his book, *Corsham and the Spackmans (A Musical Town, a Musical Family)* (Corsham, 2001), provides an admirable basis for further research into local musical repertoires and taste.

1881 and 1932 mentions the names of at least four—sometimes as many as seven—Spackmans, including Ernest’s two children (Clement and Vere) and various spouses. Clearly, the domestic music-making so vividly described in Herbert’s diaries had become the core of local concert life.

In all of this the eldest son, Harry Goold Spackman, can be seen emerging as a dominant force in Corsham’s musical activities. As well as being

organist and choirmaster at the Parish Church, he conducted the Choral Society from around 1868 to 1882 and oversaw its reconstitution in 1880 after which the repertoire was enriched by performances of well-known works

by Handel, Mendelssohn and Brahms in contrast to its previous diet of glees and partsongs. From May 1883, Lewin succeeded his brother as conductor (after a brief interregnum) with his sister, Clara, acting as accompanist and general administrator. From April 1902, a small string orchestra, led by Herbert (an accomplished violinist), was a regular feature of their concerts. The repertoire thereafter became increasingly adventurous although many of the works by Somervell, J F Barnett, C L Williams, Cowen, Gade, Gaul, Barnby, Mackenzie, Spohr, Sterndale Bennett, Jensen, Faning—even some by Elgar, Sullivan, Parry and Stanford—have been forgotten or reside on the more dusty shelves of libraries.⁵ Some of these compositions, no doubt, had been heard during visits to concerts in London, Birmingham or Bristol, and it says much for the enterprise of Lewin, especially, that Corsham should have attempted to measure its talents against the standards of major choral societies. At a more parochial level, the Corsham choirs, trained by Lewin and Clare Spackman, regularly won first prizes at the Wiltshire Musical Festival, drawing praise from adjudicators such as Dr Hugh Allen (New College, Oxford), Dr Edward Bairstow (York Minster), Dr Armstrong Gibbs and Dr (later, Sir) Adrian Boult.

As so often in village and small-town music-making, the boundary between amateur and professional participation was very blurred. It is not clear whether the Choral Society paid its conductors, or if non-family soloists (some of whom were cathedral lay-clerks) received fees or expenses. It is likely that Lewin, as organist at the parish church, would have received a modest honorarium for his services, but he earned his living as a grocer’s assistant and, latterly, a printer at the Caxton Press. There is certainly no evidence that any of the Spackmans possessed professional musical qualifications (other than

preliminary ‘Grade’ exams)⁶ although we know that Lewin studied organ with George Riseley at Bristol Cathedral and that several members of the family taught piano, violin and singing to supplement their income and to foster local talent. However, two of the brothers, Harry and Herbert, appear to have harboured professional aspirations.

Harry made the transition from draper’s assistant (aged 32) to cathedral organist and choirmaster after

emigrating to Napier, New Zealand, in October 1882. He quickly established himself as a charismatic if somewhat abrasive conductor,⁷ but resigned his position

Members of the Spackman Family

Henry (Harry) Goold Spackman (1850-1941)	(organist / violinist / conductor)
Sarah Goold Spackman (1852-1883)	(soprano)
Lewin Spackman (1858-1944)	(organist / conductor / composer)
Alice Spackman (1860-1909)	(<i>a much loved invalid sister</i>)
Herbert Spackman (1864-1949)	(violinist / conductor / baritone)
Wilfrid Spackman (1866-1956)	(tenor & baritone / bell-ringer))
Clara Spackman (1867-1933)	(pianist / soprano)
Ernest Spackman (1869-1946)	(bass)
Clare Spackman (1870-1940)	(organist / conductor / tenor)

at Napier in 1893. He then took up a similar post at Holy Trinity Church, Gisborne, before returning to Napier in 1896 to work as a freelance music teacher, piano tuner and dealer in violins and pianos. He also served for many years as secretary of the Trinity College music examinations, and, styling himself ‘Professor of Music’, was active as an organist until 1939 when (aged 89) he played at his granddaughter’s wedding. Few of his compositions survive but songs, such as his setting of Byron’s ‘Fare thee well’,⁸ demonstrate a harmonic competence all the more admirable for being largely self-taught.

It was at Harry’s behest that Herbert also emigrated to New Zealand. Unlike his much older brother, he did not play the organ,⁹ and found it far more difficult to find regular employment as a violinist—although he was occasionally engaged to lead the Opera House Orchestra in Wellington, and was conductor of the Hastings Orchestral and Choral Society. For a while he also held the post of choirmaster at St Thomas’s Church, Wellington, where he introduced Lewin’s setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis.¹⁰ His living must have been precarious despite these appointments, since from 1892 he worked as a shorthand writer to make ends meet. Following the birth of his first daughter, he decided to return to Corsham in 1900 where he quickly made a name for himself as a professional photographer while continuing to contribute richly to local music-making as a violinist and conductor of the Town Band (he also taught himself the trombone). Space does not permit a

⁶ In a letter of January 1891, Herbert declared his intention of studying for ‘the Licentiatehip’ (of the Royal Academy of Music) but there is no record of further progress although he did pass a Trinity College harmony exam in 1892.

⁷ See Hird, *op cit* pp.23-31, for details.

⁸ Facsimile of MS in Hird, *op cit* p.102.

⁹ In 1892 Herbert wrote to his brother Clare pointing out the opportunities that existed for organists in Wellington, Nelson and Gisborne.

¹⁰ Apparently published by Novello, but no longer available.

⁵ The present writer plans a detailed study of this repertoire.

detailed account of his other siblings, except to record that his youngest brother, Clare, served as organist and choirmaster of Hartham Church and conductor of Neston Choral Society (both near Corsham). He and Herbert were also in great demand locally as dance-band musicians.¹¹

A large collection of music belonging to the Spackman family provides a fascinating insight into the self-education, teaching methods, performance aspirations and musical taste of the period. In addition to numerous piano tutors and keyboard studies, the three boxes contain many songs and pieces for piano solo, presumably performed by Herbert's wife, Daisy (née Goad), and Clara; miscellaneous cinema and dance music; educational anthologies such as *The Strand Magazine* and *The Music Lovers' Album* (edited by Sir Landon Ronald in 32 weekly volumes);¹² chamber music such as Lachner's Grand Trio, Gurlitt's Miniature Trio and Grieg's Violin Sonata in G; dramatic works such as Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha Ballet Music*, Birch's pastoral operetta *The Merry Men of Sherwood Forest*, O'Neill's music for *The Blue Bird*, Horrock's *Nine Action Songs*; and (most revealingly) several collections of colonial songs such as Homer's *Bandanna Ballads*, King's *Plantation Songs*, Woodforde-Finden's *On Jhelum River—a Kashmiri Love Story*, and Clutsam's (ed.) *Plantation Album*. A fuller analysis of this repertoire is overdue, but even this preliminary survey reveals a local awareness of British, Continental and Empire cultures that is as creditable to the Spackman family as it is indicative of developing national taste.

¹¹ See Hird, *op. cit.* p.69, for a photograph of the two brothers playing dance band percussion.

¹² Each volume contains an essay on a classical work or genre (eg *Schubert and his Songs*) plus *Nine Complete Gems of Melody* [sic] (piano solos/arrangements, songs and occasional pieces for violin and piano, ranging from Purcell to Czibulka).

Robert Lucas Pearsall: 1795-1856

James Hobson

Like many others, I first encountered the music of the Bristol-born composer, R L Pearsall, in his excellent arrangement of the German macaronic carol, *In dulci jubilo*. As a young chorister, I gave little consideration to the question of why Pearsall set this melody, simply accepting the music *per se*; but as an adult singer my interest was stimulated by the carol's preface. Pearsall's lengthy explanation first appeared in print when the arrangement was published as a supplement to *The Musical Times* in 1844, and is reprinted in some modern editions, such as *Carols for Choirs I* (Oxford University Press). The preface describes how the melody came from 'an old German book published in the year 1570', and suggests that its roots are even older, belonging in the Catholic tradition. All very interesting stuff, but what really grabbed my attention was the last sentence and postscript: 'The music in the following passages was written for the choral society at Carlsruhe, and was performed there in the Autumn of 1834. Willsbridge, Gloucestershire, 31st of January, 1837. R L P.'

Why, I asked myself, was a man from Gloucestershire writing music for a choral society in western Germany? So I set out on my quest to discover more about the man and his music.

A light surface scratching of the Oxford University Press catalogue revealed a few more of the choral works to me, notably the eight-part madrigal, *Lay a Garland* and the larger-scale *Sir Patrick Spens*. Both these works spurred me on to want to see and hear more of the composer's output. I turned to Nicholas Temperley's concise article in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, which provided answers to many of my elementary questions and sent me down new avenues of enquiry. In particular, I wanted to know who had been in pursuit of Pearsall before me.

It transpired that the first Pearsall scholar was Dr Hubert Hunt, organist of Bristol Cathedral from 1901 until 1945, and conductor of the Bristol Madrigal Society (BMS). Hunt had joined the BMS in 1901 as an alto, but was appointed its conductor in 1915. It was whilst clearing out a music cupboard which held some of the scores belonging to the BMS that Hunt came across a discarded, crumpled autograph manuscript of a work written for the society by Pearsall. Enthused by the discovery, Hunt then began a quest to identify all the autograph manuscripts in the possession of the BMS and to learn more about the man.

Hunt was able to enlist the help of Pearsall's one surviving daughter, the elderly but enthusiastic Mrs Philippa Swinnerton Hughes. She gave him access to many letters, autograph manuscripts and personal effects, and directed him to the Benedictine monastery library at Einsiedeln in Switzerland, to which the composer had bequeathed the majority of his papers and compositions on his death. Hubert Hunt's own work was continued by his two children, Edgar and Enid, who completed and published a biography of Pearsall, in their father's memory, in 1977.¹³

William Barclay Squire published a certain amount of correspondence between Pearsall and the rector of Bitton, Canon Henry Nicholson Ellacombe, in the *Musical Quarterly* (1919) and the *Musical Times* (1921). This correspondence eventually passed into Hubert Hunt's hands in 1922. Many of these letters form the corpus of the 1977 book. However, Barclay Squire chose to publish edited highlights from the letters and the Hunt book relies on many of those extracts. The correspondence covered nearly thirty years, from the time of Pearsall's departure from England until his death. Not only did they discuss things musical, but also revealed many personal details and wonderful accounts of Pearsall's peregrinations on the Continent. Sadly, the letters passed out of Edgar Hunt's hands some time between

¹³ Edgar Hunt, *Robert Lucas Pearsall: The 'Compleat Gentleman' and His Music* (Amersham [published privately by the author], 1977).

1979 and 1989 at auction and I discovered, through my own correspondence with him in 2000, that he was not able to identify through which auction house they were sold. My search for them continues.

But what of the man himself? A potted history will serve here, at least to answer the questions that first came into my head. Robert Lucas Pearsall was born in Clifton in 1795. His father was an officer in the Bristol Light Horse Volunteers and a member of a once prosperous family of iron manufacturers who had fallen on hard times. His mother, Elizabeth Lucas, was of more substantial personal means, being the daughter of a Worcestershire gentleman. In 1816, Pearsall's widowed mother bought back the Pearsall family demesne at Willsbridge, now a Bristol outer suburb, and moved there with her son.

Young Pearsall was destined for a legal career. In 1817 he married Harriet Hobday and was called to the bar in 1821. At this time the couple were living in Bristol. They had 3 children, Robert, Elizabeth and Philippa. In 1825 he suffered a minor stroke and was advised to leave England for the improvement of his health. It is not known who recommended this, nor is there any record of what must have been a huge personal upheaval, but he set forth later in 1825 with his family in tow to Mainz, where they stayed for four years.

Music had obviously played a part in Pearsall's education, but his transition to becoming a composer was very gradual. There is evidence of a compositional bent in some musical sketchings in a notebook of 1825, but it was moving from England which gave him his opportunity. At Mainz, he received tuition in composition from Joseph Panny, an Austrian composer and violinist, who lived in Vienna.

In 1830, more upheaval, and the Pearsalls moved to Karlsruhe in the Duchy of Baden. Speculation suggests that an already established English-speaking community and the possibility of good education attracted the family to the comparatively new city.

There Pearsall was able to pursue his multifarious interests. He had already published a translation of Schiller's *William Tell* in 1829 and he went on to write articles on subjects as diverse as the medieval instrument of torture, the Iron Maiden of Nuremberg to a defence of the English Society of Baronets and a study of duelling laws and rights in fifteenth-century Germany. In 1832 he visited Munich where he met the composer and librarian, Kaspar Ett. Ett 'unlocked' for Pearsall the secret of neumatic notation and prolation. Between 1830 and 1842, Pearsall produced nearly 50 Latin text settings, at least six orchestral works, a ballet-operetta, a handful of chamber works for strings, partsongs—including *In dulci júbilo* for Karlsruhe's Choral Society—and some 23 madrigals.

It was the madrigals which truly set Pearsall on his musical pedestal. In 1837, whilst on a year-long visit to England to tie up the affairs of his recently deceased mother's estate (and thus answering the remaining question of the *In dulci júbilo* preface as to how it was signed and dated Willsbridge, 31 January 1837), Pearsall was coincidentally and conveniently on hand at the birth of the Bristol Madrigal Society. The BMS

was founded in a wave of excitement during a series of lectures given by Edward Taylor in early January 1837 at the Bristol Institution in Park Street. His subject was 'English Vocal Harmony'.

When the BMS recorded its first minutes on 14 January 1837, its stated intention was to promote the revival and singing of madrigals in Bristol. Pearsall's music became a valuable part of the Society's repertoire and it was nearly always included as part of their public 'Ladies' Night' concerts. Ever the historian-musicologist, Pearsall turned to Thomas Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* of 1597 for instruction and inspiration. Morley is thorough in his description of how and what a madrigal should be and Pearsall was a model student. However, his was not just music written in an antique style to sound like a pastiche of sixteenth-century composition. It contained the necessary elements prescribed by Morley, but Pearsall used his own distinct musical language, lending a delicious flavour to the whole. The music is never overtly sentimental but it *is* deeply expressive. It shows that Pearsall really had mastered the art of counterpoint—the final seventeen bars of *Lay a Garland*, with their relentless anguish of dissonance piled upon dissonance and semi-resolution, only achieving true rest at the very last, are supreme testament to this.

In 1842, family and financial trouble moved Pearsall to the crumbling Schloss at Wartensee on the Lake of Constance in north Switzerland. This seems to have put a significant pause on his compositional activity and it was not until 1846 that he began working again. A close connection with the chancellor of the diocese of nearby St Gallen was formed, and a new opportunity for composition opened itself. Pearsall produced ceremonial music for use at the cathedral at St Gallen; he wrote a good handful of works for use in the Anglican rite and also a number of partsongs. His last major work was his Requiem, written between 1853 and the year of his death, 1856. Although composed for a commemoration mass at St Gallen, it was never used and simply deposited, with the rest of his bequest, in the library at Einsiedeln.

Pearsall's connection with Bristol remained strong throughout his life. In the Ellacombe correspondence he often remarked on his desire to 'come home', although he never did. He continued sending music to the BMS until 1842 and retained a keen interest in their proceedings: a lengthy article about the madrigal, written to the editor of *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* in 1852 but only published posthumously in January 1858, is preceded by an unhappy dig at the BMS for their lack of care in choosing music worthy of the title 'Madrigal'!

In this, the 150th anniversary of his death, Pearsall's Requiem has been published by the Church Music Society and received its first complete public performance, in London, on Maundy Thursday this year. [*Editor's note:* excerpts were already heard, in our own edition, at the CHOMBEC launch several weeks before this!] It will be performed again, this time in Bristol, on 2 November 2006 at the Anglican cathedral.

Furthermore, a Pearsall dayschool will be held in the Victoria Rooms on Saturday 11 November. This event, co-hosted by the Lifelong Learning wing of the Department of Music, University of Bristol, and by CHOMBEC, will feature contributions from Pearsall

scholars and enthusiasts and music performed by the University Madrigal Singers. *A limited number of free places will be available to Friends, who should apply to Ruth Hill on 0117 954 5032 or ruth.hill@bristol.ac.uk.*

From Our Honorary Associates: 1

For my first communication from Australia I report on a recent research project that I have been involved with, based at the Centre for Studies in Australian Music (CSAM) at the University of Melbourne. The project focused on organised amateur music-making and the concerts put on by the major choral societies of the time—the Liedertafels and the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic—from the 1880s to Federation (1901). The basis of the research was a donation to the Grainger museum of an extraordinary archive of material relating to the Liedertafels, which the CSAM was fortunate enough to have on loan for the duration of the project. The archives contain minute books (in German and English), programmes, ledgers, membership subscription lists, press clippings and most of the music performed by the societies: large leather-bound full scores, vocal scores, song books, parts, both published and manuscript—most of them wrapped in dusty brown paper parcels. Archives of the Philharmonic are found in a variety of places and likewise contain a wealth of material.

Over the past few years, most of the material from these archives has been entered onto a database based at the CSAM. Unlike the database on London Concert Life, which looks at changes in musical concert life through a number of synchronic case studies, the CSAM database, because of the smallness of the sample, can afford to include everything. It provides details of programmes, reviews of concerts, biographies of performers and information on composers. We hope over time to integrate other nineteenth-century concert life into it (for instance we have a doctoral student currently compiling a database of all chamber music performances in Melbourne during this period), and eventually to put it online.

We have been fortunate to have some of the results of our research published in the latest issue of the Ashgate *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* (ii/2 (2005)). Rather than revisit these articles, however, I thought I would just say a few things about our research project in relation to the CHOMBEC enterprise.

Where is the British Empire in our project? The Liedertafels, obviously not of British origin, were founded by some of the wonderful German musicians who came to Melbourne, chiefly during the gold rushes, and remained here. Yet right from the beginning these Liedertafels performed not only German male partsongs but also chamber music and larger works involving small orchestras and choirs. Melbourne had no professional orchestra or opera company during this period, and the Liedertafels, by default, tried to do everything. German partsongs

Letter from Australia

Kerry Murphy

were certainly performed, but they were soon supplemented by British glees and other partsongs, and the music library of the archives contains many volumes of the Novello 'Orpheus' songbooks. In the 1880s, a visit from the Boston Mendelssohn

Quartet club also resulted in gifts to the Liedertafels from the Boston Apollo club of some American Chickering partsong books. A comparison of the Orpheus and the Chickering songbooks, however, reveals that a substantial portion of each consisted of German partsongs in translation! So the German influence is present in a variety of ways, both through the actual German presence in Melbourne and through the British and American publications (which were in turn influenced by the hegemony of Germany over musical life generally during this period). The same complexity is evident in gifted young Australian performers' choice of study in overseas musical institutions, for which Germany (chiefly Leipzig) was the overwhelming choice. Of course, resident Germans, many of whom had studied there themselves, promoted such institutions but so did the British musicians in Australia, for whom (coming from the 'land without music') Germany was also thought to be the only place for serious musical study.

The British connections with the Philharmonic choir are more clear cut and Jan Stockigt's article in the publication above suggests startling links between reports in the *Musical Times* of performances at British choral festivals and works performed by the Melbourne Philharmonic shortly after. Many of the scores preserved by this society also tell interesting tales of transmission. There is a score of *Elijah*, said to have been given by Mendelssohn to an Englishwoman, Miss Phipson, who then left it in her will to Australian composer Florence Ewart (along with a valuable violin), who passed it onto Alberto Zelman (an Italian musician established in Melbourne and conductor of the Philharmonic), who in turn willed the score to the Philharmonic Society! Stockigt was intrigued by another score, Handel's *Judas Maccabeus* that bears the stamp of the Melbourne Philharmonic, and has the inscription: 'This book is given by Sir George Armytage Bart. to the care of George Wright & George Roberts, for the use of the Clifton Singers, March 1st 1827.' On a recent visit to Bristol, Stockigt was delighted to discover that the Clifton Singers still exist. Exactly how the score made its way to Australia is not known.

Issues of transmission and influence are very important in understanding Australian musical heritage. However, the pathways are by no means clear-cut. Our project on amateur music making has just exposed the complexity of the issues.

News from the CHOMBEC Management Committee

Philip Lancaster

When, in December, I agreed to take on the role of Development Officer for CHOMBEC, my mind was bristling with ideas. British music has been a great source of fascination to me, as a performer, listener and researcher, for much of my life. In my early years Elgar had been my world, gradually expanding into an all-consuming passion for British arts of the early twentieth century. More recently, I had become involved in the Finzi Friends, and in recent years have been delving into the life and works of Ivor Gurney and William Denis Browne—composer, pianist and critic killed in the First World War not long after he had buried his close friend, the idol of the age, Rupert Brooke.

Having sung as a Lay Clerk at Bristol Cathedral for several years, as well as working there as music librarian and verger, I had developed an interest in what was to become CHOMBEC's regional brief, studying music in the southwest. Sir Henry Walford Davies, a former Master of the King's Musick, lay in the grounds of the cathedral. Having access to the

Music in the Empire and Commonwealth was the area with which I thought I was least familiar, so I began by sitting down with a map of the former British Empire. As I started to compile a contact list of relevant institutions and individuals from around the Commonwealth, I was amazed to discover how frequently it intersected with my own knowledge of British music. My magpie-like eye was caught by the International Library of African Music (ILAM), founded in 1954 by one Dr Hugh Tracey from Devon. He had gone to Southern Rhodesia in the 1920s to farm tobacco, and started to note down the songs he heard sung by the workers. Tracey consulted Holst and Vaughan Williams on the matter, ultimately founding the ILAM on their advice.

It was only much later that it dawned on me that I had first-hand experience of the Commonwealth and its music. In 1996 I had been on a world tour with the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, during the course of which we had visited New Zealand, Australia, Fiji and the Cook Islands. In Australia I got a taste for



Images from the National Youth Choir tour: entertainment in Raratonga (left); Philip Lancaster (right).

nooks and crannies of the cathedral as a verger, I sought out composer Cyril Rootham in the baptismal register—a son of the then cathedral organist, who went on to be Director of Music at St John's College, Cambridge. I had also spent a little time looking at some of the musical works of the last squire of Bristol, Philip Napier Miles (1865-1935). Miles studied under Hubert Parry and Edward Danreuther. His friends included Vaughan Williams whose *Lark Ascending* was first performed in Shirehampton, Bristol, at Miles's instigation. Miles had limited success as a composer: a Brahmsian Overture *From the West Country* was performed at the Queen's Hall Proms in the 1890s, and some of his operas were given at opera festivals he organised at CHOMBEC's home, the Victoria Rooms, in the 1920s.

some of their contemporary composers, in particular one who used vocal harmonics in her choral works, the harmonics soaring above the traditional choral texture. In Fiji we gave a concert including a new work by Jonathan Harvey in which the choir produced various vocal sounds which were supposed to sound like insects, waterfalls and the like. This must have been more effective than I thought, as the Fijians in the audience started to join in, creating their own animal noises!

During our visit to the Cook Islands we were based on the island of Raratonga, staying in a village church hall. There were just a few villages on the island and each took it in turns to provide meals for us. What was more memorable than the food was the singing: the villagers would sit together and sing for us—hymns in

their native tongue, sung with an extraordinary frontal, almost nasal tone. I don't think I have ever heard anything sung with such joy! It was one of those times that one wished for a cassette recorder and microphone.

Although I remain actively involved with CHOMBEC, my tenure as Development Officer lasted until just beyond the launch on 20th March. Since then I have been immersing myself in my postgraduate research on the composer and poet Ivor Gurney. I am working closely with the Gurney Estate, digitising the musical parts of the archives, compiling a catalogue of compositions, and editing works for publication and performance. Gurney is known only for his songs, about 90 of which have been published. A handful of piano preludes are also published and recorded, but there are violin sonatas, string quartets and orchestral works lying in the archives, not to mention another 200 songs. My research is mainly focused on the songs, although earlier this year Ian Venables (one of the Gurney Trustees) and I edited the *War Elegy* for orchestra, in readiness for the work to be recorded by the BBC Symphony Orchestra. When it came to the recording session at the end of February some of the orchestra found some of Gurney's occasionally unusual lines too strange to be right. I had to spend the session reassuring them that it was what he wrote! This was partly the result of Gurney's fluid tonality, in sections passing through key after key without cadencing once, often with an enharmonic change or two. The work, quite Elgarian in parts, is addictive: Ian would wake up in the middle of the night with the *Elegy's* main tune, which Gurney uses almost obsessively, going round and round in his head. The recording is to be issued on CD by Dutton in October, and broadcast on Radio 3 in November. Look out for other Gurney releases. These will include a number of previously unpublished songs, and significantly revised editions of some of those already known.



Ivor Gurney (1890-1937)

Photograph reproduced by kind permission of the Howells Estate

Bristol's Musical History: A View From the University Archives

David Manning and John Pickard

All those who attended the launch of CHOMBEC on 20 March 2006 were offered a glimpse into Bristol's musical past, thanks to an exhibition drawn from the university's archives. The exhibition was illustrated by material reproduced from the library's Special Collections, which hold a number of important music collections, many bequeathed by individuals from the local area. Among the most fascinating items is a collection of letters, diaries and scores donated in 1967 by Glen Barter, brother of W Arnold Barter. These provided the source for an exhibition which generated much interest.

Naturally enough, Arnold Barter was the focal point of the exhibition. As the letters show, he was conductor of the Bristol Philharmonic Society for over 50 years, until his retirement in 1953, whereupon the Society promptly folded. During this immense period he conducted a huge range of music, much of it by leading contemporary British composers. Many of the most important British choral works of the period, such as Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony*, received their

second or third performances under Barter's baton. There are many professional conductors who would have been pleased with these achievements. Yet Barter was an amateur, who earned his living in the accounts department of the tobacco company W D and H O Wills.

Fortunately, Barter reserved immense energy for his extra-curricular activities. This is illustrated, in part, by the archival collection of correspondence between Barter and the performers and composers with whom he worked. The correspondents form an impressive list: Ralph Vaughan Williams, Arnold Bax, Gustav Holst, Gerald Finzi, John Ireland, Herbert Howells, Percy Grainger, Jelly d'Aranyi, Adrian Boult, W H Reed, Myra Hess . . . a 'Who's Who' of British music during the first half of the twentieth century.

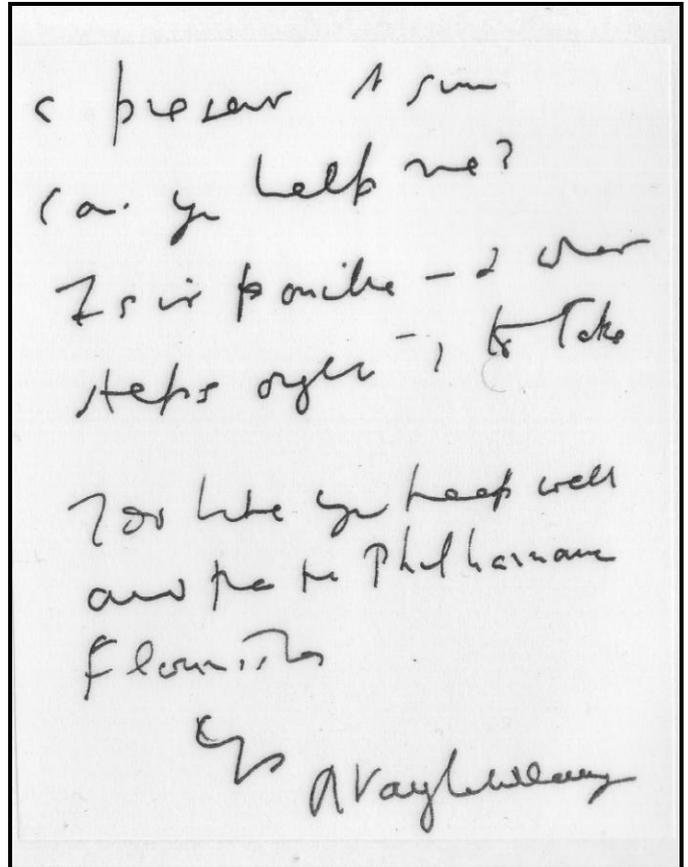
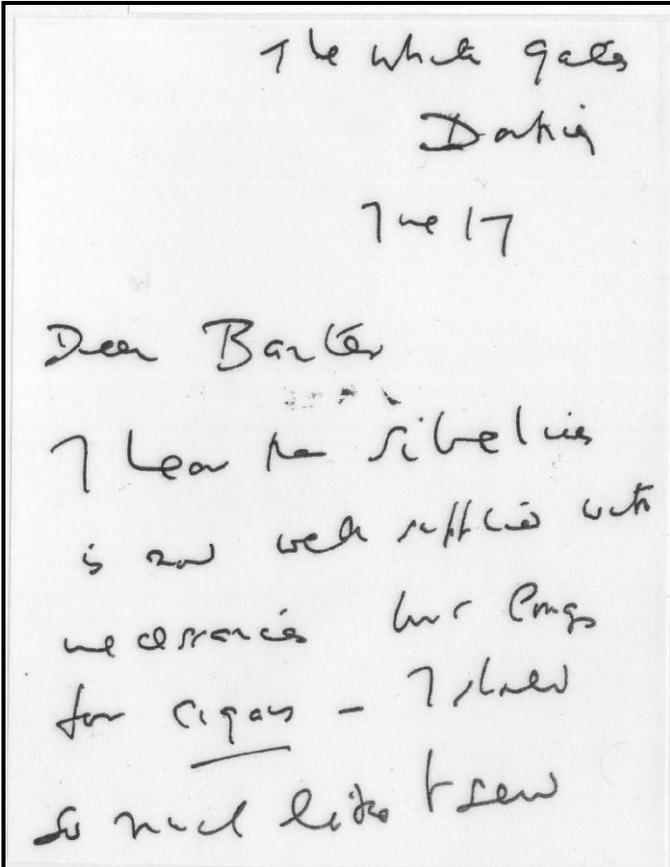
The exhibition presented a selection of letters to Barter from some of these figures. Their tone reveals a musician universally admired by those with whom he worked. Of all the correspondence, that from Vaughan Williams (stretching across almost half a century) is

the most copious and revealing. His letters cover such diverse topics as tips on conducting *A Sea Symphony*, requests for advice on donating money to the Philharmonic Society anonymously and how to arrange for Barter's employers to send cigars to Sibelius in wartime occupied Finland. Vaughan Williams's letter on this last topic is reprinted below.

CHOMBEC would like to thank Hannah Lowery and

Vaughan Williams writes to Arnold Barter:

Michael Richardson of the University Library Special Collections for their help in preparing the exhibition. It brought the university's archives to the attention of a grateful and interested audience. When the history of music in Bristol is written, the Special Collections will be an invaluable mine of information.



The letter above, written by Vaughan Williams, and sent to Arnold Barter, was included in the CHOMBEC exhibition on 20 March 2006. It reads as follows:

The White Gates
Dorking
June 17 [?1944]

Dear Barter

I hear that Sibelius is now well supplied with necessaries but longs for cigars - I should so much like to send a present of some[.] Can you help me? Is it possible—& what steps ought I to take[?]

I do hope you keep well and that the Philharmonic flourishes.

Yrs

R Vaughan Williams

We are very grateful to the RVW Trust for granting permission, on behalf of Ursula Vaughan Williams, to reprint this letter. In addition we thank the Trust's Director, Hugh Cobbe, for sharing with us his transcription, printed above.

Forthcoming Events Relating to Music in Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth

4-7 July 2006

14th International Conference on 19th-Century Music. University of Manchester. The conference will be held in the Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama, University of Manchester, and includes 20 wide-ranging sessions, a keynote lecture by Kofi Agawu and three concerts. <http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/subjectareas/music/19thcenturymusic/>

11-14 July 2006

Royal Musical Association, 42nd Annual Conference: Music and Visual Cultures. University of Nottingham. The conference will be held at Hugh Stewart Hall on the University's Highfield Campus, and includes 25 sessions embracing music and film, landscape, literature, art, iconography, sources, texts, multi-media, and theatre. http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/music/research/conference_royal_musical.php

14-16 September 2006

New Directions, New Voices. School of Music & Conservatory. North-West University: Potchefstroom Campus, South Africa. <http://www.puk.ac.za/music/>

27 September-1 October 2006

29th National Conference of the Musicological Society of Australia: Music as Local Tradition and Regional Practice. University of New England, Armidale, Australia. <http://www.une.edu.au/music/MSAconf/>

20-24 October 2006

The English Music Festival, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire. Offering a range of recitals, concerts, talks, shows and social events on and around the theme of English music. www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk

10-12 November 2006

Canterbury Finzi Festival, hosted by Canterbury Christ Church University. Commemorating the 50th anniversary of Gerald Finzi's death with concerts, talks and recitals. www.canterburyfinzifestival.co.uk

Autumn 2006

The Music Room: a series of workshops on music and the domestic interior. V&A Museum, London. Organised by the V&A Museum, the Royal College of Music and Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College. The workshops will draw together new research on music-making and the domestic interior from a variety of disciplines. <http://www.cph.rcm.ac.uk/MusicRoom/Home.htm>

17 March 2007

Victorian Soundscapes (18th Northern Victorian Studies Colloquium). Trinity & All Saints College, Leeds. Jointly organised by Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies and Leeds University Centre for English Music. http://www.leeds.ac.uk/music/lucem/Victorian_soundscapes_CFP.doc

5-8 July 2007

Music in 19th-Century Britain biennial conference University of Birmingham
contact: Dr Paul Rodmell, p.j.rodme@bham.ac.uk

PROVISIONAL

9-11 July 2007

Second CHOMBEC Conference
Charles Wesley and music: the hymns, the family
Victoria Rooms, Bristol

11-14 July 2007

British World Conference: Defining the British World. This international conference, which is spread over four days, is hosted by the University of the West of England (Bristol), the University of Bristol and the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum. <http://www.uwe.ac.uk/hlss/history/britishworld2007/index.shtml>

ALSO FOR YOUR DIARY

Department of Music Weekly Research Seminars, autumn term 2006

These take place in the Victoria Rooms every Tuesday afternoon during term, from 17 October until 12 December, and are open to all. Come for refreshments at 4.00 pm, followed by the seminar at 4.30 (which lasts, with discussion, for an hour). Certain seminars in the series will be hosted by CHOMBEC; Friends will receive precise details in due course. Further details are available from the Department of Music (0117 954 5028).

STOP PRESS

Professor Stephen Banfield has been awarded a British Academy small research grant of £5199 for a part of his Empire project, *Music in the British Empire: a documentary history through the general press, 1765-1965*. This will be an annotated anthology of musical source readings found in newspapers from around the anglophone world over two centuries, ranging from advertisements and announcements to reviews and leading articles in which music features centrally or casually. The grant will mostly be spent on about 150 day visits, over the coming two years, to the British Library's amazing range of holdings at the National Newspaper Library in Colindale.

An advertisement from the *Jamaica Courant and Public Advertiser*, 3 December 1827:

Kingston, Nov. 23, 1827
 JOHNSTON & WALLACE
 Have RECEIVED by the NEW PHOENIX,
 from London, For Sale,
 A GENERAL SUPPLY OF
 STATIONERY
 AND OTHER ARTICLES,
 INCLUDING AN EXCELLENT ASSORTMENT
 OF
 RULED PAPER, FOR
 ACCOUNT BOOKS,
 warranted of the best quality
 Blank Music Books neatly Bound
 Ditto ditto Paper, 12 and 14 Staves
 Patent Pens, with Rhodium and Platina
 points
 Patent Flutes, 4 and 6 Keys
 Best London made Penknives
 Savigny's Patent Razors
 Best Bamboo and Hickory Fishing-Rods, 3,
 4 and 6 Joints with Reels, Rings, &c.
 A variety of School Books
 Christmas Pieces, &c. &c.
 ON HAND,
 A few superior Toned Grand Imperial
 Cottage and Square PIANO FORTES.

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