



# News

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Editors: Stephen Banfield and James Hobson

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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

## The Sounds of Stonehenge

CHOMBEC's autumn workshop at the Victoria Rooms on Friday 28 November prompted the comment that perhaps it should change its name to CPOMBEC, since it was venturing into prehistoric territory. The idea for *The Sounds of Stonehenge* had arisen at the CHOMBEC workshop on Vaughan Williams's 9th Symphony earlier in the year, when Thomas Hardy's description of the nocturnal monument thrumming, unseen, like a one-string aeolian harp was quoted by Mark

Asquith. Shortly afterwards the Director was approached by Simon Wyatt, a local archaeologist fresh from his Edinburgh PhD, who in a local cafe not only talked about prehistoric musical instruments that were or might have been used in Britain but pulled some out of his bag and played them. We seemed to be on to something here, and so it proved, for the workshop, truly interdisciplinary – it could have been done in no other way – attracted nearly 50 participants from all over the country and took place in an intellectual format that ensured that everyone was engaged and excited about what they had experienced in their own field and what they eagerly wanted to know from somebody else's. There was not a dull moment.

The morning session was grounded in archaeology and featured Simon with his instruments (and a most persuasive phenomenology of music) and two contrasting archaeoacoustic presentations, plus reflections on sounds and Stonehenge from Joshua Pollard of the Bristol University Archaeology



Department, who works on the Stonehenge Riverside Project. Aaron Watson and John Crewdson offered a multimedia presentation of music and visuals, which got the day off to exactly the right start, while Rupert Till (University of Huddersfield) reported on an AHRC networking grant. His hi-tech analysis of the acoustic properties of Stonehenge showed amazing results.

The afternoon session, largely in the hands of a home team, was devoted to cultural history. Ronald Hutton pinpointed the phases of Stonehenge's reception with breathtaking clarity and then the focus moved to music: art, film, and pop. Stephen Banfield suggested how English art music 'about' megaliths has structured subjective perceptions, focussing on John Ireland, Harrison Birtwistle and George Lloyd. Guido Heldt explored Stonehenge's film music, ranging from Polanski to the Muppets and the Beatles and wisely refraining from comment on the quality of some of the more obscure productions. Tim Darvill (Bournemouth University) elaborated on cultural considerations mentioned earlier by Hutton when he uncovered Stonehenge's extraordinary breadth of rock-music citation, not forgetting Spinal Tap.

Ideas ranged just about as widely across the human dimensions of music and sound as could be imagined. This seemed to produce a strong sense of intellectual focus rather than the opposite. Purpose achieved, therefore.

It is hoped to publish proceedings in-house.

## Welcome from the Director

### Stephen Banfield

CHOMBEC's brief ranges from research to teaching as well as from the international to the regional and local. It is therefore gratifying to report that not only has the number of postgraduate students who qualify as Friends of CHOMBEC during their period of study at the University of Bristol increased to unprecedented numbers in the current academic session but undergraduates are being drawn into the scholarly family in new ways too.

This year the 'BritMus' postgrads number 17 – five on the MA (four of whom are mature students), twelve research students – plus three who are in the process of submitting their dissertations or have recently done so. From the new research students we welcome work on popular music in the British Empire (AHRC-funded), aspects of Georgian musical identity in Britain and North America, the musical history of Bath in the 19th century, and Victorian operatic culture in the British world (see Esmeralda Rocha's report on this below). Nor should the recently examined MA dissertations be forgotten. These produced fine original research on topics such as the career of England's first famous flautist, Andrew Ashe, music in Victoria BC (more below from Libby Concord), the Oxford folk revival, and the life and music of Herbert Sumsion.

There would have been no *Music from Georgian Bristol* concert, reviewed below, without the willing, expert and unpaid participation of Music Department undergraduates, as well as five postgraduates, as on comparable occasions in the past; but teaching undergraduates to research local musical history from primary sources is a new development. The course is *Urban Soundscapes: music in the English town, 1800-1900*, and 14 home undergraduates plus three continental exchange students opted to take it in the autumn term. For their essay each student had to choose a town other than Bristol (which they also researched) or London and construct some kind of historical framework for their perception of its soundscape. This was challenging, but they all worked with dedication, enthusiasm and intelligence, in some cases aided by newly digitised online newspaper holdings but often without, in which case a visit to the local studies department of the town's library was the only obvious starting-point. Every result constituted a genuine addition to a bibliography which in many cases had hitherto been virtually non-existent, for the towns chosen ranged from Weston-super-Mare to Wantage. Chepstow, Walthamstow, Chichester, Exeter and other places all threw up new material of interest, in one case an archive probably untapped.

Students are now also running CHOMBEC. James Hobson needs no introduction as a CN contributor but deserves a flourish of trumpets as the new CHOMBEC administrator, a post he took over from Ann Morgan-Davies when she moved from Music to the School of Earth Sciences on 1 September. We thank Ann for her willing and efficient contribution, which included getting the database up and running. James is now in control of most of CHOMBEC's business, while the website has been splendidly overhauled by Nick Nourse, who

maintains it. At this point I breathe a huge sigh of relief before departing for research leave on 1 February. John Pickard then takes over as Acting Director and Guido Heldt and James Hobson will edit the next issue of *CHOMBEC News*. Celia Durk (who reports below) and Nick Nourse are the new student representatives on the management committee.

Take a look at the website's 'Resources & Links' page. We now sport downloadable handlists of many relevant archives in the University Special Collections, including those of Hope Squire, Frank Merrick and John Raynor reported on below. Please encourage scholars to use them and others that we plan to make accessible.

We welcome new and old friends as contributors to this issue, and an ever-broadening range of material (including Bigfoot). I am particularly pleased that Harry Diack Johnstone agreed to be our fifth Honorary Associate, for here we bask doubly in reflected glory since he is both General Editor of *Musica Britannica* and co-editor of volume 3 of *The Blackwell History of Music in Britain*. It is always gratifying to see corresponding members offering reports; do keep them coming. Our correspondence column is a new and welcome development; positive debate on further topics is encouraged (in response to the questions on p.4, perhaps?). Philip Carter is Director of Music at Wesley's New Room. Nick Morgan and David Hackbridge Johnson introduce themselves in their articles. Kirsty Reid is Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Bristol and co-directs its Centre for the Study of Colonial and Postcolonial Societies with which CHOMBEC teams up from time to time (and there are further plans afoot). Douglas Stevens is an AHRC-funded research student working on the music of Lennox Berkeley. Esmeralda Rocha's PhD programme is with the University of Western Australia but she benefits—and we benefit even more—from an exchange agreement that allows her to spend two or more periods of six months in Bristol during her studies. Such residencies give lifeblood to the research community and we encourage more.

Most of the chapters for *Music and the Wesleys*, the book arising from our 2007 conference, have now been written and the editors are contracted to deliver final copy to the University of Illinois Press by 15 July 2009. CHOMBEC's next conference is advertised on the back page of this issue. Meanwhile, its Tuesday research seminars and the Wednesday lunchtime concerts have remained as vital and well-supported as ever. The concerts' showcasing of English music included works by Smyth, Rubbra, Francis George Scott and Raymond Warren, who has been celebrating his 80th birthday. The seminars encompassed Wales (Sally Harper on English perceptions thereof) and expatriate Ireland (Wyndham Thomas on Tom Moore in Wiltshire) as well as Joanna Bullivant (Oxford) on Alan Bush plus Sue Cole on her way to the Bristol Tudorism conference, whose most memorable utterance, off the record by Russell Jackson (and no reflection on the quality of the papers), was probably 'A nightingale sang in Barclay Squire'.

## CHOMBEC News and Events



## Music from Georgian Bristol CHOMBEC concert at the New Room

Philip L Carter

*left to right: Matt Stevens, Matthew Thomas, Christopher Redwood, Simon Allatt, Douglas Stevens, Emily Vine, Jens Boeg, Stephanie Rowlands, James Hobson, Emily Topham, Ben Edmonds and Stephen Banfield*

It was a great joy on Friday 14 November to welcome Professor Stephen Banfield and students from Bristol University Music Department for a second lunchtime concert visit to the New Room, Bristol (John Wesley's Chapel, the world's oldest Methodist place of worship). Their concert the previous year celebrated the 250th birthday of the Bristol-born composer Charles Wesley (son of the hymn-writer) and their return was eagerly anticipated.

Stephen's introductory statement about 'surviving sounds of Bristol' admirably set the scene for his opening voluntary on the 1761 Snetzler organ, no 2 of a set of eight written in the 1780s by Robert Broderip, then organist of the Lord Mayor's Chapel. This rousing start was followed by a slightly earlier setting of Psalm XXIII from *Twenty Psalm Tunes in Three Parts* compiled by George Coombes, then organist at the Cathedral. The music was composed by a Mr Smith. The unaccompanied vocal resources were arranged differently in each of the four verses with suitable organ interludes selected from *Effusions for the Organ* by Cornelius Bryan.

Climbing to the heights of Clifton the programme took on a more secular flavour as Matthew Thomas, accompanied by Christopher Redwood, gave a lively rendering of W Wrenn's early 19th-century Divertimento for flute with a piano part composed by Thomas Howell. This lighthearted mood continued with two very different arrangements of the Scotch air 'The white cockade'. The piano rondo version by Howell was played with real panache by Douglas Stevens and this was followed by the singers giving us Charles Cummins's version of the three-verse anti-Napoleonic song. We then returned down the hill to the Lord Mayor's Chapel and Cornelius Bryan for his Voluntary no 8 (also from *Effusions for the Organ*), a two-movement work played again by Stephen Banfield.

Despite strenuous efforts, including a Cambridge MusD, the Bristol organist and composer Edward Hodges failed to gain a cathedral appointment, perhaps partly because of a dissenting background. Frustrated, he emigrated to the USA and was fortunate to obtain the post of director of music at the newly rebuilt Trinity Church in New York. Here Hodges gained such a reputation as a choral director and organist that he has been considered the father of Episcopalian cathedral music in the USA. The singers' final work was *A Loyal Prayer* by Hodges. Composed in 1831, this unpublished work, 'Let the King live for ever', was written on the occasion of the coronation of King William and his consort Queen Adelaide. Although probably never heard by the royal couple it was a very attractive work and a fitting end to a superb concert.

Very warm thanks were expressed to the eight singers, the solo instrumentalists, Stephen Banfield, and in particular to James Hobson who was responsible for the editing of most of the music. Whilst it is sad that much of this lovely music has not been heard since the early 19th century, it was a unique privilege to be given this glimpse into our city's musical heritage.

## Additions to the John Raynor Archive

Giles Cooke

John Theodore Livingston Raynor (1909-1970), known among English musicians chiefly for his prolific song settings, also produced a large number of writings during his 30-year residence in Horsham. Many of these works can now be explored as the result of a recent gift to the CHOMBEC archives supplementing the large collection of his song manuscripts already held. This additional collection includes the 330-page typescript of an unpublished novel by Raynor, *The Distant Hills*; 69 of Raynor's poems; and 51 short stories, some accompanied by annotations in Raynor's own hand. There are also several cassette tapes and a compact disc of Raynor's song settings (56 – a small sampling of his total output of over 600) and 20 Christmas carols. Our thanks go to Malcolm Riley for making the gift. See [www.bristol.ac.uk/music/CHOMBEC/archivesources.html#raynor](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/music/CHOMBEC/archivesources.html#raynor) for guides to the main collection and the supplement.

## From Our Honorary Associates: 5

## Harry Diack Johnstone

Earlier this year I was both surprised and delighted to be invited to become the fifth of CHOMBEC's honorary associates. I fancy it was a recently-published article of mine on Claver Morris and music in early 18th-century Wells (*Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, cxxxiii/1) which prompted this, but whatever the reason I was more than happy to accept. What follows here will, I hope, serve to introduce myself to readers who have not hitherto encountered my work as a musicologist.

Born in Vancouver, where, as a teenage organist, I was involved (in lieu of an orchestra) in the first-ever performance in western Canada of the St Matthew Passion, I came to Britain in 1954 to study at the Royal College of Music. There I worked with Harold Darke for organ, Charles Thornton Lofthouse for piano, and William Lloyd Webber (father of Andrew and Julian) for harmony and counterpoint. Three years later, and with a little carol of mine ('I sing of a maiden that is makeles') published by OUP (and, rediscovered in my own lifetime, since recorded), I went up to Oxford as organ scholar of Balliol College. In those far-off days, anyone wishing to read for an arts degree had to have an O level in either Latin or Greek, so my first task was to rectify this deficiency in my Canadian educational background. (Scientists were by then exempt from this requirement.) At Oxford, I was pupil of Dr H K Andrews whose books on the technique of Palestrina and Byrd are established classics. Later, in my first year of postgraduate research, I was assistant to Dr (now Sir) David Lumsden at New College. It was whilst I was still at the RCM, however, that I had the great good fortune to come into contact with, and be taken up by, Walter Emery, the foremost English Bach scholar of the period. This was to prove one of the most formative encounters of my career, for he it was who introduced me to the world of textual criticism and supervised my initial efforts as an editor of early music, a field of studies which has been central to my scholarly activities ever since.

In 1963 I took up my first appointment, as Assistant Lecturer in Music at Reading University (where now, sadly, music as an academic subject no longer exists). There, in addition to teaching, I also conducted (at various times) the University Operatic Society, the University Orchestra, the large town-and-gown Choral Society and, most enjoyably of all, a small chamber choir specialising in the unaccompanied choral repertoire from the early 16th century to the present day. When, in October 1980, I returned to Oxford as Tutorial Fellow in Music at St Anne's College (and Lecturer in Music at St John's), I had been Senior Lecturer at Reading for fifteen years. The narrow focus of my Oxford doctoral dissertation on the life and music of Maurice Greene has long since been broadened to include most of Handel's English contemporaries, and most, though by no means all, of my published work has been in this area. My patch I

would now describe as being music in Britain from about 1660 to 1820 or thereabouts.

It was not long after my retirement (in 2001) that I was invited to succeed Paul Doe as General Editor of the distinguished *Musica Britannica* series, whose antepenultimate volume (LXXXV) was reviewed in the summer 2008 issue of *CHOMBEC News*. With volumes ranging (in my time) from early 17th-century Latin motets and keyboard music via 18th-century psalmody and opera to late 19th-century violin and piano sonatas, the general editorship has proved to be one of the most interesting and rewarding jobs I have ever taken on. If I have a grouse, it is that so few practising musicians appear to have either the time or inclination to question the accuracy (or otherwise) of the texts from which they perform. This worries me since, without properly edited scholarly editions, neither performers nor analysts can be certain of what a composer actually wrote, or what, in the absence of an autograph or other authoritative source, his or her intentions are most likely to have been. Good editing is critical to our understanding of music and it involves a multiplicity of skills: palaeography obviously, but also a detailed knowledge of notational conventions, source studies, scribal habits and problems of text transmission, plus an instinctive awareness of period style sufficient to enable one confidently to recreate missing parts and/or to compose convincing continuo parts for example. Why is it, I wonder, that so few young scholars these days seem interested in responding to the challenge? Is it conceivable perhaps that their undergraduate curricula no longer equip them to do so? If so, it seems to me that there is something seriously wrong here. Best not get me started on that one, however, for I am already regarded as something of a dinosaur in groves of academe.

## Research Reports

## Kirsty Reid

## Ballads

Wandering through the streets of the Seven Dials in 1855, Charles Dickens came across a man performing a broadside ballad entitled 'The 'orrors of Transportation; being the sufferings of one William Cockburn condemned unjustly to be banished from his native country.' A 'sallow artist with a blue, bristly beard', 'Cockburn' was 'clad in an absurd masquerade costume of patched, faded druggot, one side of which is gray and the other yellow. The entire suit is plentifully sprinkled with a coarse embroidery of broad arrows, letters and numbers. A vile felt hat . . . covers his head (which, with a view to further effect is closely

cropped) and to his ankles are attached a pair of jingling, clattering fetters.' To further deepen the effect, the man also held a banner on which was painted scenes of convict suffering in the colonies, including images of a convict being speared by 'ferocious dragoons', being subjected to bloody floggings and being chased and eaten alive by 'fierce savages'. Despite these many efforts to elicit sympathy, Cockburn's audience still responded to him in diverse ways. 'Some, the female portion especially', Dickens reported, 'express their opinion that it is a "shame" and ejaculate "poor fellow". The boys venture conjectures as to "what was it for?" and ask how he managed to effect his escape, while 'many of a misanthropic turn of mind pronounce the whole transaction "gammon" but buy a halfpennyworth notwithstanding.' Dickens's account provides us with a fascinating but fleeting glimpse into the world of the 19th-century street musician and thus with all too rare insights into a complex of issues surrounding performance style, audience reception and interaction.

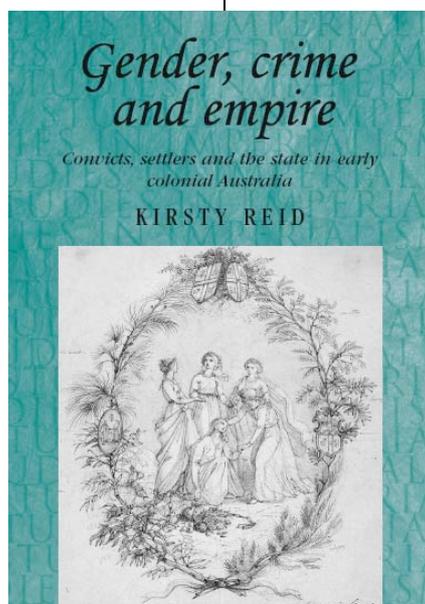
I first became interested in broadside ballads a few years ago when I was working on a book about convict transportation to the Australian colonies. Broadside ballads were a highly popular musical form for several centuries. Mainly performed on the streets, they cost very little and catered to a mass market. Their ubiquity and popularity only began to decline in the later 19th century with the rise of music hall and other much more thoroughly commercialised, and less oral and street-based, forms of culture. Thanks to the endeavours of folk-song enthusiasts in the 19th and early 20th centuries large collections of these ballads survive today in libraries and archives around the world. Although many ballads focussed on everyday matters at home – covering routine topics like love and marriage, poverty and wealth – a significant proportion also dealt with more global and imperial themes. The more I studied these ballads, the more I became convinced that they offered historians unique insights into popular mentalities about empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. Although themes like emigration and convict transportation tend to dominate, ballads actually cover a surprisingly wide range of colonial issues and questions. Substantial proportions of the surviving collections deal, for example, with sailors, soldiers and other imperial voyagers. There are, in addition, significant numbers of ballads about such topics as 'exotic' colonial visitors to Britain, slaves, native Americans, colonial wars, and blackface minstrelsy.

Broadside ballads meant different things to different audiences in different times and places. The meanings of transportation ballads shifted subtly, for example, depending on whether they were performed on the streets of Sydney or London. Indeed, even

within the one city, singers tended to vary their repertoire and style in line with their expectations about particular audiences. No ballad-performer worth his name, one contemporary account for instance relates, would provide the same 'bill of fare' to the crowds of the Seven Dials as to 'the nobs' of 'the Westend'. Unfortunately, we have few surviving accounts of ballad performers and performances. We also often lack information about the tunes: ballads were often so well known that publishers saw no need to write such information down. Research on the ballads must then necessarily primarily focus on a close reading of the surviving texts.

Given the separation from families and friends that transportation and emigration necessarily entailed, many of these ballads were first and foremost laments, and focussed on themes of displacement and loss. But both sets of ballads nevertheless also served as media for the enunciation of a range of other emotions and beliefs. Remarkably few of the transportation ballads, for example, expressed criticism of transported convicts. Instead they often preferred to represent convicts as figures who deserved sympathy and compassion and even as outright victims of exploitation and oppression. Thus a considerable number relate the stories of convict poachers (despite the fact that relatively few men were actually transported for poaching), thereby throwing grievances about enclosure and other restrictions on public access to the land into sharp relief. Other transportation ballads critiqued the social and economic ills of the 19th-century city, blaming crime on poverty, unemployment, industrialisation and starvation. Transportation and emigration ballads also enunciated a series of broader questions about liberty at home and in empire. Many of the ballads were, for example, replete with images of transported convicts in chains and begged hard-hitting questions about

how, if Britons were born free, they could rightly be enslaved in the colonies. Emigration ballads often pursued similar themes but in them it is Britain, rather than the colonies, that appears as a site of lost freedoms. The emigrant in these ballads has thus left Britain not only in search of a life free from hunger and poverty but also in order to escape its 'tyranny'. Ballads about ordinary sailors and soldiers, upon whom British imperial might so heavily depended, were also often surprisingly outspoken and critical in their themes. It would be a mistake, however, to conclude from this that 19th-century street culture was consistently oppositional in tone. An initial reading of a broader range of ballads – on subjects such as native Americans, the Indian Uprising, Ireland, the Irish and more – suggests that ballads were equally capable of giving voice to more reactionary and even racist views of British imperial power.



## 2. Nick Morgan

### The National Gramophonic Society

As a compulsive classical record buyer, I've long been interested in the evolution of the species. Looking for a subject to research for a PhD at the University of Sheffield, I was reminded of the short-lived National Gramophonic Society (1924 to 1931). As its name implies, the NGS had members, never more than 300 it must be said, who (initially) funded its recordings by subscription – just the thing to reveal something of the tastes and habits of fellow punters of 80 years ago. Now, two years on, I find myself fascinatingly embroiled in early 20th-century British chamber music culture, music appreciation and a global 'gramophile' movement.

The subscription system was apparently the brainchild of the NGS's founder, the novelist Compton Mackenzie (1883-1972), who invoked as his model the Medici Society. Never as successful as the Medici, which is still trading, the NGS nevertheless managed to issue 166 discs. Almost all were premiere recordings, mainly of chamber music, from canonic works by Haydn and Beethoven, Schubert and Brahms to novelties by Ravel, Schoenberg, Malipiero, Bax and Warlock.<sup>1</sup> The classical record business undoubtedly gained from Mackenzie's bold experiment: the NGS was surely the model for HMV's and Columbia's 'society' editions, from Hugo Wolf and Beethoven to Delius and Medtner.

The NGS also threw a lifeline to British music-lovers scattered across the Empire and beyond. The Society's activities were chronicled in Mackenzie's other project of the time, *The Gramophone*. In 1925, it reported that NGS records were 'already being sent to America, China, Australia, South Africa, Egypt, and even Turkey.' Members wrote from Toronto, Penang, Johannesburg and New Zealand, praising early issues; others, from Calcutta and the Persian Gulf, attended Society meetings in London. In 1926, under the heading 'Tropical Diseases', *The Gramophone* regretted the damage caused by heat and humidity to a shipment to Calcutta and promised more care in packing discs for the tropics. By 1929, the Society had an agent in China, Jas B Whitehead & Son of 25, Jinkee Road, Shanghai; it would be fascinating to find echoes of the NGS in the Empire's newspapers, as I have in the American and French press.

No membership lists appear to have survived; but *The Gramophone* and other sources have yielded some dozens of names and a few tentative identifications. Most exciting was the discovery that a

<sup>1</sup> The NGS catalogue is currently being remastered by Pristine Audio.

hero of the 1920s attempts on Mount Everest, and later of missionary medical work in India, Dr T H Somervell (1890-1975), was a member. This seems fairly typical of the social status of those NGS members pinpointed so far: others include C Hogarth Forsyth, a British doctor working in Labrador (who is supposed to have seen Bigfoot) and possibly the Moravian missionary and scholar of Tibetan folklore, F B Shawe.

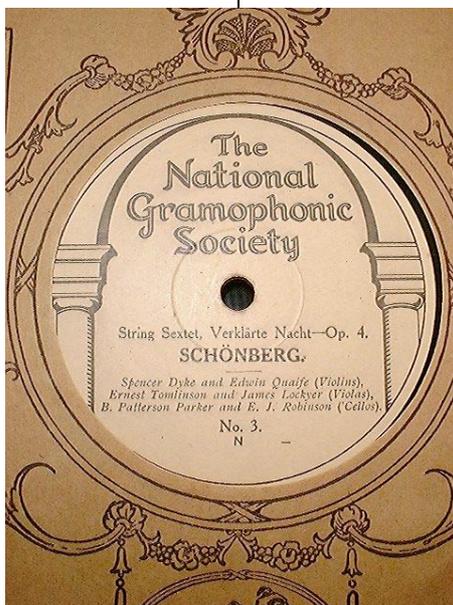
Straying off my topic, I have found these sources rich in evidence for non-NGS expatriate 'gramophiles'. In 1925, *The Gramophone* quoted a detailed analysis of the German Polydor catalogue submitted by Arthur Anson, of Kandy; and a planter, also from Ceylon, wrote to the *American Phonograph Monthly Review* that, 'cut off from the musical world', he found his gramophone 'a joy', as well as record magazines and 'the various inexpensive books on music, both biographical, and for study' – a disciple of music appreciation? Isolation was a common complaint from the subcontinent – although, when live music did come to Lahore, the setting wasn't congenial to one N Hackney: 'as I abhor concert rooms and their audiences I have always shunned public performances . . . This being so, you may imagine what a joy and a delight my gramophone is to me.' Hackney was adventurous, being at first repelled by Hindemith's Quartet but then fascinated; an Australian correspondent to *The Gramophone* went further, suggesting recordings of quarter-tone music, for instance by Alois Hába!

By 1930, the NGS was in decline, and Mackenzie admitted that, 'were it not for our American and Colonial members we should probably be unable to keep the Society going.' After it was officially wound up, M. Hepper complained from Cairo that 'although the recording companies have gone far ahead since the days when the NGS was active, I do not

find that the Society issues or the Connoisseur lists go anywhere near to filling the gap left by the NGS.'

My research forms part of Sheffield University's contribution to CHARM, the AHRC Centre for the History and Analysis of Recorded Music, due to make way in April 2009 for a new Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice, CMPCP. Sheffield's focus is the record industry in the 1920s and early 1930s, whose bigger picture has been ably drawn by David Patmore at Sheffield and Peter Martland at Cambridge.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> I gratefully acknowledge the invaluable help of my supervisor, Professor Eric Clarke (now of Oxford University) and Dr David Patmore of Sheffield University, Jonathan Summers of the British Library, the Directorate of CHARM and others too numerous to mention here. Dr Martland's history of the British record industry, 1870-1939, is due to be published by the Scarecrow Press.



### 3. Morag Grant

#### Music, Conflict and the State



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*God Save The King!* The monarch, pictured, who was originally to be saved from the 'rebellious Scots' described in the original version of the national anthem, was George II, also known as Georg August, Elector of Hanover. It was he who, a few years before the second Jacobite Uprising, had founded the university named after him, the Georg-August-Universität in Göttingen, Germany. It is therefore fitting – and perhaps slightly ironic – that a new research group at that university, under the leadership of CHOMBEC's corresponding member for Scotland M J Grant, will look specifically at the role of music in conflict situations throughout the ages.

The research group 'Music, conflict, and the state', initially funded by the federally sponsored Excellence Initiative, differs from many existing projects on political music and music and war in focussing quite specifically on the negative uses of music in this context – how music is used to incite hatred and violence, and not only as propaganda for war in general but in connection with the most brutal excesses committed in such contexts, including crimes against humanity and genocide. The aim is to pursue a number of historical and ethnological case studies in addition to building theoretical conclusions based on this and existing research. Several of these projects deal with countries that come under CHOMBEC's remit. Group leader M J Grant, for example, will focus on music's role in religious and political conflicts in the British Isles in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Norwegian ethnomusicologist Ingvill Morlandstö, one of the group's three doctoral research assistants, is researching music, conflict and identity in Zimbabwe, with a special focus on the recent past but drawing in information from the colonial era as well. Another doctoral project, conducted by social anthropologist Connie Nuxoll, intends to look at music in connection with child soldiers and youth militia in West Africa, including Sierra Leone. The third doctoral student, Simone Münz, is looking at political music in Cuba with a special focus on the Cuban diaspora in Miami; this project also offers the opportunity to contextualise the role of diaspora and exile communities in political and armed conflicts in their countries of origin, such as is the case in Sri Lanka and was the case during the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

Researchers with expertise in any of these areas, or generally in the field of music in conflict situations and musical propaganda, are encouraged to contact the group. Further information and updates can be found on the group website: [www.uni-goettingen.de/en/84354.html](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/84354.html)

CHOMBEC's current corresponding members are:

- Yu Lee An (University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand)
- Richard Barnard (City of Bath)
- Kate Bowan (Australian National University, Canberra)
- Suzanne Cole (University of Melbourne)
- Alisabeth Concord (Victoria BC, Canada)
- Morag Grant (Scotland)
- Roe-Min Kok (McGill University, Montreal)
- Karl Kroeger (USA)
- Stephanus Muller (DOMUS, Stellenbosch, South Africa)
- Paul Watt (Monash University, Melbourne)
- Susan Wollenberg (University of Oxford)
- Litong Zhu (People's Republic of China)

If you would like to enhance CHOMBEC's representation by becoming a corresponding member for your base in Britain or overseas, please contact the editors. The duties are pleasant: to report from time to time on yourself, your background and work, your environment, your colleagues, and events in your part of the world in relation to their 'British world' history or identity.

## Letters to the Editor

Sirs, – We are strong supporters of your publication, and we appreciate Karl Kroeger's generous and understanding review of our edition of *Eighteenth-Century Psalmody* in your Summer 2008 issue.

We would like to clarify one point. Professor Kroeger correctly observes that no Moravian composer is included, and that we offered six works by William Knapp and four by Joseph Stephenson but none by William Tans'ur, John Arnold, Aaron Williams, or Charles Lockhart. These omissions are no accident. We spent many years combing the vast repertory for pieces that we judged to be artistically valuable; in many cases the selection process included trying out the music in performance. As we explained in our preface, 'Each piece has been chosen because the editors believe it is rewarding both to perform and to listen to; at the same time they have sought to represent every important development in English psalmody of the period.' If a piece was to be included, it had to be both pleasing and representative. Admittedly, pleasingness is a subjective quality, but it is ultimately the one that prevails in our musical life.

We stand by our choices. As Kroeger says, the English Moravians did produce one distinguished composer, Christian LaTrobe; but his undoubtedly valuable contributions to psalmody all appeared after 1800. As for Knapp and Stephenson, our view of them (as stated on page xxvi) is that they 'developed considerable craftsmanship, apparently without ever being taught the rules of thoroughbass and counterpoint'. We cannot say the same for Tans'ur or the other composers Kroeger mentions, no matter how influential they were. Instead, we looked for and (we believe) discovered some worthier pieces by relatively unknown composers like John Smith of Lavington, William Cole, Richard Taylor, and Benjamin Milgrove.

Karl Kroeger himself has published the collected works of William Billings, Daniel Read, and other leading American psalmodyists of the period. In these fine editions he was not required to be selective. Everything went in. Unfortunately, psalmody in the 18th century did not hold the pre-eminent position in British music that it occupied in North America. We could not hope to persuade a publisher to produce the complete works of, say, Tans'ur – nor would we have wished to do so. We had to compete with many well-developed genres of art music, and we are grateful (and still rather astonished) that *Musica Britannica* proved willing to devote a whole volume to this vernacular species. As Kroeger points out, it is 'a departure from the prior 84 volumes of this series', and one we heartily welcome.

NICHOLAS TEMPERLEY  
SALLY DRAGE

Sirs, – I'm grateful for the opportunity to respond to the letter of Nicholas Temperley and Sally Drage regarding my review of *Musica Britannica* LXXXV (*Eighteenth-Century Psalmody*). At the outset, let me say again how pleased and impressed I am with all aspects of this volume. It is path-breaking and in every way exemplary: a credit to both the series and the editors. The few things I questioned in my review are very minor and in no way diminish its usefulness or integrity.

Selection is always a major concern when it comes to the contents of any anthology, and editors may disagree on what to include and what to leave out. Sometimes objective criteria can be established, but often decisions are more subjective, based on personal tastes. And when faced with the task of choosing only a few dozen items from among thousands of pieces, this may not be a bad thing. I never doubted that Temperley and Drage were conscientious in their selection process. However, as they well know, part of a reviewer's responsibility is to point out for those unfamiliar with the repertory that important pieces and influential composers did not make the cut. This is particularly important with the largely unfamiliar psalmody repertory.

I do think the emphasis on William Knapp and Joseph Stephenson is somewhat excessive, considering the severe space limitations. Who's to say, for example, that William Tans'ur's BANGOR or COLCHESTER or Aaron Williams's ST THOMAS are less worthy of inclusion than Knapp's WAREHAM? All are fine pieces. On the other hand, it is also good to have Knapp and Stephenson represented in some depth, for they were among the very best of the country psalmodyists. I for one would love to see a collected edition of Stephenson's music – a project that, I suggest, is not implausible and should be seriously considered. For me he is at the very top of the heap.

Concerning Christian LaTrobe and the music of the Moravian Church, as I said, this omission is minor. True, LaTrobe's major contributions to English sacred music came after 1800, but the first edition of his tunebook, *Hymn Tunes Sung in the Church of the United Brethren*, is thought to have been published ca1790. Although he took many tunes from Christian Gregor's *Choralbuch* of 1784, LaTrobe himself contributed a few new ones to it (e.g. T581 and T585 for sure and probably several more). Considering the influence of the Moravians on John Wesley and Methodist hymnody, it might have been instructive to have included one or two of these pieces in the anthology.

As an addendum to my review, I'm pleased to note that Stainer and Bell have published a small collection of psalmody taken from MB LXXXV: *Sing We Merrily*, edited by Temperley and Drage (72pp, £8.95). It contains 19 pieces, well selected, with the voice parts arranged for keyboard accompaniment. Well done, Nicholas and Sally!

KARL KROEGER

## From the Archives

## The Frank Merrick Archive at Bristol University

David Hackbridge Johnson

A chance purchase of two LPs led to my visiting the Bristol University Special Collections to view a new deposit of scores, letters and memorabilia relating to this Clifton-born composer and pianist. I bought the records on the strength of having heard Merrick mentioned by two composer/pianist friends: Michael Garrett and Ronald Stevenson. Garrett had been a Merrick student in the early 1960s whilst Stevenson got to know him in the early 1970s. I eagerly seized the chance to listen to Merrick's music for the first time. Two piano concertos and the slow movement of a piano sonata are on the LPs. Duly impressed by the music, I found what few biographical details exist. He was born in 1886, studied with Leschetizky and taught in Manchester and later at the Royal College of Music. During World War One he was imprisoned for his beliefs. He later had a distinguished teaching and performing career. He won a competition to complete Schubert's 'Unfinished' Symphony. His book *Practising the Piano* was published in 1960. He died in 1981.

I visited the archive on 20 October 2008. What follows is a brief outline of its contents, providing an overview that should lead to further research. I looked at many Merrick compositions. The music has already been sorted to a certain extent, but Merrick presents problems for the scholar in that he does not provide opus numbers and at most only half of the works at Bristol are dated. A chronological worklist is therefore some way off. I was obviously keen to find scores of the piano concertos and the piano sonata, the works on the Merrick LPs. They are not at Bristol (the piano sonata at Bristol is clearly a work other than that which Merrick recorded) so more searching will have to be done to locate these and perhaps other works. Tantalisingly there is a two-piano version of three movements of a Symphony in D minor, but the full score is not in the archive.

Despite these missing works there are many riches. I examined over twenty songs set to Esperanto texts. Merrick was a keen student of this synthetic language. There are many songs for voice and piano as well as several for a *cappella* choir. Some of the latter were clearly written for Esperanto events. Perhaps the most significant Esperanto work is the cycle *La Kvar Sezonoj* (*The Four Seasons*). That Merrick thought highly of it himself is hinted at by the fact that he made three versions of the work: for voice and orchestra; voice, clarinet, piano and strings; and voice and piano. All three versions are in the archive.

Chamber groups may one day relish the challenge of playing two important scores by Merrick: the Piano Quartet in G minor and Piano Trio in F# minor. The latter is represented in the archive by two exquisitely handwritten copies – the days of photocopying were some years off. Like a number of scores these have the composer's address on the front, enabling a picture to emerge about his movements, information which may prove useful in dating works.

Many other chamber works exist including an important-sounding Sonata for Cello and Piano.

In addition to the music (of which the above is but a taste) there are large numbers of concert programmes and hundreds of letters. I found many striking photos of the composer including some fine studio portraits. His concert programmes show the breadth of his repertoire; many seem to be modelled on Anton Rubinstein's historical concerts of the late 1800s. Works by the Tudor keyboard masters lead to a classical group, followed by Chopin or Liszt, then Debussy, Bax or Ireland to represent the modern school. Of the letters only a cursory glance could be made in the time I had, but I came across one in German from Glazunov to Merrick. There is also a large amount of material relating to Merrick's first wife, fellow-composer Hope Squire. Her charming Edwardian ballads are here and, most intriguingly, an atonal pastiche that Merrick describes in a marginalium as Schoenbergian.

The most startling find of all relates to Merrick's First World War experiences. In an unassuming little box I found a whole series of letters, trial transcripts and documents that reveal the saga of Merrick's military life in detail. From these it can be deduced that upon being called up he did not become a conscientious objector straight away, but when ordered to remove his civilian clothing in order to don the uniform of the Lancashire Fusiliers, he refused. He was subsequently arrested and arraigned before a military court. This resulted in court martial and imprisonment at Wormwood Scrubs and Wandsworth Prison. Many documents relate to an appeal process whose basis was that Merrick would not fight on moral grounds. The appeal was refused and he remained in prison. Hope Squire-Merrick's letters to the prison authorities include impassioned protests against the fact that her husband's wedding ring was forcibly removed from his finger. There is also a polite note from the prison chaplain that lists the extent of the vegetarian diet the prison was able to provide for Merrick. At one point in the drama it is clear that Merrick's behaviour fell short of the required level that would allow him to receive letters. He was however allowed manuscript paper since there is a booklet containing works written in prison. In addition, on the back of a short sketch in D minor, there is a letterhead for the United Suffragists, Manchester Branch; Merrick is listed as Hon Treasurer for the branch. Merrick was finally released from prison in mid-1919; this would seem to be a date chosen to coincide with general demobilisation.

The archive at Bristol clearly represents a vital store of material that illuminates Merrick both professionally and personally. I look forward to more research into this neglected musician.

## From Our Corresponding Members

### 1. Third Study Day, Australian Study Group for British Music

Paul Watt

The third Study Day of the Australian Study Group for British Music was held at the University of Melbourne on Saturday 13 September. About 25 people attended the various sessions throughout the day and, as is our usual practice, the presentations comprised a mix of short discussions on work in progress as well as the more usual, and formal, 20-minute presentations followed by 10 minutes of questions.

There were four informal work-in-progress discussions. The first was by Alison Rabinovici who discussed her research on Augustus Stroh and the problems faced by a musicologist in placing this extraordinary inventor in historical context. The audience was treated to details of Alison's research paths, and great interest and admiration was shown over the extent to which Alison had been able to discover who Stroh's London neighbours were! This was followed by a presentation by Stephanie Roche on Karl Jenkins's *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* in which hard questions were asked about an 'authentic' appropriation (or misappropriation?) of chant and, indeed, the ethics of setting the Mass in such a manner as this. The third such presentation was by Rosemary Richards who discussed the significance of Canberra's carillon in relation to not only its British origins but in the context of other carillons globally. Finally, Katrina Dowling did a 'show-and-tell' on Dolmetsch recorders from the Monash Music Archive and this was followed by a recital from Katrina (on her own instrument) of the first movement of Gordon Jacob's Sonata for Treble Recorder. Our thanks go to Kate Webber who gave up a large chunk of her Saturday afternoon to attend the conference and accompany Katrina.

There were five formal presentations, the first of which was given by Therese Radic on the multi-talented E H Sugden, the first Master of Queen's College, University of Melbourne. Few in the audience had ever heard of Sugden, but it was soon discovered that his role in the musical life in Melbourne and beyond was far-reaching. The second presentation was by Elizabeth Kertesz on Ethel Smyth's 'self-representations' and the composer's various struggles to find a 'voice'. Of particular interest (to me at least) were Liz's in-depth discussions on Smyth's style that involved 'looking forward and looking back'. Melanie Plesch (one of whose ancestors Smyth knew and whom Liz quoted in her paper) gave a fascinating insight into musical criticism in Buenos Aires in the early 19th century, which covered some rather hilarious opera criticism and observations on concert etiquette in both England and Argentina. This was followed by a presentation by Paul Watt outlining the broader shape and context of a new project, a history of musical criticism in England in the 1890s. Finally, Sue Cole's cryptically titled paper 'Of English loons and 6-foot

flagpoles' was the bizarre story surrounding the publication, afterlife (and the many equally weird historical and social tangents) of Leigh Henry's controversial biography of John Bull.

### 2. Of Women and Music in Colonial Victoria

Libby Concord



*'A Picture From the Past', The Islander, courtesy of K J Zoller*

Throughout my life I have been inspired by brave musical women. I have marvelled at the stories of my aunt's move to New York City to become an opera singer, her success as a vocal instructor at the college level, and most recently the doctorate of musical arts that she worked so hard to achieve. From birth my mother instilled in me the love of music that I cherish today. The joy she took in being a jazz singer, church choir director, pit music conductor, and classical vocalist rubbed off on me. Following in the footsteps of these two great ladies I completed my undergraduate degree in Music Education at the University of Puget Sound in 2007, as well as my Master's in British music history at the University of Bristol in 2008. Soon I hope to be entering the University of Victoria's PhD in Musicology programme<sup>1</sup> in British Columbia.

While at the University of Bristol I came across another woman whose life in music couldn't help but inspire. Although our lifetimes were separated by a century and a half, I found that she and I had a lot in common. Both of us were world travellers with a driving passion for music. While I had grown up in a small town in north-western Washington State, she

<sup>1</sup> Libby comes from the USA and naturally wrote 'program'. This is a British publication. We are not sure how they spell it in Canada - Eds.

had been born in Brighton, England. Throughout childhood, we were both introduced to famous composers and musicians by our parents (though I am jealous of her family's friendship with William Sterndale Bennett). In our twenties, we both set out to have the adventure of a lifetime in the homeland of the other: me for south-west England and her for Victoria, BC. While at my age she would have been singing in the choir of a burgeoning colonial town, I was exploring the musical traditions housed in the cathedrals of England. Like me, she too went to school with the idea of becoming a music teacher, an idea that was realised at Angela College in Victoria. As the research for my Master's dissertation came into place, I was able to follow her life of music, taking what I could from her example. I was also lucky enough to come in contact with her great-great-granddaughter, who was able to fill me in on the activities of the generations that followed the musical lady I admired so much.

Agnes Johnston was just one of many English musical pioneers to make the long trek to Victoria in the mid-19th century. While much space was devoted to male musicians such as William Haynes and Digby Palmer, perhaps the best chapter in my dissertation<sup>2</sup> detailed the lives of the women of early Victoria (or 'domestic musicians' as I called them). I argued that while men did hold the most prominent place in the spotlight, women musicians played a vital role in the transplantation of the music of their English forbears to the new colony. Combining and supplementing the work of de Bertrand Lugin and Dale McIntosh with census records, family memorabilia, and newspaper articles, I strove to advance the position of women in the music history of Victoria.

Lugin aptly describes the dual nature of the pioneering lady of Victoria as 'symbolic of the Old World, with its refinements, its culture, its conventionalities and restrictions' while at the same time being 'an emblem of the Western wilderness in all its rugged beauty and charm.'<sup>3</sup> Despite their remote location, the female occupants of Victoria found a way to keep music alive in their community, whether it be by requesting the importation of pianos and music from England, nurturing the musical inclinations of the young, patronising the concerts of local and travelling performers, or participating in church musical activities. At the same time, these amazing ladies were organising concerts to benefit female hospitals, starting orphanages, teaching at girls' schools, and bringing up families in less than perfect conditions. It was this refusal to give up the culture of their birth while at the same time embracing life in a strange new place that makes these women worth reading about and emulating. I know that the stories of their lives and commitment to music will continue to inspire me throughout mine.

<sup>2</sup> They were all good – Eds.

<sup>3</sup> N de Bertrand Lugin, ed John Hosie: *The Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island: 1843-1866* (Victoria BC, 1928): 25.

## Research Students: 6

### 1. Assessing the Music of Sir Lennox Berkeley

Douglas Stevens

It is a rewarding and stimulating task to study the work of a composer who produces work of palpable merit and achieves considerable recognition in his lifetime but is subsequently neglected. One such case is that of Sir Lennox Berkeley, a versatile musician – conductor and pianist – as well as a composer whose output ranges from the virtuosic piano works through to the operas, symphonies and numerous pieces of choral and chamber music. A relatively small number of these works have remained in mainstream repertoire, for example the late anthem 'The Lord is my shepherd', the Sonatina for recorder and piano and the *Missa brevis*. A more substantial amount, however, has been made available in recent recordings, and particularly worthy of note at the present time are those of the operas and orchestral music by the sadly deceased Richard Hickox. Berkeley was in many ways a traditionalist composer for whom the fundamental rudiments of musical fabric, harmony, counterpoint, structure and textural clarity, were at the forefront of his compositional mind. These elements were derived in part from his six-year period of study in France which, for the composer, was a profitable experience anything but equivalent to the frustration some of the previous generation had expressed at Leipzig. During the Parisian years Berkeley studied with Nadia Boulanger and encountered many of the leading figures of the day, Ravel, Poulenc and Stravinsky in particular, and absorbed many features of their individual approaches to composition. Partially under the guidance of Britten, Berkeley developed his harmonic sensitivity and refocussed his initial influences into something more original and distinctive. Thus the Stravinskian bitonality consisting of the simultaneous combination of two unrelated chords as seen in his early piano music or the song cycle *Tombeaux* becomes something more fluid by the 1940s. In the music from these years, tonal centres overlap and there is a more 19th-century approach to continuum within the fluctuation of tension and resolution.

It is perhaps due to the spurious emphasis on Berkeley as a miniaturist that not much attention has been given to extended works such as the operas, so that looking at them now some 60 years after they were written is not so much a task of reassessment as first-hand evaluation. Berkeley's three operas from the 1950s, *Nelson*, *Ruth* and *A Dinner Engagement*, are representative of the composer's ability to handle large-scale form. All these works are fundamentally different in character; neither *Ruth* nor *Nelson* exemplifies the satirical comedy contained within *A Dinner Engagement*, which is correspondingly devoid of

the tragic element in the former works. In my research I am trying to show how Berkeley's choice of subject and libretti is reflective of prevailing contentions of the period as well as personal circumstances. On a more technical level, I also intend to elucidate how Berkeley's structural syntax and tonal language reinforce the dramatic element. All the operas represent different means of cementing formal cohesion; *A Dinner Engagement* for example is characterised by a predisposition towards ternary form, unremarkable given the comic inclinations, though Berkeley achieves considerable interest by varying each application of ternary design. Even if Berkeley is understood more as a traditionalist than a modernist, his ability to devise new ways of constructing formal unity is the undisputed hallmark of an experimental composer.

At a more intimate level, what arias such as 'He was a quiet little boy' from *A Dinner Engagement* and 'Another day' from *Nelson* show most clearly is the melodic and harmonic sensitivity for which Berkeley is rightly renowned. In my analytical work I have attempted to demonstrate how Berkeley's ability to use minimal motivic material and develop it into unfolding contrapuntal structures produces some of his best passages, as in the Kyrie from the *Missa brevis* or the slow movement of the First Symphony. Despite the poignancy of these sections, however, it is a mistake to think of him as an excessively introverted figure, even if he did possess a degree of humility that at times caused him to be overly-condescending towards his own works. During the 1950s and 60s Berkeley was active as professor of composition at the Royal Academy of Music and his pupils there included William Mathias. Despite the successes of these years, though, the composer was evidently grappling with more fashionable contemporary trends in composition. This is shown in his periodic experimentation with twelve-note construction, evident in the Violin Concerto and Third Symphony. Whilst there is certainly evidence of a decreasing output, some of the composer's best orchestral works, such as the *Windsor Variations* and the Partita, were written during the 1960s. Despite his aptitude for eclecticism and his assimilation of different styles and aesthetics, Berkeley maintains a steady clarity of technical focus throughout his years as a professional composer, rarely losing the melodic and harmonic vitality or the textural concentration inherent in his best music.

## 2. Opera across the British Empire During the Victorian Era

Esmeralda Rocha

After completing my Honours thesis *The Cagli-Pompei Royal Italian Opera Company: Australian residency 1871-5* at the University of Western Australia (UWA) in 2007, I was eager to continue investigating the rich history of operatic culture outside Europe and North America. While some research has been done in chronicling and describing Australia's colonial opera

history (most notably in Alison Gyger's fabulous trilogy of works), next to no research, even of the most basic kind, had been done upon non-Western ex-colonies such as India. Moreover, I felt that even the existing studies of Australian opera history were more descriptive than analytical; hence I aim in my current research to frame opera and operatic performance practice within wider social, economic and cultural frameworks.

I was also eager that my study be comparative. The relatively small selection of literature concerned with opera outside Europe and Great Britain consists almost entirely of examinations of individual countries. Describing and discussing cultural phenomena without comparison and contextualisation seemed to me to be not only incomplete, but also too difficult! I am convinced that it is only through comparison that events, practices and attitudes can be fully identified, contextualised and understood; otherwise they remain arbitrary facts, stripped of their full social and cultural significance.

Given that my study is dedicated to contextualising operatic culture and performance practice sociologically, I have tried to select case studies which have enough common ground to make comparison meaningful, while being careful to ensure each centre was representative of a different facet of 19th-century society. It was for this reason that each centre under investigation was a member of the British Empire. The specific centres I chose were London, as the heart of the Empire, Calcutta, as representative of high imperialism, and Melbourne, a typically anglo-dominated settler community.

Thanks to an APA (Australian Postgraduate Award), UWA's School of Music, a UWA postgraduate travel bursary, and the International Offices of both my home university and the University of Bristol, I've been fortunate enough to be able to come to Bristol for four months, studying under Stephen Banfield, who has been of enormous help to me. One of the innumerable ways in which my contact with Stephen has benefitted my research has been his suggestion to include a provincial English city as a case study. My UK case study is now split between London and Bristol, the latter representative of opera in Britain beyond the metropolis.

So far my research is turning up more than I could have ever expected to find. Each city fostered opera in a guise that suited and reflected its particular social structure, demography, economics and even its geography, while at the same time being representative of and influenced by British operatic culture and 19th-century performance practice more generally. The decision to concentrate on Melbourne and Calcutta has turned out to be more perfect than anyone could have imagined, with the nexus, competition and interdependency between these centres being far stronger than I had foreseen. Bristol's opera culture, whose surface I've only begun to scratch, again has connections to each of the colonies – something I never expected to find – while London is the ideal touchstone.

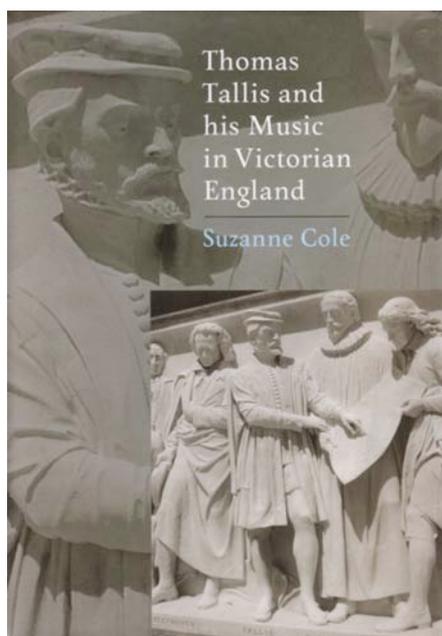
Indeed, each centre's operatic culture, development and performance practice are as

interesting as those of the next, with enough daring, bravado, boom and bust to scare a Canary Wharf executive! My research consistently reminds me of Terry Pratchett's comment, which seems perfectly to sum up the complexity of 19th-century opera culture across the British Empire, particularly in the colonies: 'Opera happens because a large number of things amazingly fail to go wrong.' Let us hope the same is not true of doctoral theses!

Only 6 months in, my research is still in its infancy. I adore discussing my interest with others, especially when the discussion becomes a debate, so please do not hesitate to reach out to me in the Antipodes via email: rochae01@student.uwa.edu.au.

## Reviews

Suzanne Cole  
*Thomas Tallis and his Music in  
 Victorian England*  
 (Boydell, 2008)



The ever-growing interest in the history of music in 19th-century Britain has produced a steady flow of studies over these last ten years. Two publishers in particular, Ashgate and Boydell, have released a number of excellent volumes that explore areas which have long deserved greater investigation. Suzanne Cole's wonderful new book, *Thomas Tallis and his Music in Victorian England*, is the latest addition to the Boydell Press series *Music in Britain, 1600-1900*, edited by Rachel Cowgill and Peter Holman.

In the 21st century, we may accept without question that Tallis's great canon of works has been an integral part of our musical heritage since the 16th century. However, to set the record straight(er) is the prerogative of the historian and musicologist, and Dr Cole exposes the surprising truth that Tallis's name

and music only survived the 19th century through little more than a tiny handful of his works and because of the legend adopted in the 18th that he was the father of English church music.

Over the book's five chapters, Cole not only surveys the role, influence, perception and reception of Tallis and his music in the 19th century but also devotes a chapter each to the great 40-part motet, *Spem in Alium*, and to the Preces and Responses, examining their place in history. Her work is meticulously detailed with excellent footnotes, clear and concise tables, and a detailed bibliography, and her ontological approach to the music is as refreshing as it is informative.

The first chapter examines Tallis's music, beginning by tracing its thread from the late 16th century into the Victorian era, and also surveys its reception, showing how the Victorians idolised and idealised Tallis, affirming his paternal role. Yet the majority of his works were unknown in either worship or performance, and not many were published; only a very few anthems were available in print, and none of them stepped beyond the limits of homophony in its simplest form. Cole examines the works best-known in the mid-19th century, notably the Short, or Dorian Service, and those few available anthems, exposing two whose attribution to Tallis was entirely fictitious: 'All people that on earth do dwell' and *Veni Creator*. In a superb piece of detective work combined with historical re-mapping, Cole reveals how these two behemoths that once posed as works of Tallis were responsible for confirming the skill of the composer in the Victorians' mind through their simple beauty. The 19th-century Church of England was furiously re-inventing and identifying itself with long-discarded, or utterly 'factitious' ritual, and these works in Tallis's name, with their Anglican-friendly words, served its needs with the simplest of compositions. We learn that it was not until the very late 19th century, and specifically through the efforts of musicians such as Richard Terry, that the polyphonic works had their revival.

In the same way that an attribution to Tallis conveniently sanctified the invented music, so too his biography was invented; and in the second chapter, Cole investigates Tallis the man. Appearing in the Frieze of Parnassus on the Albert Memorial, he is depicted amongst the worthies of the fine arts (a photograph of his statue is the book's cover illustration). Cole clearly shows how, with few extant primary sources concerning his life, the Victorians were able to weave a new plot and appropriate Tallis's life, defining him as a paragon of virtue, not only musical but a man religious and just. As long as the perception remained that his compositions were as simple as the homophonic music peddled under his name, so did Tallis's calm and ordered reputation. His Victorian biographers chose largely to ignore any conflicting religious views he might have felt at the Reformation, and he was portrayed as happy only to serve his Protestant queen. However, as Cole shows, all of this changed when the Latin music and polyphony became known around 1900.

The two chapters on individual works follow. The performance history and the genealogy of the surviving scores of *Spem* is traced, and we learn, which is by now no surprise, that the Victorians and their predecessors regarded the work with great suspicion. It neither appealed to them nor improved the composer's standing, and it was described by one fierce critic as 'this mistake of a barbarous age' (also the title of this chapter). Six performances in the 19th century, beginning with its revival in 1836, seem to have been the sum.

The Preces and Responses, on the other hand, were repeatedly printed in many differing versions, and yet their use and popularity endured. Through many musical extracts and detailed tables, the ever-changing face of this staple of the Victorian church's diet is meticulously charted. The paradox, however, is that the Responses in particular were largely invented, constructed out of the imagination of later editors, and yet they were the best-known of all works attributed to Tallis in the 19th century. Their appeal and use was universal, and confirmed that the beauty and sanctity of the church was to be found in a few simple chords and cadences, speaking out across the centuries from such a man as Tallis, the true master.

The final chapter draws together all the ideas in the preceding chapters and underlines the enormous importance applied to, and the changing perception of, Tallis. Yet his role as upholder of the Protestant English religion as perceived in the early 19th century was re-wrought at the beginning of the 20th when he was claimed by the Roman Catholic church as the oppressed but fervent upholder of the True Faith.

In conclusion, *Thomas Tallis and his Music in Victorian England* provides a fascinating, scholarly study which causes the reader to challenge his or her own received knowledge about the composer and his music. Yet it is as much a great read as it is a learned book, and I cannot praise author or publisher highly enough for its timely publication.

JAMES HOBSON

(ISBN 978 1 84383 380 2)

## Study Day Cultivating Britons: culture and identity in Britain, 1901-1936

This interdisciplinary conference was held at Oxford Brookes University on 16 September 2008, convened by Dr Alexandra Wilson (Oxford Brookes) and Dr Alex Windscheffel (University of London). The day was divided into four main sections, 'Legacies of public and private worlds', 'The politics of culture', 'Institutions and authorities' and 'Cultivating citizens and identities'. Three speakers contributed to each section.

Sophie Fuller (Trinity College, London) opened with "'Good-time Edwardian ghosts"? the legacy of the private music world'. Sophie showed how wealthy socialites offered performance space to those outside the musical mainstream. Ashleigh Melvin (Birkbeck College, London) spoke on 'Cultivated Christians? The impact of Victorian religion on Great War soldiers'.

Although public worship, apart from communal hymn-singing, declined in favour of private faith, the Victorian Christian tradition coloured the national identity. Steven Martin (Bristol University) closed the first session with 'Cultivating the revival of English opera', speaking of efforts to provide a national opera house for Britain, to make prices more reasonable, to produce operas in English and to encourage new works to be written.

In session two, David Thackeray (Jesus College, Cambridge) compared the differing views and portrayal of Conservatism before and after the First World War. In her paper 'G K Chesterton and George Orwell: eminent Edwardians and "The English genius"', Anna Vaninskaya (King's College, Cambridge) spoke of the part these literary figures played in the construction of English identity in the Edwardian era. Joanna Bullivant (Merton College, Oxford) in 'Political indoctrination or transforming the listener? Musical modernism and the Left in the 1930s' reconsidered the relationship between modernism and left-wing concerns in music.

After an ample sandwich lunch, Rachel Cowgill (University of Leeds) told of 'Blackface minstrelsy and the changing face of the British police' illustrated with contemporary film clips. Eve Colpus (New College, Oxford) used the correspondence between editors and staff in a discussion of the 'Volumes of "in the main, eminent Victorians?" Public achievement in the interwar *Dictionary of National Biography*'. In 'Modernism vs tradition at the Proms' Jenny Doctor (University of York) spoke of her work on the changing programmes for the Promenade Concerts.

Opening the final session Kathrin Pieren (Institute of Historical Research) spoke of the way in which work with Jewish youth was portrayed in 'Cultivating Jewish Britons in the Edwardian period: Jewish youth work between the call to empire and the home cinema'. David Monger (King's College, University of London), continued with 'Local, national and supranational identity in Britain: the cultivation of Britishness in First World War propaganda' in which he discussed the work of the National War Aims Committee as it sought to maintain civilian morale. Ruth Davidson (Royal Holloway, University of London) then spoke on 'Barbara Duncan Harris, "a pioneer, fighting spirit": the public role of women in Croydon, 1914-1939', highlighting the continuance of women's rights campaigning during WWI.

In drawing the conference to a close, the convenors spoke of the possibility of further events and future publications. As a first step, they would set up a mailing list for both contact among individuals and announcements about future projects. This has now been set up and a notice and call for papers for an interdisciplinary conference on the First World War to be held by The Institute of Historical Research in London in September 2009 has been distributed. To become involved in this network, please email Dr Alexandra Wilson:

alexandra.wilson@brookes.ac.uk.

CELIA DURK

## Study Day

### English Cathedral Music: the long 19th century to the present

The RMA co-hosted this one-day event with the music department of Durham University, and it took place on Wednesday 9 July 2008, the day before the start of the *Music in 19th-Century Britain* conference, also held at Durham.

It proved to be an important and thought-provoking event. As it claimed to be the first such gathering to study English cathedral music, it had also drawn members of the worldwide academic community to it, and some of the issues that were raised evidently required further discussion and consideration – not least of all from that challenging perspective of the crossing of music and current theological thought.

In all, nine papers were given on subjects ranging from 'Samuel Sebastian Wesley: the last of the old, or the first of the new?', a highly enlightening paper from Peter Horton of the RCM, first speaker of the day, who investigated some of Wesley's cathedral music, and its favourable – and sometimes unfavourable – reception by the composer's contemporaries, to the last paper of the day, Joseph Sargent's 'Howells' depersonalised Requiem', which explored this extraordinary and unorthodox – in all senses of the word – composition, shedding much light on the creation of a masterpiece of choral writing.

The speakers were divided into three sessions. In the first morning session, 'The 19th century', after Peter Horton's opening paper, Laura Stokes of Indiana University delivered her paper on 'Mendelssohn's oratorios and late 19th-century cathedral music'. She tackled an area of music that was certainly unfashionable in cathedral repertoires in the latter half of the 20th century, but caused not a little controversy amongst the delegates when she suggested that Mendelssohn's music was already on the wane from the choir stalls by the late 19th century. But this is what conferences are all about, and the discussion that followed was lively and light-hearted.

The third paper – and the one for which I cannot hide that my interest was greatest – 'Self-imposed exile: Robert Lucas Pearsall – craftsmanship, historical awareness, crisis and humour in music for formal liturgy, private devotion and social pleasure, 1845-1855', was delivered by Anthony Rooley, renowned lutenist and now director of the advanced vocal ensemble studies Master's programme at the Schola Cantorum of Basle, Switzerland. Mr Rooley produced a very interesting and entertaining biography of Pearsall, which encompassed his life from his departure from Bristol in 1825 to his death in Switzerland in 1856. Sadly, the 30-minute slot allotted him barely allowed the opportunity to explore any music in detail, but it certainly whipped up enthusiasm from the delegates to learn more; and the hand-outs of some editions of Pearsall's religious music, especially the setting of *Tu es Petrus*, which Rooley exquisitely described as a *madrigale spirituale* re-working of 'Lay a garland', was greatly appreciated.

The second session, entitled 'Airwaves and across the waves: (re-)defining and disseminating the tradition', comprised three excellent papers that grappled with very different issues: Rebecca Frost of King's College, London, 'The BBC and English cathedral music: 1922-1931'; Ian Burk, 'How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? (Psalm 137:4): the English cathedral music tradition in Australia'; and Stephanie Martin, 'Canadian by adoption: Healey Willan's sacred music'. Each paper offered an individually precise view of the interpretation, and sometimes re-invention, of the English cathedral musical tradition for either broadcast or adaptation to needs outside the 'old country'. It was this session that really highlighted the thorny issues of the crossing points of theology, churchmanship and music, and nowhere more so than in Australia. Ian Burk drew attention to the difficulties currently encountered in Australian cathedral foundations, where liturgy and music sometimes clash. In highlighting the changes in the Australian cathedral tradition in the late 20th century, I think everyone was surprised at how much the Anglican 'wound' was still bleeding in the conflict of modernism versus traditionalism.

The third and final session, 'Ancient and modern in the 20th century', comprised another three papers: Suzanne Cole, 'S Royle Shore's *Cathedral Series* and the *Tudor Church Music* edition in context'; Laura Meadows, "'It's very modern, but I think it will do": Elgar's *Te Deum* and *Benedictus*, and the creation of modernist cathedral music'; and the aforementioned study of Howells's Requiem. These were all arresting and well-researched papers, and Sue Cole's inimitable combination of humour with eminent scholarship gave great life to her paper on that stalwart of the early 20th-century revival of English renaissance music, Royle Shore. Laura Meadows's exploration of two of Elgar's great choral works was an excellent starting point for a new approach to cathedral music from perspectives of both composition and reception.

The keynote address by Timothy Day, 'How might we study the history of "sweet singing in the choir"?' was a glorious and broad study of archived recordings of English choral foundations, taken from the earliest 20th century onwards, which showed how very much the quintessential 'English choral sound' evolved through the last century, effectively putting it beyond a single definition.

The day highlighted many points, both musical and theological, and it afforded an excellent opportunity to discuss them; above all, it underlined that there remain many more issues for consideration, thus we look forward to the next conference of the same.

JAMES HOBSON

SPECIAL BOOK OFFER

CHOMBEC has been donated a large stock of new copies of Edgar Hunt's book on Robert Lucas Pearsall, privately published in 1977. We offer them for sale at £7.50 each. Secure your order with a cheque payable to the University of Bristol, adding £2.50 for each copy that needs to be mailed. (Copies will be sent surface mail to territories beyond Europe.) Proceeds will offset CHOMBEC's general expenditure. Send your cheque and order to CHOMBEC, Department of Music, University of Bristol, Victoria Rooms, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1SA, UK.

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

Events listed in boxes are organised by CHOMBEC and are held in the Victoria Rooms, Bristol. Tuesday seminars begin at 4.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

15 January 2009 Time and Pastime in Songs of Haydn's London, Sarah Day O'Connell. IMR, University of London School of Advanced Study [SAS]. 1700-1830 hrs, Senate House, north block NG14

26 January 2009 The Layman's Musician: Arthur Collingwood in Scotland and Canada, 1898 to 1947, Robin Swales. Music in Britain social history seminar, IHR, University of London, 1715-1900 hrs, Senate House, Wolfson Room

20-22 February 2009 London Fiddle Conference. SOAS, University of London. [www.geocities.com/fiddleconference2009](http://www.geocities.com/fiddleconference2009)

26 February-1 March 2009 American Handel Festival. Centre College, Danville KY. email: [wbheller@Princeton.edu](mailto:wbheller@Princeton.edu)

10 March 2009 Miguel Mera (Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge): *Reinventing 'Question Time'*

14-15 March 2009 Joseph Haydn. British Library, in association with the Haydn Society of Great Britain. email: [richard.chesser@bl.uk](mailto:richard.chesser@bl.uk)

19 March 2009 Perceptions of Ethnicity and Nationality in a Selection of Early-20th-Century British and Colonial Composers, David Pear. IMR, University of London School of Advanced Study. 1700-1830 hrs, Senate House, north block NG14

26-28 March 2009 The Green Nineteenth Century. Nineteenth Century Studies Association, Milwaukee WI. email: [roth@uwosh.edu](mailto:roth@uwosh.edu)

27-29 March 2009 Purcell, Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn: anniversary reflections. Royal Musical Association conference, New College Oxford. [www.rma.ac.uk/conferences/](http://www.rma.ac.uk/conferences/)

16-19 April 2009 Music, Culture and Globalisation. British Forum for Ethnomusicology, Liverpool John Moores University [www.bfe2009.net](http://www.bfe2009.net)

16-19 April 2009 Oxford Organ Conference: Hope and glory: the British organ in the age of empire (1785-1901). Wadham College, Oxford. [www/music.ox.ac.uk/organconference](http://www/music.ox.ac.uk/organconference)

7-9 June 2009 The Sounds of Early Cinema in Britain. IMR and the Barbican, London. email: [julie.brown@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:julie.brown@rhul.ac.uk)

2-5 July 2009 Sixth Biennial International Conference on Music Since 1900. Keele University. email: [n.w.reyland@keele.ac.uk](mailto:n.w.reyland@keele.ac.uk)

2-5 July 2009 The Phenomenon of Singing International Symposium VII. St John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. email: [arose@mun.ca](mailto:arose@mun.ca)

7-11 July 2009 Making the British Sound. Galpin Society, Historic Brass Society. London and Edinburgh. [www.galpinsociety.org/gxh](http://www.galpinsociety.org/gxh)

11-12 July 2009 The First World War: music, literature, memory. King's College, Cambridge. [ww1literatureandmusic.googlepages.com](http://ww1literatureandmusic.googlepages.com)

LOOKING AHEAD

12 November 2009 Transatlantic Connections. AMS, Philadelphia, RMA-sponsored session. [www.rma.ac.uk/conferences/event](http://www.rma.ac.uk/conferences/event)

20-21 November 2009 Purcell, Handel & Literature. IMR and English Studies, SAS; Open University; Handel Institute; Purcell Society. Senate House, University of London [www.music.sas.ac.uk](http://www.music.sas.ac.uk)

7TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE ON MUSIC IN 19TH-CENTURY BRITAIN  
supported as the  
3rd CHOMBEC CONFERENCE

University of Bristol, 23-26 July 2009

conference convenor: Guido Heldt  
[guido.heldt@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:guido.heldt@bristol.ac.uk)

2009 sees important anniversaries of the birth or death of George Frideric Handel, Joseph Haydn, Felix Mendelssohn and Louis Spohr. The conference will, it is hoped, include papers on the relationship between these composers and music in 19th-century Britain, and about musical cross-channel relationships in the 19th century in general. Additionally, as in previous years all aspect of music in 19th-century Britain will be within the conference's purview.