

HOLST AND VAUGHAN WILLIAMS MANUSCRIPTS AT LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL

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The recent discovery of a small collection of manuscripts at the Anglican Cathedral, Liverpool, has shed light on a precisely identifiable but now almost forgotten period in the late 1920s and early 1930s when the Cathedral provided the initial context for various innovations in church music, some of which have become established as enduring features of the repertory. The collection also gives an insight into the working methods of two composers whose importance extends far beyond that of their contributions to English church music: Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams. The collection consists chiefly of correspondence, dating from c. 1930 to 1951, between the Dean of the Cathedral and various distinguished individuals including Holst, Vaughan Williams and the composer Martin Shaw (1875–1958). Of particular interest are two manuscripts of music: an autograph draft score of Holst's anthem *Eternal Father, who didst all create*; and a printed vocal score annotated by the composer, with corresponding autograph manuscript instrumental parts, of the *Te Deum* in G by Vaughan Williams. The Cathedral archive is essentially a private one without facilities for research, and the discovery of these manuscripts was fortuitous. As an aid to scholars, therefore, the Cathedral authorities kindly permitted the manuscripts to be photographed. One complete set of photographs is now held by the Department of Music at Liverpool University. Of the second set of photographs, those showing the hand of Gustav Holst are now in the possession of the Holst

Foundation. Those pertaining to Ralph Vaughan Williams have been donated to the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library by Mrs Ursula Vaughan Williams. Photographs of the instrumental parts and annotated vocal score of the *Te Deum* in G have the call-number MS Facs., Suppl. XV (10) 1, 2; photographs of the letters have the single call-number of MS Facs., Suppl. XV (11).

The link between the composers and the Cathedral was the Reverend Canon Frederick Dwelly (1881–1957), the first Dean of Liverpool, who held office from 1931 until 1955.¹ Dwelly was first appointed to the new Cathedral in 1925 and his talent for organising ceremonial occasions on a large scale was put to good effect as the building and its establishment grew. The special appointment of *Ceremonarius* accorded to him was in recognition of his particular ability at planning occasions of considerable visual, liturgical and musical splendour.² Construction of the Cathedral had begun in 1904 and by the 1920s the building was already of a considerable size although it was not to be completed until fifty years later. At an early stage it was equipped with the largest cathedral organ in England,³ and choir stalls were laid out in proportion to the massive dimensions of the proposed complete building. One of Dwelly's aims was that Liverpool Cathedral should be at the forefront of developments in every field of ecclesiastical conduct and particularly that of music. To this end he acted as the prime mover in the foundation of the College of Counsel, a body of 'learned brothers not in holy orders' (to quote Dwelly)⁴ first assembled by invitation in 1931, whose collective wisdom was to have acted as a guide to the Cathedral authorities on matters of policy. Not surprisingly, new members of the College of Counsel were admitted at specially-devised ceremonies. Among its members were the poet John Masefield, the Scottish author on church history Francis Eeles and the composer Martin Shaw.⁵ Both Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams declined invitations to become members.⁶ In the event, the reality fell short of Dwelly's ideal: the College of Counsel met only rarely and its survival as a corporate body was brief.

The inception of the College of Counsel was the formal outcome of Dwelly's consistent policy of gaining the alle-

giance of as many of the great and the good as he could muster on behalf of the Cathedral. His purpose was to become, in effect, the ecclesiastical equivalent of an impresario. In the field of music he eventually worked closely with Shaw and, to a lesser extent, Vaughan Williams, in editing the hymnal *Songs of Praise* which was issued first in 1926 and in a revised form influenced by Dwelly in 1932.⁷ The forms of address used in the correspondence show that whereas Dwelly and Shaw maintained an enduring personal friendship, Dwelly's standing with Holst and Vaughan Williams was that of an acquaintance rather than a friend.

Dwelly was not himself a musician but he held decided and somewhat flamboyant views on church music which were occasionally the cause of friction with the professional musicians who worked at the Cathedral, most notably Henry Goss-Custard, organist from 1917 until 1955, and Edgar Robinson, choirmaster from about 1922 (not initially a formal full-time appointment) until 1948.⁸ Robinson, especially, was successful in promoting the use of English carols, Tudor church music and a wide repertory of modern services and anthems by English composers.⁹ In particular Dwelly favoured the use for grandiose effect of trumpets and kettledrums in the Cathedral. Also, he had an especial liking for tubular bells.¹⁰ Curiously, these factors partly explain the layout of some of the contents of the music manuscripts to be discussed in detail below.

II

There are two manuscripts in Holst's hand. The first is a letter consisting of a single sheet written from Holst's workplace at St Paul's Girls' School, Hammersmith, London, and dated only 'Sep 14'. Its self-effacing manner is typical of Holst and it is sufficiently brief to be quoted here in full:

Dear Mr Dean, Thank you for the honour you do me. I regret that I cannot accept it but console myself with the thought that I should not have been of much use to you. Yours sincerely, Gustav Holst.

This is almost certainly Holst's response to Dwelly's invitation to become a member of the College of Counsel. It can therefore probably be assigned to September 1931, since the College of Counsel was formally inaugurated the following month. A date of 1930 is ruled out since Dwelly would not by then have been addressed as 'Mr Dean'. By 1932 Martin Shaw had accepted a musician's place in the College of Counsel. Although less likely, it is possible that Holst was invited as late as September 1932 to become the second musician member, for Dwelly originally envisaged a large corporate body with a wide diversity of learning including two musicians.

The second manuscript consists of a single folded sheet and is a draft of Holst's anthem *Eternal Father, who didst all create*. The opening is shown as Plate I. The text is by Robert Bridges, a close friend of Holst. The draft is signed by the composer and dated 'Dec 4 1927'; again addressed from St Paul's Girls' School. A date of 1927 concurs with Holst's entry for that year in his composition diary in which two anthems, *Man born to toil* and *Eternal Father, who didst all create*, are noted as having been completed.¹¹ It was Holst's usual practice to address, date and sign his manuscripts before submitting them to his publishers. However, the music in this manuscript is not complete in itself and could not reasonably have been published or performed as it stands, although it could (and probably did) provide rehearsal material for a choir. The manuscript includes all the choral parts fully written out but the organ part is sketched only sparsely and intermittently. The part for tubular bells which appeared in the printed edition published by Curwen in 1928 is absent from this manuscript, but a pencil mark 'Be[lls]', probably also in Holst's hand, appears at four places in the score, indicating that the bells played in unison with the sketched organ pedal part at certain points.

The published edition of *Eternal Father, who didst all create* was taken from what was previously the only known autograph manuscript of the piece, now part of a volume of music by Holst, mostly in his own hand, in the British Library in London.¹² Almost all the music in the volume, including this anthem, contains various printers' instructions in red, showing that each piece in manuscript was a

fair copy to be used as the basis for publication. Alone among this collection of pieces, *Eternal Father* bears no dedication or reference to a specific event or purpose for which it was composed. Both this anthem and the one that immediately precedes it (also to a text by Robert Bridges), *Man born to toil*, have the same scoring: four-part choir, organ and tubular bells, with the addition of a soprano solo in *Eternal Father*. *Man born to toil* was written for the Bath and Wells Diocesan Choral Festival of 1928. The close proximity in date and similarity in scoring between the two anthems raised the possibility that both might have been written for this festival, but the discovery of the Liverpool manuscript demonstrates that *Eternal Father* was composed for a different purpose which will be outlined below.

The two manuscripts differ in several important respects. That in the British Library is unsigned, undated and, contrary to Holst's usual practice, the publisher's address rather than his own is given. There are also important musical differences concerning both layout and substance. The British Library copy has a fully written out organ part complete with three and a half bars of introduction before the choir enters. The tubular bell part, specifying a metal striker for loud passages and a soft felt striker for quiet passages, is fully laid out. This degree of detail is absent from the Liverpool manuscript. When the choir first enters, the British Library source specifies 'Chorus in unison *ff*' instead of 'Tenors and Baritones *mf*' as in the Liverpool manuscript. During the subsequent passage in which the choir sings in unaccompanied four-part harmony there are several differences in rhythms and pitches between the two manuscripts which show that they represent two slightly different versions of the piece rather than one being merely an elaborated concordance of the other. The accumulation of these and other minor differences would have been sufficient to make impossible the simultaneous use of these manuscripts in performance.

The unfinished state of *Eternal Father* in the Liverpool manuscript, together with the likely sequence of events leading up to its production and the eventual performance of the anthem, suggest that the Liverpool manuscript constitutes a fairly late draft of the piece at a stage when

most of the details were already clear in Holst's mind. Furthermore, the inclusion by Holst of his address and date suggest that this draft was the version he first submitted to Curwen. Within the relationship then existing between Curwen and Holst the work could have been accepted for publication on the basis of a manuscript such as the Liverpool one, subject to Holst's readiness to supply a full score. The agreement for publication was prepared on 30 December 1927.¹³ It is likely that Holst compiled the full score in mid December 1927 or possibly as late as mid January 1928, since he took a much-needed holiday abroad for almost the whole of the intervening month.¹⁴ In addition to some modifications of scoring, rhythm and harmony, the incorporation into Holst's full score of some minor alterations that he made to the music of the Liverpool manuscript (in which deleted material is still clearly decipherable) reinforces the likelihood that the Liverpool manuscript antedates the one now in the British Library.

A collection of service-papers at Liverpool Cathedral reveals that, as with most of Holst's similar pieces, *Eternal Father* was written with a particular occasion and specific forces in mind. The occasion was the wedding in the Cathedral on 3 January 1928 of the Reverend Richard Brook and Miss Janet Moss Hardwick. The wedding, only the second in the main area of the Cathedral (as distinct from the Lady Chapel), was an occasion of great splendour, particularly with regard to the music, of which *Eternal Father* formed the climax.¹⁵ Richard Brook was Principal of Liverpool College, the school which at that time was attended by the boys of the Cathedral choir. Frederick Dwelly devised the wedding service and it is likely that it was he who asked Holst to compose an anthem especially for the occasion. The parents of the bride expressed their wish to make a gift to the Cathedral as a thank-offering for their daughter's forthcoming marriage there. Characteristically, Dwelly chose a set of tubular bells as the gift: they were installed in time for the wedding.¹⁶ It may have been the case that Holst had started work on *Eternal Father* before he knew that tubular bells would be available, because in the Liverpool manuscript the cues for the bells are indicated by pencil notes inserted after the ink sketch had been made.

Further to this, it is possible that Holst decided at a late stage also to include an *ad lib* part for tubular bells in *Man born to toil*, a work that was already similar in many respects to *Eternal Father* and which subsequently featured prominently in the relatively forward-looking repertory at Liverpool Cathedral.¹⁷

Probably, therefore, the Liverpool manuscript represents not only a partly-formed draft of *Eternal Father* but also an exemplar from which copies for the choir were made for rehearsal purposes. The anthem would have absorbed considerable rehearsal time: the trebles had to be divided into four groups in addition to which a boy soloist was required. This was a further burden on an already heavy schedule which included not only all the Christmas music but also a quantity of then unfamiliar music from *The Oxford Book of Carols*. This material was being previewed at Liverpool in a carol service on 1 January 1928 (two days before the first performance of the Holst) prior to publication of the book in spring the same year.¹⁸ There is sufficient material in the Liverpool manuscript of *Eternal Father* for singers' rehearsals to have reached an advanced stage, so that minor adjustments could have been made on the later arrival of detailed material for organ and bells. However, unlike some pieces from the 1920s and 1930s that were first performed in the Cathedral, no multiple handwritten copies of *Eternal Father* have survived and it may be that any such copies were disposed of when the printed edition came out, presumably not in time for the wedding but later in 1928. Thus there survives no written evidence about the way in which the piece was first performed. But according to the small number of people who can still recollect the wedding,¹⁹ an organ introduction, absent from the Liverpool manuscript, was played, and after this the whole choir (rather than the men only as indicated in the Liverpool manuscript) entered in unison. Possibly the use of the whole choir at this point was tried out at Liverpool and then suggested to Holst who incorporated it into his fair copy for publication.

The tubular bells were placed in the organ loft and used at the first performance, not only in *Eternal Father* but also in hymns. Another striking and hitherto unexplained feature of *Eternal Father* is Holst's use of three groups of trebles

placed at a distance from the main choir, passing an 'Alleluia' refrain from one group to another. At the wedding and at subsequent performances of the anthem in the Cathedral, these groups of trebles were placed in the triforia on either side of the nave (which was not by that stage complete) so that they were above and a short distance away from the rest of the singers.

It is clear that Holst was aware of the layout of the Cathedral and the capabilities of its musical establishment as he was composing *Eternal Father* late in 1927 with the circumstances of its first performance in prospect. There is no surviving evidence in diaries or correspondence to show whether Holst had visited the Cathedral personally or whether he knew these details only at second hand, probably from Dwelly. However, it can be established from documentary evidence such as press cuttings that Holst was a frequent visitor to Liverpool from 1925.²⁰ In that year he was the first holder of the Alsop Lectureship in Liverpool University, an annual appointment under the terms of which distinguished musicians were invited to give a series of lectures. Holst visited Liverpool at least six times in 1925, not only talking about English music but practising it too: at one meeting the 700-strong audience was organised into voice-parts for the massed impromptu singing under Holst's direction of late Tudor motets and madrigals. Three of Holst's Seven Part-songs Op. 44, written that year, were dedicated to the Liverpool Bach Choir.²¹

The first Liverpool performance of Holst's opera *Savitri* was given in 1925, with the composer in attendance at some of the rehearsals. In 1933 Holst agreed that the music society at Liverpool University should give the first performance of *The Wandering Scholar*, a one-act chamber opera which he had composed in 1929 and 1930 to a libretto by Clifford Bax, based on part of Helen Waddell's book *The Wandering Scholars*, and dedicated to Helen Waddell. The opera was first staged in Liverpool, running for one week in January 1934 as part of a triple bill with *Savitri* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. By this time Holst was already too ill to be able to attend but his friend Frederick Wilkinson, who had produced the operas, visited him in a nursing-home to report on the performance. It was perhaps as well that Holst

was unable to attend, because *The Wandering Scholar* was not well received. From the outset *Dido and Aeneas* was considered the most important work in the triple bill and the brief reviews of the new Holst piece that emerged were largely dismissive, chiefly because of the libretto rather than on account of the musical content or the competence of its first performance. In addition, the operatic presentations were eclipsed by the University's celebrations in the same week of Lord Derby's silver jubilee as its Chancellor, which received far greater publicity and press coverage. Holst died the following May and a brief service in his memory, organised by Dwelly, was held in the Cathedral for which it is now known that he had composed his anthem *Eternal Father* just over six years earlier.²²

III

The manuscripts at Liverpool Cathedral that include the hand of Vaughan Williams or are copies of letters written to him are listed here in chronological order as far as this can be established with any certainty. Unlike Holst, Vaughan Williams rarely dated his correspondence or music autographs, so most dates assigned to these manuscripts are necessarily conjectural. All the letters from Vaughan Williams in this collection were written from his home at The White Gates, Dorking, where he lived from 1929 until 1953.

1. Letter, two leaves, handwriting on both sides of the first, from Vaughan Williams to Percy Dearmer concerning the secular origins of some hymn tunes. This is a copy in the hand of the composer's first wife Adeline, signed by the composer. Probably c. 1930.

2. Letter, five leaves, handwriting on one side of each, from Vaughan Williams to Frederick Dwelly concerning accents in hymns. In the composer's hand. Probably c. 1930 or 1931.

3. Letter, single leaf, handwriting on one side, from Vaughan Williams to Dwelly declining a proposed honour, most likely to have been an invitation to become a member of the College of Counsel at Liverpool Cathedral. In the composer's hand. Almost certainly 1931.

4. Letter, single leaf, handwriting on one side, from Vaughan Williams to Dwelly concerning difficulties in obtaining instrumental parts for a piece of music evidently referred to in previous conversation or unknown correspondence, but not here named. In the composer's hand. Probably from the period 1931 to 1939, possibly 1935.
5. Letter, single leaf acting as a compliments slip, from Vaughan Williams to an unknown recipient, probably Dwelly. In the composer's hand. Possibly 1935, if sent in conjunction with the following group of musical material.
6. Printed vocal score, twelve pages, Oxford University Press edition of the *Te Deum* in G by Vaughan Williams published in 1928. Annotated in red, all or nearly all in the composer's hand, with instrumental cues and cue letters which correspond with those in the instrumental parts listed next. Composer's annotations almost certainly 1935.
7. Manuscript music, single folded sheet, *Te Deum* in G, parallel parts for two trumpets, all or nearly all in the composer's hand. Almost certainly 1935.
8. Manuscript music, single folded sheet, *Te Deum* in G, kettledrum part, all or nearly all in the composer's hand. Almost certainly 1935.
9. Manuscript music, single folded sheet, *Te Deum* in G, cello part, all or nearly all in the composer's hand. Almost certainly 1935.
10. Typed letter, carbon copy with handwriting on both sides of a single leaf, from Dwelly to Vaughan Williams requesting permission to perform unstaged extracts from the opera *The Pilgrim's Progress* in Liverpool Cathedral. Probably early 1951.
11. Typed letter, single leaf, typing and signature on one side, from Vaughan Williams to Dwelly in response to the previous letter, pointing out that none of the material in *The Pilgrim's Progress* would be suitable for use as an unstaged extract. Dated 21 February 1951.

In terms of subject-matter as well as chronology, the material in this list can be divided into three groups. The first, containing items 1-3, chiefly concerns Vaughan Williams's activities as co-editor with Martin Shaw of the music in the hymnal *Songs of Praise*. The second, containing items 4-9, relates to performances of Vaughan Williams's 1928 *Te Deum* in G in Liverpool Cathedral, although in the case of items 4 and 5 this relationship cannot be established conclusively. The third, containing items 10 and 11, is about the opera *The Pilgrim's Progress* and is virtually self-explanatory, nevertheless adding a little more information to the somewhat troubled history of this piece.

IV

The editing of *Songs of Praise* was not Vaughan Williams's first work on hymnals. His work began in 1904 when he was asked to prepare the music for *The English Hymnal* (first published 1906) in collaboration with Percy Dearmer, its principal text editor. Vaughan Williams's attitude towards music for worship was radically different from that of many people involved in church music at the start of the twentieth century. He believed that the secular origin of a tune need be no impediment to its acceptance for use in church, although he deplored the wholesale appropriation of currently popular tunes for use in worship where the criterion for this practice was popularity rather than quality of the music. His views thus conflicted with both the opposing views that in general prevailed at the time: that no music having a secular origin was fit for use in worship, and that any music at all, irrespective of origin, quality or current associations, was fair game for adaptation as church music. The manifestations of Vaughan Williams's attitudes, exemplified most conspicuously by his introduction of almost-forgotten English folksongs into the hymn repertory, provoked controversy but proved in the end to be mostly successful.²³

The progressive simplification of the musical parts of the services in many parish churches in Britain in the 1920s, largely owing to the upheavals that resulted from World War I, revealed the need for a new hymnal of wide appeal and practicality. *Songs of Praise* was designed to meet this need whilst at the same time extending and reinforcing the principles first put forward by *The English Hymnal*. Similar attitudes informed another new publication, *The Oxford Book of Carols*, which sought to redefine the carol for modern use as something more diverse than merely the Christmas hymn with which the term 'carol' was, in the early twentieth century, largely regarded as synonymous. For both volumes, Percy Dearmer was the principal text editor; Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw were the music editors. The full music edition of *Songs of Praise* was first published in 1926. A revised and enlarged version was published in 1932, and it was in relation to the preparations for this edition that the

correspondence contained in items 1-3 of the Liverpool collection of manuscripts took place. *The Oxford Book of Carols*, which was influential in freeing the concept of the English carol from the narrow confines of the sacred and the seasonal, was first published in spring 1928. As previously mentioned, several newly-edited items from the book were given their first performances, by special permission of the publishers, at an elaborate carol service in Liverpool Cathedral on New Year's Day 1928.

The first item in the Liverpool collection is a copy, made by the composer's first wife Adeline Vaughan Williams, of a letter sent by him to Percy Dearmer. Compared to her husband's, Adeline's hand is a model of clarity, and of all the handwritten Vaughan Williams material in the collection this is the only item that contains nothing illegible or ambiguous. This copy was sent to Dwelly at Liverpool Cathedral. Because its content relates to the compilation of the revised *Songs of Praise* rather than to the original edition, it is likely to date from about 1930. The letter was prompted by a complaint from an unnamed clergyman to Dearmer about the proposal to include a particular American tune in the revised *Songs of Praise*. The complaint was based on the supposed secular origins and likeness to jazz of the tune in question. The length, detail and evident exasperation of Vaughan Williams's response is a measure of the strength of his feeling on the subject of secular tunes adapted as hymns. He enumerates seven well-known and widely accepted hymn melodies that derive ultimately from sources as varied as an early French chanson and an early English dance tune, using them to demonstrate that the secular origin of a melody need be no impediment to its transformation into a hymn tune of the utmost respectability. However, at the end of the letter he mentions that the editors had already reluctantly decided that the American tune should not be included in the revised *Songs of Praise* because objections to it had been made before this particular complaint to Dearmer.

Vaughan Williams's views on accentuation in hymns were no less clearly defined or tenaciously held than those on the use of secular melodies as hymns. This is obvious from the second item in the Liverpool collection, a letter

written by the composer to Dwelly in response to a query from Dwelly to Martin Shaw about a supposed ungrammatical pause in a hymn chosen for the revised version of *Songs of Praise*. Plate II shows the opening page of Vaughan Williams's letter. This letter can probably be assigned to 1930 or 1931, but in September 1931 Dwelly was installed as Dean and from then on would have been addressed as such in writing (as in the next item), whereas in the present letter Vaughan Williams begins by writing 'Dear Canon Dwelly'. In the letter, Vaughan Williams points out the inevitability of false accents in hymns of which several verses have to be sung to the same music. As in the previous letter he supports his argument with examples from the past that have been accepted without question into the repertory, using them in this case to show that the flow of a hymn is not necessarily impeded by accentuation that conflicts with that of speech rhythm. He deals with Dwelly's apparent misunderstanding of the double barline as a pause in the music and demonstrates the impracticality of the huge book that would be needed if every verse of each hymn were to be underlaid so that all awkward accents were eliminated.

The final item in this group is a letter from Vaughan Williams to Dwelly declining a proposed honour. This letter was almost certainly written in response to an invitation to become a member of the College of Counsel at Liverpool Cathedral, and as such can probably be dated around September 1931. The form of address used at the opening denotes that Dwelly had become Dean by the time the letter was written. As with the letter from Gustav Holst mentioned above and for similar reasons, a date of 1932 cannot be ruled out but is less likely. It seems from Vaughan Williams's letter that the benefit of his wisdom on specifically Anglican church music, rather than music in general, had been sought by Dwelly. It is clear that he knew of Martin Shaw's appointment to the College of Counsel, for he writes of him as an ideal representative of church music. In this letter, Vaughan Williams's own extremely objective attitude towards church music is evident. His involvement in it was the result of a perceived necessity rather than because of any interest in church music for its own sake. This emerges clearly, for he states that he no longer regards

Violins and Basses *mf*

Eternal Father, who didst all create, In whom we live, and to whose
 bosom move, To all men be Thy name known which is Love, Till its loud praises
 Perfect Thy Kingdom in our passing state, That
 sound at heaven's high gate.
 here on earth Thou might as well approve Our praise, as those on high
 This alone, whose joy we dip, and in this fountain
Soprano Solo Grant body and soul each day their daily bread: And should in
 spite of grace fresh use begin, Even as our anger soon is past

Plate I: Opening page of Liverpool manuscript of Holst's anthem *Eternal Father*.

TELEPHONE
01843 511111

THE WHITE GATES,
WESTCOTT ROAD,
DORKING.

Dear Corn Dwelly

Martin Shaw has long known me
 yr letter - false accents
 & ungrammatical phrase are, as you
 must know, inevitable in hymns & verse
 at some time has to be sung in each
 verse & hymn, written ^{and} with mistakes
 in (assumed) (is this the right word?) across
 the lines

But in subjects we have seen
 you have passed upon comment
 such things as _____

Plate II: Opening page of letter from Vaughan Williams to Dwelly about false accents in hymns (Item 2 of the Liverpool Vaughan Williams manuscript collection).

himself as a member of the Church of England and that the chief reason for his decision to undertake hymn editing was to prevent the work from being done by someone who may have been less competent.

V

Vaughan Williams composed his *Te Deum* in G for the enthronement in December 1928 of Dr Cosmo Gordon Lang as Archbishop of Canterbury. As the only specially-commissioned piece of music in the service of enthronement it formed a fitting musical climax to the occasion, the ceremonial proceedings of which had been entirely planned by Dwelly. The piece was composed for choir and organ only, and this was the scoring used at the enthronement. The original manuscript of this version, from which the vocal score first published in 1928 by Oxford University Press was presumably taken, can no longer be traced. The compact, approachable nature of the *Te Deum* in G made it ideal for use not only by competent church choirs but also by secular choral societies, and a version for orchestra and without organ was in demand. Pressure of other work caused Vaughan Williams to hand over the orchestration of the piece to Arnold Foster (1896–1963), a composer and teacher who had been a pupil of Vaughan Williams at the Royal College of Music.²⁴ Foster's scoring, which became the standard version issued by Oxford University Press, was for double woodwind, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, three timpani, percussion and strings.

The Vaughan Williams *De Teum* in G became a regular feature of the Liverpool Cathedral choir's repertory, being used there for the first time in the services on Easter Day 1929. For particularly splendid occasions such as armistice services, assize services and the cathedral builders' services, tubular bells were played *ad lib* from the keyboard staves of the vocal score in addition to the organ accompaniment. The piece was performed at services to mark the jubilee in July 1930 of the founding of the diocese of Liverpool.²⁵

VI

Events of 1935 serve to offer dates for some of the manuscripts. Early that year preparations were in hand for a large-scale service on Easter Sunday (21 April) which that year was to be broadcast from Liverpool. A fortnight later, in common with the rest of the nation, there began in Liverpool the week-long celebration of the jubilee of King George V, marked on the first and last Sundays by Cathedral services of unprecedented splendour.²⁶ Martin Shaw was commissioned to compose music for these occasions. For the Easter service he devised settings of the Easter Anthems (beginning 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us . . .') and for the jubilee services he set Shakespeare's text 'This England', beginning 'This Royal throne of kings . . .'; part of John of Gaunt's speech near the beginning of Act II of *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second*. Both of Shaw's pieces were published in 1935 by Oxford University Press. Correspondence at Liverpool Cathedral from Shaw to Dwelly (almost no correspondence from Dwelly to Shaw survives) shows that these commissions were undertaken at fairly short notice and under some degree of musical constraint imposed by Dwelly. Shaw had originally been under the impression that he could score the Easter Anthems for full orchestra but this notion was quickly dispelled by Dwelly, who specified a scoring of trumpets, timpani, cellos, double basses and tubular bells in addition to organ and choir. The same scoring was specified for the setting of 'This England'. The reasons for Dwelly's choice of this rather unusual instrumentation are not known for certain, but they are likely to have been influenced at least partly by possible seating arrangements and availability of musicians. Despite the size and versatility of the Cathedral organ, Dwelly and the organist Henry Goss-Custard shared the opinion that the acoustic of the Cathedral caused the lower registers of the organ, and in particular the string-instrument stops, to lack the clarity and 'bite' of actual strings. Cellos and basses may thus have been incorporated to remedy this defect and to balance the trumpets which, like the timpani and tubular bells, were to enhance the ceremonial splendour of the occasions.²⁷

As well as Martin Shaw's specially-commissioned pieces, a selection of ceremonial music taken from works such as Handel's *Messiah* was arranged for the same instrumentation and performed at the Easter and jubilee services in the Cathedral.²⁸ At the Easter service and the final one for the jubilee, the *Te Deum* in G by Vaughan Williams was included, and it is thus almost certain that the same instrumentation, available on those occasions, was used for this piece as well. Like Shaw's pieces and the arrangements made for the same occasions, the manuscript parts that survive as items 7, 8 and 9 in the Liverpool collection are for trumpets, timpani and cellos and were clearly provided by Vaughan Williams as exemplars from which multiple handwritten copies were to be made for the instrumental players' use on these occasions. Some of these handwritten copies survive. Those for double bass are sufficiently different from the cello parts to suggest that there may also have been a double bass exemplar written out by Vaughan Williams which has not survived, or possibly that in the absence of such an exemplar, a part for double bass was devised for the occasions by someone else, probably Edgar Robinson.

It is the juxtaposition of the Vaughan Williams *Te Deum* in G and the pieces by Shaw in the same services that gives a probable date of early 1935 for items 7, 8 and 9 and also for item 6, a printed vocal score of the *Te Deum* in G annotated in red by the composer and probably intended for use by the conductor at the performances. The annotations consist of cues for the instruments and correspond with the material in the manuscript instrumental parts. There are no cues for double bass, which may mean that Vaughan Williams's scoring did not include this instrument from the outset rather than that an exemplar for it was later lost. Nor are there cues for tubular bells, but these were played *ad lib* from another copy of the vocal score and it is unlikely that Vaughan Williams was ever consulted about their inclusion.

The Vaughan Williams autograph instrumental parts and annotated vocal score, taken together, are not merely the organ and choir version of the piece overlaid with extracts from the full score. They are entirely self-sufficient, constituting a complete and hitherto unknown version of the piece. This is especially important in the case of the *Te Deum*

in G because this version is the work of Vaughan Williams himself rather than a helper, as had been the case with Arnold Foster's full orchestration. Comparison with Foster's score shows that Vaughan Williams made his own version entirely without reference to it, even adopting different positions for the cue-letters. Because the terms of reference of those who devised them differed so widely, there is an obvious difference of approach between the two instrumentations although both are highly practical. Whereas Foster's work is largely conventional, Vaughan Williams's is much more imaginative, stretching the resources of the few instruments at his disposal and using them to add colour rather than reinforcement. This is particularly noticeable in his use of the two trumpets. In Foster's score their main function is to double the upper voices, but in contrast to this Vaughan Williams lets the voices stand alone and uses the trumpets in a much more characteristic fanfare-like manner to add a feature to the organ part. He uses effects that go beyond the mere reassignment of existing material: for example, his occasional addition of repeated fifths for trumpets in rapid quavers, and rapidly-tongued triplets on repeated notes, both of which would produce a distinctive shimmering sound in the resonant acoustic of the Cathedral. This section of the trumpet part is shown in Plate III. The cellos, freed from their usual function as part of a group of stringed instruments, are used sparingly but resourcefully in all registers by Vaughan Williams to sustain inner melodies in the accompaniment as well as intermittently to underpin the harmony.

Vaughan Williams had only two timpani at his disposal instead of three as used by Foster. Although their part is more prominent in Vaughan Williams's arrangement than in Foster's, it is less difficult. Since, unlike Foster, Vaughan Williams does not include timpani in passages outside the home key, no retuning is required. From a practical point of view this is inexplicable because in neither score is the timpanist required to double on percussion, in neither arrangement need there be any shortage of time in which to retune timpani by hand, and in the Liverpool arrangement Vaughan Williams was writing for expert players including

Walter Hatton and John Casson, principal cellist and timpanist respectively of the orchestra of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, later to become the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. The most likely explanation must be on musical grounds: that within the sparser scoring of the Liverpool version, conventional use of the timpani would have rendered them too obtrusive.

Nothing remains of any correspondence that may have taken place between Dwelly and Vaughan Williams requesting the arrangement or discussing details such as the choice of scoring, although in the light of circumstances discussed above it is probable that Dwelly rather than Vaughan Williams stipulated the scoring to be used. The willingness to arrange for limited forces a piece of his own such as the *Te Deum* in G was typical of Vaughan Williams's consideration towards bodies such as small choral societies that lacked the resources to furnish full-scale performances of his music. Having completed the arrangement, Vaughan Williams took no further interest in it: around the same time he was heavily preoccupied with his Fourth Symphony and there is nothing to suggest that he visited Liverpool to hear his arrangement of the *Te Deum* in G in rehearsal or performance. Nor is there any evidence that this version was ever performed again, once the celebrations for King George V's jubilee in May 1935 had ended. Comments in the press on the relevant Liverpool Cathedral services describe only the new pieces by Martin Shaw, omitting any mention of the Vaughan Williams arrangement.²⁹

The item numbered 5 above in the Liverpool collection of manuscripts was probably used as a compliments slip to accompany the instrumental parts and annotated score of the *Te Deum* in G when they were sent to Liverpool. If so, a date of 1935 can be assigned to it. Item 4, however, remains enigmatic. It is an undated and apparently somewhat exasperated letter from Vaughan Williams to Dwelly concerning the frustrated efforts of both of them to hire from Oxford University Press some instrumental parts, at the time on loan to the BBC, for an unnamed work including wind, trumpets and drums. It is clearly part of an already protracted set of negotiations, much of which

had taken place by telephone, and gives no clues as to the work in question or the occasion, date or location (presumably the Cathedral) for which the instrumental parts were wanted.

It is possible that this letter relates to the performance of Vaughan Williams's *Te Deum* in G at Easter and for the jubilee in 1935, and that Dwelly's original idea was to use selected instrumental parts from Arnold Foster's full score, material which could be hired from Oxford University Press. It may have been the unobtainability of this material that prompted Vaughan Williams to devise the arrangement of the piece discussed above. If a larger orchestra had been part of the plan at its inception, that would account for Martin Shaw's supposition that he would have a full symphony orchestra at his disposal for his commissioned compositions for the same occasions. But a number of factors make it unlikely that a large orchestra was ever envisaged by anyone other than Shaw, even casting doubt on the identity of the *Te Deum* in G as the work discussed in this letter. Chief among these is the absence from any BBC broadcast in 1935 of the *Te Deum* in G, or any correspondence with the BBC about that particular work, when the letter makes it clear that the BBC were currently using the instrumental parts that were needed so quickly.³⁰ Shaw was aware by early in March 1935 of the limited instrumental group for which he had to compose.³¹ Yet the urgent tone of Vaughan Williams's letter suggests that there were only days, not weeks, to go before the parts were to be in use. Furthermore, it is unlikely that wind parts would have been sought for an occasion such as those in Liverpool at which they were not to be used for any other piece. Altogether these anomalies undermine any assumption that the *Te Deum* in G was the work referred to in the letter, yet there is no other known candidate that fits the circumstances. Consequently a date of 1935 can be assigned only tentatively to item 4. The letter does not antedate 1931 because Vaughan Williams addresses Dwelly as 'My Dear Dean'; on the other hand, on the assumption that it relates to a proposed performance in the Cathedral, it is likely to date from before World War II, when the choirboys were evacuated from Liverpool and the full choir ceased to function.

VII

The accumulation of ideas and sketches for *The Pilgrim's Progress*³² occupied Vaughan Williams intermittently for over forty years, during which isolated episodes from the work were made public. It was completed in 1949 but revisions were made to it both before and after that date. Its first production was intended as Covent Garden's main contribution to the Festival of Britain in 1951, and its enormous cast and orchestra demand considerable professional resources. Vaughan Williams saw the piece, not as an opera, but as a 'morality' in the sense that its characters are intentionally allegorical and its setting symbolic. He held strong views about its staging and came into conflict about this with those responsible for the first production. In the event, the music met with wide critical acclaim but the work as a whole foundered largely because it did not concur with conventional notions of opera: it lacked dramatic development and love interest, the libretto was considered unwieldy and the setting too static. The Covent Garden staging was felt to be unimaginative. The piece was given only once outside London in 1951 and very rarely thereafter. It was dropped from the Covent Garden repertory after the first season. The misunderstanding and failure of the piece in which Vaughan Williams had invested so much of his lifelong creative energy came as a bitter blow at an already difficult time for him, for his first wife Adeline had died in May 1951 after a protracted illness.³³

The unusual subject-matter of *The Pilgrim's Progress* as a vehicle for musical treatment, combined with the relatively static nature of the piece as it was first performed, led to misconceptions about ways in which the work could be treated. After the Covent Garden production in 1951 the distinguished musicologist and critic Edward J. Dent wrote a series of letters to Vaughan Williams about the piece from which it is clear that some observers thought that it would work better as an oratorio than as an opera. Vaughan Williams's antipathy to this notion, as well as Dent's, emerges strongly in this correspondence.³⁴ After the Covent Garden production a scheme was put forward for the piece to be performed in Worcester Cathedral as part of the Three

Choirs Festival but this came to nothing because it would have entailed much alteration to the music.³⁵ Furthermore, Vaughan Williams wanted the piece to become established in the staged repertory before performances elsewhere were to be allowed. It is interesting to speculate whether it had occurred to Vaughan Williams that if the work appeared to him incongruous in a church setting, it must have seemed to many even more so in the opulent surroundings of a conventional opera house.

Some misconceptions about the nature of Vaughan Williams's *The Pilgrim's Progress* were already current even before the work was first performed, partly because it had come to be described by the press, for the sake of simplicity, merely as an opera. Item 10 in the Liverpool collection of manuscripts refers to it as such. This item is a letter, undated but probably from early in 1951, from Dwelly to Vaughan Williams seeking permission to perform an extract from *The Pilgrim's Progress* at special Festival of Britain services in Liverpool Cathedral in July and August 1951. Dwelly requests advice on which section would be most suitable for use in this context, stressing the availability of a 'first class' choir of men and boys.

Vaughan Williams's reply to Dwelly, which is item 11 in the collection, shows that for a long time before the work's first performance at Covent Garden the opinion that it was essentially a stage piece was already present in the composer's mind. This letter, dated 21 February 1951 and typed by a visiting secretary, Beatrice Bone, during Adeline Vaughan Williams's final illness,³⁶ points out that no part of the work would be suitable for detachment from the whole for use at a service. Vaughan Williams mentions that the question of approaching the Liverpool Cathedral authorities about the possibility of giving a dramatic performance there had arisen before Covent Garden had adopted the piece. He goes on to say that his decision not to pursue this possibility had been taken because he wanted to see the work on stage first. This means that the idea of a dramatic performance at Liverpool must have been put forward by someone other than Dwelly or Vaughan Williams: possibly Martin Shaw. Furthermore, it shows that performance in a cathedral, despite the fact that it was to be acted rather than

given as an oratorio, did not accord with the composer's wishes even before he was sure that the piece would be accepted by a leading opera house. In the letter Vaughan Williams does not rule out the possibility of a dramatic performance in Liverpool Cathedral after the piece had become established on stage, but points out the necessity of rewriting a substantial proportion of it to suit the large size of the Cathedral.

So ends the intermittent but often lively and informative correspondence between Dwelly and Vaughan Williams. From it emerges some insight into the composer's attitudes to his own music and that of others, and most significantly a previously unknown version by the composer himself of the *Te Deum* in G. Dwelly retired from office as Dean in 1955 and this marked the end of the period of deliberate and consistent innovation in the fields of church music and ceremony that had distinguished the Cathedral, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s. It was a fitting tribute to Vaughan Williams's influence that, on the composer's death, the Chancellor of Liverpool Cathedral based a sermon on his life's work.³⁷

NOTES

(The items in the Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral are grouped in files or volumes according to general subject and are not catalogued individually, so it is not possible to give exact references to some of the items mentioned in these notes.)

- 1 *Crockford's Clerical Directory 1955-56* (Oxford, 1956), p. 338.
- 2 For example the enthronement of Cosmo Gordon Lang as Archbishop of Canterbury on 4 December 1928. The new Archbishop wrote to Dwelly the following day thanking him for planning the enthronement service. This letter is in the possession of Canon Ken Riley of Liverpool Cathedral. See also p. 177 of the present article. The date of conferment of the title *Ceremonarius* on Dwelly is not known except that it was between 1925 and 1931: details corroborated by William Hunter and Stanley Williams who were connected with the Cathedral at this time.
- 3 *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980), vol. VII, p. 559: article by Stanley Webb on Henry Goss-Custard.
- 4 Dwelly's typescript draft of scheme for the College of Counsel, Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, file marked 'College of Counsel'.

- 5 Copies of correspondence between Dwelly and these members of the College of Counsel, Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, file marked 'College of Counsel'.
- 6 Manuscript letters from the two composers: see below, pp. 164, 169 (Vaughan Williams manuscript item no. 3). There is no subsequent correspondence concerning College of Counsel matters between Dwelly and these two composers. This strengthens the likelihood that they had declined to become members, since those who accepted membership continued to correspond with Dwelly and receive mention in papers pertaining to the College of Counsel.
- 7 Percy Dearmer, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw (eds), *Songs of Praise* (Full music edition, 1926; revised and enlarged 1932). Dwelly's name appears in the acknowledgements of the 1932 edition, and his work with Shaw is recollected by several of the informants acknowledged at the end of this article.
- 8 Memorial to Edgar Robinson, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral. Information corroborated by Robinson's successor, Ronald Woan.
- 9 Such items occur frequently in the weekly service-books issued to the Cathedral's congregations in that period. Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, bound collections of service-books.
- 10 Information chiefly from Leslie Goss-Custard and Ronald Woan, who took part in performances of music in ceremonies organised by Dwelly.
- 11 B(ritish) L(ibrary), Additional MS. 57,863. Both anthems were published by Curwen (now Curwen-Roberton): *Man born to toil* in 1927 and *Eternal Father* in 1928. *Eternal Father* is being reissued by Curwen-Roberton, 1990.
- 12 B.L., Additional MS. 57,897.
- 13 Information in letters to the author from Kenneth Roberton, partner in Roberton Publications, whose firm now deals with material originally published by Curwen.
- 14 Information in letter to the author from Rosamund Strode, Administrator of the Holst Foundation.
- 15 Service-book of the Brook-Hardwick wedding, Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, bound collections of service-books.
- 16 Information in telephone conversation between the author and the bride, Janet Brook.
- 17 Service-books as at note 9.
- 18 Note at the end of service-book for 1 January 1928. Percy Dearmer, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Martin Shaw (eds), *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928).
- 19 Information in letters from the bride, Janet Brook, and two members of the choir at her wedding, Victor Ledder and Christopher Mercier.
- 20 *Liverpool Daily Post*, 4, 12 February, 5, 9 March, 15, 23, 30 October, 6, 13, 20, 27 November 1925.
- 21 Imogen Holst, *A Thematic Catalogue of Gustav Holst's Music* (1974), p. 162.
- 22 Imogen Holst, *Gustav Holst: a Biography* (1938; 2nd edn 1969), pp. 145, 167; Liverpool University Students' Union Magazine and Music Society Committee Records, 1932-1934.

- 23 Further on this, see Vaughan Williams's preface to Percy Dearmer and Ralph Vaughan Williams (eds), *The English Hymnal* (1906), also Ralph Vaughan Williams, *The First Fifty Years: a Brief Account of the English Hymnal from 1906 to 1956* (1956); also Judith Blezzard, *Borrowings in English Church Music 1550-1950* (1990), pp. 93-7.
- 24 Information in a letter to the author from Ralph Vaughan Williams's widow, Ursula Vaughan Williams.
- 25 Service-book for the jubilee of the founding of the diocese of Liverpool, 13 July 1930. Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.
- 26 Service-books for Easter Sunday 1935 and for the jubilee of King George V, May 1935. Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.
- 27 Shaw's letters to Dwelly about resources available for his commissioned music: Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, file marked 'College of Counsel'. Information on Dwelly's and Henry Goss-Custard's opinions about the Cathedral organ and the effect of the acoustic: letter to the author from the late Leslie Goss-Custard, Henry Goss-Custard's son.
- 28 Service-books as at note 26, also parcel of instrumental parts for the music at these services, Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.
- 29 *Liverpool Daily Post*, 6 and 13 May 1935. The *Liverpool Echo* carried no review of the services. *The Musical Times*, vol. 76, p. 535 (June 1935) anonymous author mentions Martin Shaw's commission for the Cathedral having been performed.
- 30 Information in letter to the author from Neil Somerville, Senior Assistant at the BBC Data Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park, also in telephone conversation with Julian Hogg of BBC Radio 3.
- 31 Letter from Shaw to Dwelly, 2 March 1935. Archive of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, file marked 'College of Counsel'.
- 32 Vocal score published by Oxford University Press, 1952.
- 33 James Day, *Vaughan Williams* (1961; reprinted 1964) pp. 68, 109, 124, also Michael Kennedy, (*The Works of (Ralph) Vaughan Williams* (1964), pp. 309-15, 592-607.
- 34 Kennedy, *Works of Vaughan Williams*, pp. 596-606.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 313.
- 36 Information in a letter as at note 24.
- 37 Day, *Vaughan Williams*, p. 72.

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