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Reclaiming a music for England: Nationalist concept and controversy in English musical thought and criticism, 1880-1920. (Volumes I and II)

Ball, William Scott, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1993

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<td>-- Guildhall School of Music</td>
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<td>-- Incorporated Society of Musicians</td>
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<td>-- The Monthly Musical Record</td>
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<td>NTSM</td>
<td>National Training School of Music</td>
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<td>OHM</td>
<td><em>Oxford History of Music</em></td>
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<td>PRMA</td>
<td><em>Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association</em></td>
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<td>RAM</td>
<td>Royal Academy of Music, London</td>
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<td>SIMG</td>
<td><em>Sammelbände der Internationalen Musik-Gesellschaft</em></td>
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INTRODUCTION

The years 1880 to 1920 constitute a critical turning point in English musical history. During these decades England experienced a creative surge in native musical composition, ending a draught that had dominated the English musical scene for nearly two centuries. Opinion varies as to the precise cause of this resurgence, yet virtually every discussion of twentieth-century English music acknowledges the growing movement toward national music that accompanied it. The present study proceeds from this twofold recognition.

The impressive number of studies devoted to English music since 1880 bears witness to the rising standard of native musical composition from that time. The majority of these works are either surveys of the period, or monographs dealing with particular composers and their works.¹ To date, however, no study has appeared that specifically addresses the intellectual milieu that fostered this awakening, commonly called the “English musical renaissance.” This work examines the intellectual impulses which provide the rationale for much of the music composed during the formative period in which this “renaissance” began, namely between 1880 and 1920.

The four decades that mark this study were characterized by vibrant intellectual activity that enriched the musical life of the nation in many areas. The standard of musical criticism experienced such a significant rise during the period that it could justifiably be termed the golden era of English musical criticism, boasting such names as W. H. Hadow, J. A. Fuller Maitland, H. C. Colles, and Ernest Newman. The activities of critics were not limited to press notices but also included substantive historical, aesthetic, and theoretical studies. The scholarly contributions of others such as Edmund Fellowes, Cecil Sharp, Barclay Squire, Godfrey Arkwright are well known. Yet the period is further distinguished by the involvement of composers in those same scholarly pursuits. Through books, articles, and lectures composers made a vital contribution to the intellectual climate. Parry, Stanford, Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Mackenzie and Smyth were but a few of those composers committed to shaping musical and aesthetic thought. Furthermore, the list of those actively engaged in musical/intellectual interests was not limited to professional musicians but also included clergymen, philosophers, literary figures, and other lay persons, e.g. H. R. Haweis, Herbert Spencer and George Bernard Shaw.

The vibrancy of the intellectual life is further evidenced by the sheer number of publications that appeared during this period. Over 150 separate music journals saw publication between 1880 and 1920. Some of these are in current circulation, while others existed but a few months. Musical criticism and discussion of musical issues also appeared as regular features in the daily papers and in general publications.

A survey of the professional journals and other scholarly publications reveals a broad scope of concerns. Yet no concern so dominated the musical/intellectual landscape as the topic of musical nationalism. In their writings and public lectures many composers and critics sought to provide intellectual and aesthetic bases for the development of a
national school of musical composition, with the goal of reestablishing England as a force in the musical world.

From the early eighteenth century onward the English-born composer found him- or herself writing for a public that openly showed a marked preference for music produced across the channel. Foreign critics labeled England "the Land without Music." English critics and audiences regularly measured the production of the native composer by the latest continental fad. In their attempts to gain an audience English composers had been driven to imitate the compositional styles of their continental counterparts, be they Italian, French, or German.

Beginning about 1880, however, there arose a generation of composers who were willing, in some sense, to claim and indeed affirm their "Englishness" in ways that composers of previous generations had not. Many of these composers sought a musical idiom that was distinctly "English," drawing inspiration from folk song, Tudor and Stuart composers, drama and literature, and also from the English countryside and seascape. The composers were aided and encouraged in the cultivation of a national musical idiom by nationally-minded critics who in their writings also sought to establish the basis for an English music.

This study reveals that the picture of the national-music movement in England, as it is usually portrayed, fails to do justice to its controversial and multi-faceted character. The subject of nationality in music generated vigorous debate during the four decades. Often the ideas and music of the nationalists would meet with formidable resistance on the part of critics and other thought leaders. The issue over national music was universal in scope, drawing virtually every writer on music into the debate, with few claiming neutrality. As time progressed the national movement gradually spread to become a broad-based popular
movement, which ultimately reached the height of its influence during the events of World War I.

The controversy raged over questions ranging from whether music could ever be considered national to more specific matters pertaining to the cultivation of a national music in England. Consequently, the debate was not limited to those on opposite sides of the national question but also included nationalists who differed on the precise method of cultivation. Seen together, the writings of all groups combine to produce a fascinating picture of the intellectual and aesthetic milieu in England as it unfolded over four critical decades.

The present study reaches the conclusion that the nationality debate provides an important framework for understanding the intellectual milieu in which some of England's greatest composers worked. It further argues that the contributions of composers and critics to the intellectual life of the period provided a significant spark to the renaissance that has not received adequate attention. The issues addressed in this dissertation remain unresolved even today, yet the path of every post-World War I English composer would be profoundly affected by the national-music discussions of the previous generations.

In its attempt to present the various dynamics of the national-music discussions the present study is divided into three principal parts. Part one focuses upon preliminary questions in the debate. In designating these chapters as preliminary, I do not intend to suggest that the issues raised there are of any lesser importance. Quite the reverse—the material presented there is not only foundational to my presentation of the topic, but was also considered to be crucially prerequisite to the continuing debate.

Part two looks at the principal concerns associated with the cultivation of an English musical idiom. It traces the circumstances which led to the call for a national music and addresses the arguments regarding particular modes of cultivation: folk song, historical
precedent, and national opera. Since nationalism appeared rather late in England I have also included a brief discussion of the English appraisal of other national-music movements as they sought assistance in cultivating a national idiom.

Part three deals primarily with the reception of composers in light of the concepts and controversies addressed in parts one and two. Chapter eight addresses the problems of composer classification and nationalism as a mode of classification. The final chapter presents four representative "English" composers. The basis of composer selection was not to advance a particular view as to who constituted a national composer, but rather to explore the diversity of opinion as to what constituted national musical expression—in essence, to demonstrate the breadth of the scope of nationalism. Each of the composers selected was considered (by at least some) to be truly representative of English music.

Finally, my use of the term "English" as opposed to "British" is intentional and reflects traditional usage by Howes, Pirie, Trend, Kennedy and others. The "English musical renaissance" refers to an awakening that occurred in England achieved by composers of British origin. Scholars have noted the "Celtic fringe" dimension of the movement as seen in the contributions of Mackenzie and Stanford. While the music of both reflects their respective countries (Scotland and Ireland), their careers centered in London and their writings sought to advance the cause of "English" music.
PART ONE

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS AND ISSUES
CHAPTER I
THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITY IN MUSIC

Introduction

The topic of nationality in music was addressed by many writers in England throughout the four decades of this study. A survey of the journals, books and other writings from the period reveals an interest that was both persistent and diverse, representing a variety of opinions on the topic. In this chapter we shall address some of the more important issues that surround national music in general and in so doing provide a context in which to understand the rise of English musical nationalism.

A primary concern of writers about music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the question of whether or not music could ever be truly national, or was inherently a universal art-form. Since all music is universal in the sense that it shares the same basic elements, can we ever properly call it "national?" If so, what attributes of the music produce this national quality? Furthermore, when we call music "national" are we suggesting that its national quality is actually a property of the music itself [melody, harmony, rhythm] or is music national only in an associative sense? A third dimension of the discussion dealt with specific national identities in music. Is a national musical identity always a product of the same factors? Does every country achieve musical nationality in the same manner? In other words, is the recipe for achieving a national musical idiom in one country transferable to other lands or does the formula vary from country to country?

A final issue of this chapter, which inevitably accompanies any discussion of nationality in

---

1 The term "universal," as used by the writers treated in this study, and by the present writer in this discussion, applies only within a Western European musical context.
music, is the question, "Cui bono?" Given the possibility of music's being national, is nationalism a virtue or a vice, something to be sought or avoided? Do nationalistic traits have anything to do with quality or lack of quality in music? How do nationalistic aspects within a musical composition affect its universal appeal? Is a nationalistic composer necessarily limited, being bound by time, space, dialect?

Can music be national?

The question of whether or not art in general and music in particular could be national surfaced in England after the mid-point of the nineteenth century. The nationalist movements in other countries, specifically in Russia and Bohemia, played a significant role in stimulating the discussion of the viability and legitimacy of nationalist art as early as the 1860s.

Important studies were Carl Engel's volumes, *Introduction to the Study of National Music* (1866) and *Literature of National Music* (1879) and H. F. Chorley's *National Music of the World* (1880). Chorley's volume, in fact, was a collection of essays based upon lectures read at the Royal Institution in 1862, and subsequently delivered in Manchester and Birmingham. As their titles suggest, these works seemingly accept without question the viewpoint that music can and does possess national identity. Yet, the focus of these works inclines more toward traditional and folk music than to art music.

The greater and more controversial concern surrounded the issue of art music. Throughout the 1880s many writers advanced a moderate view on the question which found them affirming that music was both a national and a universal art. Music critic D. C. Parker would later refer to this simultaneity as the "supreme paradox of music."² The

moderate position is reflected in an unsigned article entitled “National Music” which appeared in *Magazine of Music* of January 1885, the first in a series of articles on the topic. In support of the universal view of music the author stated that the *Eroica* symphony of Beethoven has achieved universality by virtue of its unlimited appeal. It transcends national boundaries, speaking as powerfully to the Englishman, Russian, Spaniard, or Australian as to a fellow-countryman of its composer. Other evidence of the universal nature of music is its essential language, which is universal in the sense that it is familiar to all. “The flat that went forth from the Tower of Babel left the language of music pure and unbroken.”^3 Thus, music may claim universality in at least two ways: the catholic appeal of a great masterpiece (transcending nationality) and the essential language of music.

The writer then proceeded to temper his position, stating that from another perspective all music, as indeed all art, may be considered national.

All music is to a certain extent influenced by local surroundings and circumstances, and by national feelings and aspirations. While it is true that Shakespeare was “not for an age, but for all time,” he was still a true child of his age, an Elizabethan of the Elizabethans, and similarly the wideness and universality of his genius did not weaken or impair his English sympathies. And the same holds good of music. No doubt, even in symphonies and sonatas, one might find amid a general uniformity some nuances in expression which indicate variety in national temperament.^4

While the above writer recognized an aspect of nationality in music, it is important to note that he avoided pinpointing exactly which musical traits suggest nationality. He did not venture beyond “national feelings and aspirations” and “nuances of expression.” One finds this reluctance reflected in many of the articles on the topic written during the four decades. D. C. Parker would later make the following observation:

While it is true that “les grands artistes n'ont pas de patrie,” as the French proverb has it, it is equally true that much great art is closely connected with national history. . . .

---


No one will deny that Smetana and Dvorak are national writers, and yet the merit of
their music, the sincerity and imagination of it make it valuable for us all.\(^5\)

Like the previous writer Parker did not define exactly what constitutes those national
attributes.

Throughout the decade of the 1890s there emerged a stronger movement in favor of
a nationalist conception of music. The fact that it was a controversial viewpoint, however,
was attested by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who quoted an eminent professor’s counsel: “If
you love peace let national music alone.”\(^6\)

W. H. Hadow was a strong advocate for the pro-national stance. In an article
entitled “Art and the People” Hadow sought to counter an elitist view of art which held that
the public was innately incompetent to form any judgment on artistic questions. One of the
opinions supporting the view in question was the denial that art rested upon any national
basis. Hadow began his defense of the legitimacy of public opinion in art through citing
his opponents who claimed: “There is no such thing as English Art . . . You might as well
talk of English Mathematics. It is [says another] matter for congratulation among all who
have some sense of the purity of pure art, that in it there is nothing which can be called
provincial, parochial, local, or national.”\(^7\)

Against this sentiment Hadow contended not only that art was in its various
manifestations national, but in fact, “the basis of the highest art is national and its criterion
popular.” He supported this view by looking first to literary figures, past and present,
asking, “Can we imagine Shakespeare anything but an Englishman, or Victor Hugo
anything but a Frenchman? Can we imagine Walt Whitman in Athens, or Sophocles in


\(^6\) "Sir A. C. Mackenzie’s Lectures. English Country Songs," reported in MS, ill.s., 3
(23 February 1895): 148.

Philadelphia?" According to Hadow, if one would answer these questions in the negative then one is forced to conclude either that nationality is an aspect of great art or that the art of these men was not pure, i.e. second-rate. Hadow granted that there were instances of great artists who had been on the "border-line of nationality," but these were merely the exceptions that proved the rule. What was true of the sister arts was even more so true of music which at its root is the most national of all since it is the "most direct outcome of popular life and popular emotion."8

Hadow would not claim nationality, however, to the extent that the universal aspects of art are completely excluded. The universality of art, though, is necessarily limited "in so far as Art deals with general principles or universal types." In other words, universality touches only those elements which the entire human race can appreciate merely by virtue of being human. To speak of the universal in art is to confine oneself to an abstract idea. "The moment that the universals take shape, they must be coloured by the particular character of the artist, and in that character the influence of nationality forms a very potent factor."9 Borrowing once again from the literary world Hadow contended that while all can revere Sophocles because there are "those touches of Art which make the whole world kin," we can never see Sophocles as anything other than a Greek, as one who inevitably looked at life from a Greek point of view. Thus, in Hadow's opinion, art is a human undertaking which certainly may and does speak a universal truth but never takes form without a national medium. The universal idea must become flesh and blood and it cannot do so devoid of national expression. Hadow would later write in his 1897 study of Haydn: "In everything, from the conception of a poem to the structure of a sentence, the national element bears its part . . . it colours the personal temperament, it gives a standpoint

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8Ibid.

9Ibid.
from which principles of style are approached, and wherever its influence is faint or inconsiderable the work of the artists will be found to suffer in proportion."

In the year of Hadow's *Musical Standard* article, the same journal reprinted an article from the *Musical Courier* of New York written by Alexander McArthur, the former private secretary of Anton Rubinstein. While, strictly speaking, the article exceeds the scope of this study, its appearance in the English journal was accompanied by the following statement: "With the writer's opinions, stated with clearness and no uncertain tone, we entirely agree." McArthur argued that only folk music and dance could make a claim to nationality. In the sphere of serious music it was as absurd to speak of a School of National Music as it would be to speak of a School of National Speech. "Music is universal," he contended, "and it is folly to talk of Russian music, German music, or Italian music." Listing a number of operas, among them: *Cavalleria Rusticana, Samson et Dalila, H.M.S. Pinafore, Die Walküre, Aida,* McArthur asked whether they could be considered Italian, French, English, German, and Italian respectively. According to McArthur, "one might as well try to cage the sunshine and call it national as call music national. Music belongs to the world." Yet, the author seemingly reversed direction as he added, "there is one form in music, however, that can be made national, 'the opera'."

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12Writers on both sides of the nationality question cited *Cavalleria Rusticana* to prove their respective points. For instance, eight years after the appearance of the above article the same journal would reprint another article, this time from the *Referee* by Lancelot [F. Gilbert Webb] which claimed: "Only modern Italy could have produced the Intermezzo in 'Cavalleria Rusticana.' Every bar of this composition is permeated with the spirit which animates present Italian life—the passion underlying sensuous aspirations and lazy love of the beautiful." "Nationality in Music," *MS,* ill.s., 16 (24 August 1901): 119.

He then proceeded to describe Russian nationalist opera as a “specially cultivated opera, sung by Russians in Russian, the libretto composed on subjects in Russian history, the opera itself largely interspersed with Russian airs or folk songs, and with an orchestra manned by Russians.” Not only did McArthur applaud the Russian accomplishment but in turn heartily recommended the establishment of national opera in all countries--so that “in it the heroes of the past might live again and perform their great deeds before the youth of succeeding generations,” with the national folk songs and dances inspiring young composers. McArthur then appears to capitulate once again adding: “This is as far as patriotism can go in music, for music is beyond and above all nationalities. The language of the soul--it exists only for those who understand it, belonging to no individual races and no sections of people.”

Within the discussions of the period were initial attempts at clarifying exactly what attributes contributed to national expression in music. Stating that art could not be above nationality, Alexander Mackenzie found the explanation of national distinctions in music to lie chiefly in the inherent differences in temperament among the various European races. As temperaments among the races were distinct so it was impossible that their respective musics should not reflect these differences. According to Mackenzie, it was at best an exaggeration to maintain that the commonality of music's essential language was sufficient ground to explain its universality. Music is universal, as Hadow had argued, in the sense that its expressive power proceeds from and reflects fundamental traits which all mankind has in common (e.g. certain phases of feeling, fundamental passions and thoughts). Yet, as he reflected upon the creative process of the composer Mackenzie stated “it would not be easy to explain how the composer who is the possessor of real perception and fine impulse [could] get away from certain peculiarities of rhythm and melody that have been singing in

his brain from childhood. Now, perhaps this fact helps to prove almost the necessity of the existence of a national school.”

In an article that appeared in the *Review of the Week*, the author designated J. D. H. suggested that music is an international language only for the few who are actually musical. The vast majority of people find music to be as national an idiom as literature, because “it is indigenous to the soil of each country, it derives its character from that of the people, and it exactly expresses their way of looking at things.” J. D. H. extended but did not limit his argument to folk song, stating that one need only compare the folk songs of various nations to find distinctive and varied melodic, rhythmic, or constructive features. Interestingly, this writer’s advocacy of nationality in music is so ardent that it may be said to border on parochialism. “Each nation has, so to speak, its own formulas of musical expression, and these formulas are not understood or appreciated by the mass of the people of other nations. It is, therefore, quite impossible to import the music of another nation with any success. It may be appreciated by the few, but it will not be appreciated by the many.”

In 1910, Ernest Newman began his battle with the proponents of national music. In essence, Newman argued that there was “no such thing as English or French or German music. There are only two kinds of music—the good and the bad.” His article in the


17Ernest Newman, "Debussy on Nationality in Music," MT 51 (November 1910): 702. Newman would later substantially qualify this assertion. In a *MT* article of 1918 that dealt with Vaughan Williams’s setting of "A Shropshire Lad" Newman referred to the "English quality" of the work, and subsequently backtracked to justify his position. "Surprise was recently expressed in another quarter that I—1 of all people—should be either so impudent or so illogical as to speak of any music or poetry being 'English,' after my horrible record in this matter of the 'nationalist' theory… The little misunderstanding comes from my critics failing to perceive the difference between 'English' (or 'German' or 'French' as the case may be) and 'national.' I have often denied that any composer's music is or can be national, but I have never denied that it is German or French or Italian or Russian." See "Concerning 'A Shropshire Lad' and Other Matters," MT 59 (1 September 1918): 394.
Musical Times of November 1910 was generated by some comments that Debussy had made to *Quest-Artiste* concerning a recent French music festival held in Munich. Debussy's assertions sound strangely similar to what many English composers were saying at that time.

We like everything that comes from abroad. We clap our hands like children over any work that comes from afar—from Scandinavia, Germany, or the Latin countries—without properly estimating its real weight and value, without asking whether the emotions of souls foreign to our own can rouse sincere feeling in us. It will be better for us when we cease imitating weakly what these people say in their own language; when we cease to rave over false Italianism in music and false Ibsenism in literature; and when certain of our compatriots cease to make themselves ridiculous by attempting to be exotics. The Germans cannot understand us any more than we ought to try to reach them.  

These comments of Debussy provoked a response from Newman, then music critic of the *Manchester Guardian*. Newman understood that it was quite reasonable that Frenchmen would want to throw off the Wagnerian yoke after wearing it for so many years. But Debussy's suggestion that they could only truly become French “by declaring themselves to be fundamentally different in soul from the Germans” in Newman's view was extremist. Newman took particular exception to Debussy's idea that music is not made to overstep geographical frontiers. “Any student of history,” claimed Newman, “could tell these irritable amateurs that no race produces its finest flowers of the soul, whether in art, science or philosophy, without plentiful fertilisation by the culture of other races. The self-contained and self-evolving great nation is a myth.”

The principal argument that Newman advanced against the nationalists was the impossibility of formulating a generic construct of the Frenchman, the German, or the Englishman. A necessary pre-condition to formulating a national school of music, he

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reasoned, was to determine exactly what constitutes the national characteristics. Newman queried: “Is there such a thing as 'the Englishman?' What is the common denominator between types so varied as Shakespeare, Milton, Blake, Pope, Swinbourne, Meredith, William Morris, Byron, Carlyle, Charles II, Nell Gwynne, Florence Nightingale, Mrs. Aphra Behn, and Mrs. Gaskell--to extend the list no further.”

According to Newman, if one could not answer these questions definitively then there was no foundation upon which to build a national school of music. He concluded that to acknowledge such a formulation as “the German,” “the Frenchman,” or “the Italian” was to embrace a myth. Consequently, how could the nationalists speak of a national school of music--be it French, Russian, German, English--that would be the expression of that mind exclusively. In Newman’s opinion, that aesthetic belief was not only errant, but was in fact suicidal to the cause of any nation’s music. To underscore his point, Newman cited Debussy’s admiration for Bach, whom Newman termed, interestingly enough, “the most German of the Germans,” making the following observation:

Debussy may rest assured that if Bach had only written for Germans instead of humanity his following now would hardly have been larger than Debussy’s; and that if the latter can only manage to make his music speak universal wisdom instead of the complacent tags of philosophy of a little Parisian coterie—as it sometimes does—he will conquer the world as Bach has done.

In his reaction to parochialism by taking issue with the naive belief which saw art and thought as existing within a national vacuum, Newman provided an important contribution to the discussion. Yet here he has made a profound leap from a fact of contemporary universal reception to an opinion concerning the composer’s intention. The

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20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 702.
universal appeal of Bach's music does not demand the conclusion that he was writing for humanity, rather than a German public. Newman had a perspective toward Bach's music that he lacked in his appraisal of Debussy's. We would suggest that it was this perspective that necessarily magnified the local and immediate context of Debussy's music and, simultaneously, minimized those same aspects of Bach's music.

Two years later, Newman continued his attack on the concept of national music in a lively interchange with Cecil Sharp, the folk-song collector. The debate appeared in the pages of the *English Review* beginning in May 1912. In the article entitled "The Folk-Song Fallacy," Newman continued to hold to his previous line of argument. First, he found it impossible to identify a common national thread between diverse personalities living during different historical periods within a given country.

Once again, who is the typical Frenchman? In the realm of music can we really say that we can "isolate the essence" of a national musical idiom which Sharp affirms to exist? Can we find a common thread to identify a French musical idiom within the music of composers such as Debussy, d'Indy, Berlioz, and Massenet? How, Newman asked, "can any one who reflects for a moment imagine that complex nations are to be summed up in this style under a single simple formula? What is 'the' Englishman? What common denominator is there in the minds or the outlook of such people as Judge Jeffrey and Howard, Browning and Blake, Pope and Mr. Chesterton, Spencer and Keble, Elgar and Bantock, Frith and Hornel?"^22 He continued:

We have only to look within our own borders, or at our own artistic and literary history, to see that the so-called English race puts forth specimens of every mental and moral type stable and unstable, ascetic and voluptuous, intellectual and sensuous, reckless and careful, extravagant and precise—that could be raked together from all the countries on earth. "The" Englishman is a fiction. And when we speak of other

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nations as capable of being summed up under a single formula of this kind, it is only because we have not sufficient acquaintance with them to see them in detail.\footnote{Ibid., 266.}

If Newman's first argument against nationalism centered upon the problem of establishing commonality between seemingly different composers of the same nationality, the second argument addressed the issue of particularism. What is distinctive of a given nationality that is not shared by other national groups? In other words, what trait could be claimed as peculiarly French that would not be found in music that claimed to be English or Italian?

Cecil Sharp countered Newman in a reply that appeared in the same journal two months later.\footnote{Cecil Sharp, "The Folk Song Fallacy: A Reply," \textit{English Review} 11 (July 1912): 524-50.} There were a number of points advanced against Newman, but we shall limit ourselves to the essential ones. First, Sharp accused Newman of attempting to deny the existence of all national characteristics. Since, according to Sharp, any distinctive attributes of a country would necessarily overflow into its music he felt Newman was forced to minimize those distinctions between nations. Thus, Newman's argument must proceed from the belief that there are no distinctive qualities by which a person of one nationality may be distinguished from other persons of differing nationalities.

Secondly, Sharp did concede the difficulties inherent in specifically defining a national characteristic. Yet, while it might be hard to define, he nonetheless contended: "We recognize it when we come across it." Of course, said Sharp, "our conception of the German is an abstraction, but it is nonetheless a legitimate deduction as we observe many Germans."\footnote{Ibid., 543.}
A third argument finds Sharp drawing an analogy between music and painting. Because music "is intelligible to all listeners irrespective of nationality [it] is called a cosmopolitan language, and on this account, regarded as the one art in which national peculiarities can find no expression." But, asked Sharp, is painting any less universally intelligible? Yet critics find no difficulty in maintaining distinctions between national styles. Sharp made an important differentiation: "The fact is that music is a cosmopolitan language only so far as the listener, not the composer, is concerned; and each nation uses it in its own distinctive way. For proof of this you have only to glance at the music produced by the several nations of Europe to discern upon each the impress of the national stamp." Finally, Sharp challenges Newman to leave the world of the abstract and submit to a practical listening test.

Suppose Mr. Newman were to find himself by chance in a concert room, without a programme, where works, old and new, were being performed, none of which he had ever heard . . . would he find the smallest difficulty in "spotting" the national origin of all or nearly all the pieces he heard there? Does Mr. Newman ask us to believe that he would be incapable of distinguishing the music which came from Germany from that which was made in Italy? If he does, then, surely, he is doing himself a gross injustice; if not, then the whole of his argument goes by the board.

The following month saw a rejoinder to Sharp's reply. Newman felt that if Sharp had been well acquainted with modern music he would not have had the boldness to make such a claim and offered to:

play him thousands of pages of modern English, German, French, Italian, Russian, Scandinavian, Finnish, Bohemian, Hungarian, Roumanian, and American music, and defy him to name correctly the nationality of the composers in one case out of five--except by a fluke. There are hundreds of Russian works, for instance, that are

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26Ibid.
27Ibid.
28Ibid., 544.
absolutely indistinguishable in mood or idiom from English and German and Scandinavian works in the same genre.\textsuperscript{30}

Newman again expressed his two-pronged argument against a national musical idiom, that of a unified musical style within a country, and distinctiveness when compared with the music of other lands. The challenge was again issued for Sharp and others to articulate exactly what aspect is shared by all music within a given country and absent in the music produced within a different country. Having highlighted some of the arguments for and against national music let us take Newman at his challenge and isolate those features which, as many writers have argued, combine to produce a national musical idiom.

**Factors affecting nationality**

Most writers dealing with the topic of musical nationality suggested a number of factors which contribute to a national musical identity. In 1907, an article by Maud Matras appeared in the *Monthly Musical Record* entitled “Nationality in Music” in which she listed seven distinguishing characteristics that influence and actually shape a nation’s music: geography/climate, linguistics, scales, religious ceremonies, rhythm/dance, particular musical instruments, and physical/psychological constitutions.\textsuperscript{31} Other writers would offer more specific sub-categories that could be grouped under some of Matras’s broader headings. Carl Engel, for example, would pinpoint habits, occupations, food; others would list character and temperament.\textsuperscript{32} But the listing provided by Matras is a helpful summary of those factors frequently cited by a number of writers on the topic. It will be noticed that these may broadly be divided into two large categories: those factors that

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., 68-69.

\textsuperscript{31}Maud Matras, "Nationality in Music," *MMR* 37 (June 1907): 126-27.

\textsuperscript{32}Carl Engel, quoted in Joseph Bennett, "Dumps," *MT* 42 (1 January 1901): 13-15.
involve musical elements and those that by nature are non-musical traits. In our discussion we shall first concentrate on those factors that stand outside of music.

Climate was proposed as a major factor in explaining the differences between the musics of various nations. In a paper delivered before the Royal Musical Association, F. Gilbert Webb, one-time chief music critic for the Standard and later critic for the Daily Telegraph, described the effects of climate on music. He began by asserting climate's prior effects upon religious experience. Webb observed:

The northman is seen striving to propitiate his gods, awestruck in the gloom of dark forests; while the southern man is worshipping his deities in beautiful temples with song, music, and dancing. . . The religion of the northern man is one of the spirit, which regards all that appeals to the sense with suspicion, while the religion of the southern man is one of the senses; he will have nothing that is ugly, nothing that is hopeless; and he transforms eternal punishment into a transitory state of purification. [33]

It is evident that Webb was not describing only primitive and ancient civilizations as he continued.

I have dwelt at this length on the influence of climate on religion because the character of a man's real faith in the unseen biases his life-work, and especially the spirit of his musical productions. This is noticeable, for instance, in the mysticism of Gounod, the voluptuousness of Verdi, and the intellectuality of Bach and Brahms. [34]

While she does not specifically relate religion to climate, Maud Matras did find a significant bond between religious expression within “diverse countries and diverse faiths” and music. She wrote: “Devotional music ranges, through all degrees, from the dignified Gregorian chant to the elaborate mass of the Roman church, even between extremes so remote as the solemn strains of Luther's hymn, and the fantastic dance tunes, with weird harmonies, that accompany certain Oriental rites.” [35]

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[33]F. Gilbert Webb, “The Foundations of National Music,” PRMA 17 (1890-91): 118. For the sake of clarity we shall refer to this body as the Royal Musical Association even though the term “Royal” was not appended until 1944.

[34]Ibid.

Some writers, as Webb, related the effects of climate on religion and then, subsequently, upon music, while others saw the effects of climate on temperament which in turn would influence the intellectual and cultural life of a nation. Following Engel's view, George Lowe stated that it was the climate, scenery and other physical factors that combined to produce the distinctive character of a nation, which in turn produced a ruling spirit (e.g. philosophy, aestheticism, simplicity) that generated the distinctive "individuality which we term nationality in music." Some felt that aesthetic value and judgment could be strongly affected by such seemingly insignificant factors as the amount of time spent indoors as opposed to outdoors. Webb again, this time under his pseudonym "Lancelot," wrote in the *Referee*:

The man of the South lives practically out of doors, the man of the North within. The one mode of life ministers to the sensory emotions, the other induces meditation and introspection. Where the sun shines the senses quicken, and love of colour and graceful curves prevail, and with development there ensues the worship of the beautiful so remarkably illustrated by the ancient Greeks. No system of transference of ideas will alter the natural effects of climate, and music is climate in sound.

In the discussion that followed Yorke Trotter's 1904 RMA lecture, "Rhythm in National Music," Webb made a similar observation.

The inevitable tendency of living the greater part of the day in a house is to put things in order, to arrange constantly-seen objects symmetrically. Out of doors there is little or no symmetry, and the importance of details is less impressed on the eyes. This influence of environment, it seems to me, cannot fail to affect mode of thought, and consequently manner of speech, and finally style in a people's music.

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36 George Lowe, "Nationalism in Music," *MO* 31 (March 1908): 427-28. He stated: "Northern climes such as those of Russia, Norway, and Sweden produce action rather than philosophic thought or aesthetics--in the more temperate zones, such as England and Germany, science and philosophy flourish--in like manner, beneath the hot sun of the south is found less energy of mind and of body but an added gaiety and sensuality, combined with a more complete sense of beauty."


Joseph Bennett, long-time critic for the *Daily Telegraph*, after quoting and endorsing Carl Engel's views on the significance of climate, stated:

It will not be contested that the music of a people who dwell in a harsh climate, whose days are gloomy, whose summer is short, and to whom Nature turns in other respects a frowning face, must, almost as by a natural law, conform to these conditions and reflect the prevailing melancholy.\(^{39}\)

Maud Matras in the aforementioned article translated the influence of the natural world even more directly into musical language.

Turn, for instance, to the music of the northern countries, where the scenery is rugged, bleak, and wild. Those *fortes* strike with the force of a tempest beating against granite rocks; those *pianos* are wistful as the wind's whisperings through branches of a pine forest, stretching out beneath grey skies: Turn to the south. Could its glowing melodies proceed from any other than flower-laden, fruitful lands steeped in sunshine, whose fair shores are bathed by waters of *lapis lazuli* hue?\(^{40}\)

While it may be that climate and geography do affect music, and that the music of northern nations is of a different character than the music of southern nations, does this factor alone explain musical distinctions between those countries? What about those nations that are large enough to manifest varying climates? What has this to do with defining a national musical idiom? If climate influences the character of music then it follows that differing climates will inspire differences within the music of the same nation.

As Engel stated:

The influence of climate is traceable if we compare the tunes derived from the different districts of a large country. In mountainous Southern Germany, with its exhilarating air, the minor key is almost unknown, the triple time prevails, and the popular melodies are almost all capable of being harmonised with only the two common chords of the tonic and dominant. In flat Northern Germany the minor key is less foreign, the common time occurs almost as frequently as the triple time, and the modulations are, on the whole, more complicated than those of the South.\(^{41}\)

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\(^{40}\)Matras, "Nationality in Music," 126.

\(^{41}\)Engel, quoted in Bennett, "Dumps," 13.
Thus, climate may play a role as we draw comparisons and make distinctions between musics of differing countries, but it is limited in providing a satisfactory basis upon which to found or explain a national style.

As we have previously seen, a factor related to climate is the character and temperament of a nation's people. Shortly after the conclusion of the First World War, Thomas F. Dunhill in a lecture-recital on the subject of "Nationality in Music" would state: "Certain races are more 'national' than others. This characteristic was strongest in highly emotional races like the Celts and Slavs." Of the non-musical characteristics cited as providing distinctions between music of varying peoples, this factor provoked considerable discussion. Yet in reading the literature, one is never quite sure of the order of influence. Do the songs produce the character or does the character produce the songs? The anonymous writer in the Magazine of Music found that there existed a reciprocal relationship. "The songs of a nation afford a tolerably sure index of the national character, and, moreover . . . those characteristics of which they are the outcome, are fostered and perpetuated by their influence." He continues:

Is "God save the Queen" not truly English in its broad solidity and massive dignity? and is the grave and tender Scotchman not at his best in "Auld Land Syne" and the gay, rollicking Irishman in "Garry Owen"? In song as in life, the Englishman delights in hunting the hare, the Scotchman bids his "dearie" come with him to Kelvinside or Loudoun's bonnie woods and braes; the Irishman has half sanguine, half despairing dreams of the triumph of the Shan Van Vocht.

The discussion was not limited to distinctions between the songs and character of the people who inhabit the British Isles. The author extended his catalog to include French, German, and Russian characteristics as they were reflected in song.

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44Ibid.
Because folk music revealed the fundamental passions of human experience, such as love and war, many writers considered it to be the purest expression of a nation's character. It must be admitted, however, that those writers were not in full agreement as to which of those two passions was the more prominent. Webb argued: "In the war songs of a nation we more often find the characteristics of race and the peculiarities of a people's nationality than in their love songs, in which the individual character has freer play." In the following decade, Ernest Dann came to the opposite conclusion. He wrote:

The themes of folk music are the passions. Love is the most prominent of these, whatever the nation be whose melodies we consider. The love songs alone of the nations give us an admirable clue to the nature of the peoples from which they sprang. The fiery Hungarian, who is a whirlwind in his wooing and a thunderbolt in his jealousy; the playful, volatile Irishman, full of humour but tender and pathetic withal; the honest and simple hearted German, a lover of goodness and of all the qualities which go to make a heaven of home; the Scotchman whose angularities and ruggednesses vanish like magic at the touch of the blind god; the stolid yet sincere Englishman, who expresses himself none the less beautifully because he does it by the simplest and most transparent means; and last but not least the Welshman, the man of extremes, who is equally expressive in a flaming war song or in a pathetic love ditty; all these display at once the great and noble emotion common to all and the separate and individual method of expression of each.

We should note that observations regarding national temperament were not limited to folk song, but were applied to art music as well. Many articles could be cited to demonstrate the breadth of the discussion, showing that it included a host of nations and a variety of musical genres. One such witness is the previously-quoted article by Lancelot [Gilbert Webb] who wrote:

Only modern Italy could have produced the Intermezzo in “Cavalleria Rusticana”. Every bar of this composition is permeated with the spirit which animates present Italian life -the passion underlying sensuous aspirations and lazy love of the beautiful. Compare a Strauss waltz and its whirling crescendos with a Delibes ballet and its dainty lightness and fascinating coquetry, and if you know aught of the Austrian and French temperaments you will see how truly the music respectively echoes the salient characteristics of each. All the chief phases of the German temperament are reflected in


the music of Beethoven and Schumann, the former the high priest of its introspection, the latter of its romance. To come to our own times, Wagner and Richard Strauss express the present phases of German cast of thought still more powerfully, the former the controlled passion of a strong people, the latter their intellectual idiosyncrasies.47

Engel would further distinguish the music of various countries by taking into account the effects of food and drink upon their temperament. "In countries where the people commonly drink wine, the songs are more brisk and cheerful than in countries where beer is the favourite beverage."48

It should not be assumed, of course, that the general and simplistic nature of much of this discussion did not encounter a considerable degree of skepticism, if not downright disagreement. Edgar F. Jacques, future critic of the Observer, provides a sense of the controversial aspects of the issue when, upon hearing Webb's 1891 RMA lecture entitled "The Foundations of National Music," he made the following statement during the discussion:

Mr. Chairman I am very glad that someone has had the courage to stand up and assert the claims of national music to be regarded as the outcome of a people's feelings. I know that amongst my own musical acquaintances there are many who rather pooh-pooh this theory, and I have always felt that that was very ridiculous.49

As we have previously noted, Ernest Newman was the critic who seemed to take the greatest exception to the question of whether music could ever be national. It should not be surprising to find Newman also "stirring up the pot" on this issue. Prior to presenting Newman's arguments against the relationship between music and national temperament we must first summon Hubert Parry whose 1911 book, Style in Musical Art, provided a catalyst for bringing Newman into the fray. Parry accepted national distinctions in music as a given. "The fact that different races have strongly marked differences of taste

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49Edgar F. Jacques, discussion quoted in PRMA 17 (1890-91): 133.
and talent in music is so aggressively obvious that it is almost superfluous to adduce arguments to prove it.\textsuperscript{50}

Parry discussed national character from the perspectives of musical production and musical taste. He observed:

There is an intimate connection between national character and the peculiar tastes of a nation. It is observed that a voluptuous and passionate style is favoured by a self-indulgent and sensuous people, a superficially pretty and neat style is cultivated by a gay people, a weighty and serious style by an intellectual and strenuous people, a placid style by a complacent and reticent people, a blatant style by a vain and egoistic people, and an eccentric and angular style by a capricious and spasmodically energetic people. One may go so far as to suggest that wherever the taste of a people or a section of a people is strongly manifested in the characteristics of their music, it infallibly points to certain corresponding qualities of disposition.\textsuperscript{51}

Parry well realized and warned that one must be mindful of the pitfalls in drawing too rash a generalization when speaking of a national temperament. He admonished his reader to remember that nations are primarily geographical units, and consequently when we refer to French or German or Italian music "we are speaking of the music of very mixed races" though a "predominant partner" may arise from time to time. A second aspect of his admonition concerned those nations that sometimes exhibited "conspicuous differences of behaviour and even of character at different periods of their existence." But, having provided this caveat, Parry nonetheless maintained that music is the truest manifestation of "the most strongly marked characteristics" of any people.\textsuperscript{52}

Further in the volume, Parry divided the entire human race into two categories according to musical taste, essentially seeing everyone as either an Italian or a German in musical approach. Parry wrote:

\textsuperscript{50} C. Hubert H. Parry, \textit{Style in Musical Art} (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1911): 152.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Ibid.}, 152-53.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Ibid.}, 154-55.
There are two distinct types of human beings who enjoy music. There are, on the one hand, those who delight in music for itself alone, who are filled with joy by its melodies and its rhythms and its harmonies, and, on the other hand, there are those who are not so spontaneously musical in their appreciation but who enjoy music because it expresses strange depths of feeling, awakes mysterious associations, and make them feel emotional situations with an intensity which is never approached in any other way whatever. For the one type the art is a refined pleasure, for the other a spiritual exaltation. The Italians being pre-eminently a musical race, delight in it for itself. They of all people seem to have the genuine, spontaneous, unsophisticated joy in its beauty of form and phrase and melody; whereas the northern races not being so musical, and being driven by force of climatic conditions to more strenuous thought, have always striven to make music wider and more satisfying to minds asking the “why” and the “wherefore” of things, by making it an interpreter of things outside itself.53

Thus, according to Parry, the Italians are the more musical of the two cultures. It is sheer beauty of melody that distinguishes their music. The Germans, on the other hand, have shown less natural aptitude for music but have been able to turn it toward their desired end which was to manifest thought, expression, and character. What specifically brought Newman into the discussion was Parry's claim that these differences are essentially racial in origin.

Newman began his discourse against Parry by citing a “truth” which Mill and Huxley had long ago pointed out, which states:

Of all ways of accounting for the differences between the arts and customs and constitutions of nations, that of attributing them all to “race” is the most superficial. The lax habit of mind that allows people to be satisfied with these pseudo-explanations almost invariably decoys them into a maze of self-contradiction.54

Afterwards, Newman subjected Parry's description of the music of the Italian and that of the Teuton to logical analysis, finding him trapped in a “maze of self-contradiction.”

In his discussion of Italian and German music Parry had cited Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, and Haydn as representing various aspects of the question. Parry, quoted by Newman, had stated that “Mozart, and the Italians among whom he represents the highest

53Ibid., 321-22.
type, usually make long meandering passages of melody with no very definite articulation.” Schubert was called the “true Teuton” who aiming at “concentration of expression compresses his thought into figures which are specially definite and telling.” Parry next enlisted Schumann whom he says “was gifted with more of the familiar Teutonic disposition to reflect and look inwards than Schubert, whose gaiety of the Viennese type generally kept him in touch with the outward aspect of things.” Haydn, when compared with Mozart, is “throughout as Teutonic in spirit and manner as it was possible to be in those times, and . . . most of his work has a high degree of personal characteristic vitality; while Mozart, with more delicate artistic perception, more sense of beauty, a much higher gift of technique and more general facility, is comparatively deficient in individuality, and hardly shows any trace of Teutonism in style form first to last.”

Newman here analyzes the substance of what Parry has presented. Mozart, a German, is called the highest representative of the Italians. Schubert is called a “true Teuton” but not so Teutonic as Schumann. Newman draws the implied conclusion: “the true Teuton is not a true Teuton in comparison with a truer Teuton.” Newman, having isolated the comment that Haydn was “throughout as Teutonic . . . as it was possible to be in those times,” proposed this irresistible conclusion. “From this remark . . . one would infer that even Teutons are not always as Teutonic on some days as they are on others--which is as if we should apologize for the water not being quite so wet on Friday as it was on Tuesday.” But all of this, he added, was beside the point because “all the modern evidence” points to the reality that Haydn was not a Teuton, but was a Slav. Thus, Newman concludes: “it was this poor Slav who was ‘as Teutonic as it was possible to be

55Ibid.
56Ibid.
in those times,' while Mozart, an undeniable Teuton by birth and environment, represents 'the highest type' of the Italian! . . . What conclusion can we come to but that the whole theory of 'racial characteristics' in music is flawed to the very centre?"58

Cecil Sharp, in opposition to Parry and Newman, insisted that "nationality is the controlling factor, not race."59 According to Sharp, while a nation is constituted of several races, the distinctive characteristics of each "gradually become obliterated and merged into a single type under the unifying influences of a common climate, environment, fatherland, laws, and government."60 Sharp continued, arguing that until a "community has developed characteristics of its own, it is questionable whether, strictly speaking, it can rightly be called a nation at all." It follows that "if a nation has attributes of its own, these must necessarily colour and qualify its music. That is to say, each nation must ultimately evolve a musical style of its own."61

To understand Newman's contention it is crucial to see that for him there was virtually no difference between race and nationality. In fact he, in retaliation, accused Sharp of making that "bogus distinction." But Newman was forced to put his argument into sharper focus as he admitted that art "at certain times and under certain conditions" could indeed acquire "a stamp that differentiates it markedly from the art of communities living under other conditions."62

58Newman, "Folk-Song Fallacy," 257.

59Sharp, "Folk Song Fallacy: A Reply," 544.

60Ibid.

61Ibid., 545.

As Newman's argument progresses it becomes increasingly evident that his problem with the idea of nationalism in music has historical overtones. Bach's "German" style is attributable to both the presence and absence of influences that contributed to create his immediate environment. As civilization has advanced the "marked differences of mental outlook and of idiom" which have historically distinguished "one European community from another . . . become less noticeable."^63 In short, we may speak of a period in history in which a composer was isolated from a cosmopolitan world-view and therefore was more a pure product of his community, but now the impact of contemporary society has, in effect, eroded those lines of demarcation. By extension, this same progress of time has also profoundly affected a single nation within different periods of its history. Consequently, differences between nations at the same time period are no more substantial than differences within a single nation at different periods of its history. Therefore "it makes havoc of [Sharp's] theory of the oneness and continuity of 'the national mind.'"^64

One more factor that was suggested as contributing to a national musical idiom is that of language, specifically linguistics and literature. It was stated above that Gilbert Webb held that there was a connection between climate and religion which in turn affected thought patterns, speech, and ultimately music. In the same discussion that followed Yorke Trotter's RMA paper, Webb further developed the influence of language upon music. Having already suggested the relationship between climate and temperament, he continues: "Temperament governs language, and particularly verbal accentuation, and manner of speech inevitably dictates the form of melody and its rhythm."^65 Webb gave evidence of this occurrence by citing folk tunes of different nationalities. According to

^63Ibid., 67-68.

^64Ibid., 68.

Webb, the Hungarian language "is probably the most subtle in accentuation." Thus, it follows that the folk songs from Hungary are necessarily going to exhibit the greatest rhythmic variety. Webb continues:

As one goes Westward and Northward the folk-tunes lose strongly-marked rhythmic characteristics, and the notes become more even in duration and the melodies more symmetrical, until we come to our own old tunes, the majority of which are in notes of equal value, corresponding with our comparatively slow and even mode of speech.

As Webb found the rhythms of the spoken language reflected in the rhythmic character of the folk song, Maud Matras expanded the influence of speech upon music to include such aspects as vocal inflection and tonal quality to further characterize the music. "The construction of various languages, their forms of expression, accents, rhythms, are in one sense and to a certain extent reproduced in music. Also the variations of timbre, pitch, and range in the voices of persons of different nationalities add their quota to its characterization."

In an article appearing in the 28 July 1917 issue of the *Musical Standard*, the writer C. N. claimed that the interrelationship of all the arts necessitated that as we "come to consider the 'nationality' of any one art, we must to a certain extent take into consideration the others, if we are to reach bed-rock." Having stated that literature was "at the root of every country's art," he proceeded to find an alliance between the character of a people as revealed in their literature and in their music. In Russian music, as well as in Russian literature, there is "the same passionate devotion to the life of the people. Russian music palpitates with the people's tunes, and so the books throb with very serious and very

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wonderful life also."® As Russian literature and music parallel one another, so are they both different from their French counterparts. When we consider the arts of France, we note that "the people are all different; they no longer breathe of eternal suffering and eternal problems, but become livelier, more vivacious, and, if not better, at least somewhat more gay."®

Having looked at the non-musical factors that most frequently appear in discussions of national music—namely climate, temperament, and language—we now turn our attention to musical matters. The two most prominent witnesses to distinctions between nations are folk song melodies and the rhythmic characteristics of folk dances. While few advocates of national music would hold the opinion that folk music had an exclusive claim in revealing national character, most would agree that the most reliable place to look for national differences was in a country's folk songs and dances.

Even among the most hardened "universalists" there were some writers who admitted to distinctions within the area of folk music. Alexander McArthur, whose negative pronouncement regarding the possibility for nationality in art music we quoted above, made allowance in the case of folk music. "The only thing national in music is the folk song and the dance. Both are the outcome of the lives of the people, and in them we find reflected social characteristics and peculiarities. They are spontaneous, the musical expression of a simple state of life." He continues: "They are born, not made, and are the indicators of a pure nationality."® But they may only be considered as national as they are interpreted by "the people." They cannot be transferred to another idiom (e.g. art music) in an effort to produce a national identity.®

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®Tbid.

®Tbid.

Yorke Trotter addressed the topic in his “Rhythm in National Music” paper. From the outset he maintained that “modern music is derived from two sources—the music of the church and the music of the people.” The former was rule-oriented, professionally-maintained, and elaborate in its design. The latter, on the other hand, was spontaneous, intuitive, emotional, authentic, and above all, characterized by its “rhythmical melody.”

According to Yorke Trotter, while it was true that there may be distinctions between the church music of various countries, this was due primarily to the differences in liturgy and services, rather than to obvious musical features. In folk music the differences are easily distinguishable because the “musical idiom unmistakably varies in different nationalities.” Consequently, “it is to the folk-songs that we must turn when we seek for characteristic national music.”

Cecil Sharp, the folk-song enthusiast encountered earlier in dispute with Ernest Newman, wrote eloquently of the value of folk song not only as an unadulterated revelation of national character, but also as the only legitimate basis for the establishment of a national musical idiom. He stated:

National musical idiom is, I contend, to be found in its purest, crudest, and least diluted form in a nation’s traditional music. Just as the mixture is strongest at the bottom of the bottle, so are the peculiar characteristics of a nation concentrated in its humblest class. This is natural enough; because the peasantry, as a class, is, of all others, the most homogeneous and the least affected by alien and outside influences. Unlettered and untravelled, the peasant has had no opportunity of producing an imitative, sophisticated art. What art he does create must of necessity be spontaneous, natural, and unselfconscious.

Now, if music be a genuine art in a nation, not merely an exotic, it must somewhere exist in germinal form as a natural and spontaneous expression; it must lie deeply rooted in the bed-rock of the national character. Art can only be built up from below; the instinct for music cannot suddenly appear for the first time when civilisation has

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72See chapter five.


74Ibid., 18.
attained the flowering stage; it must be innate in the nation and be present, therefore, in some form or other, in all the earlier periods of its development.\footnote{Sharp, "Folk Song Fallacy: A Reply," 545.}

Other writers saw the folk song not merely as a forum for the display of national distinctions but rather as the spirit behind all music. The influence of folk songs was not limited to those compositions that quoted their melodies. In fact, it did not really matter whether or not the music showed an obvious debt. It was rather the unseen presence. "Folk-song may fairly claim to be the vital principle in the music of all nations; it is the spirit without which the most elaborate works are but mere lifeless monuments of human industry and misdirected energy."\footnote{Webb, "Foundations," 121.} Sir Alexander Mackenzie recognized in the use of folk materials in art music "a strong desire to preserve jealously the peculiar qualities that distinguished the national temperament." But folk music exhibited even more than that. He saw in folk music the "key to the music and sometimes the political history of nations."\footnote{"Sir A. C. Mackenzie on Nationality in Music. 'Hansel und Gretel,'" lecture reported in MS, ill.s., 3 (16 February 1895): 130-31.}

While the rhythmic aspect of folk song was considered to be the vital aspect that carried national identity, consideration of scales did occupy many writers. Maud Matras observed:

The scales from which melodies arise are by no means alike in all parts of the globe. For instance, there are over seventy different examples in the music of India alone; while Chinese, and other Eastern tunes, are evidently based upon other scales than those familiar to Western ears, chiefly, in fact, upon that known as the "Pentatonic."\footnote{Matras, "Nationality in Music," 126-27.}

A report of an Edinburgh lecture delivered by H. Sandiford Turner on the topic appeared in the pages of the Musical Standard. Turner also recognized the tonality of
national folk songs to lie outside traditional tonal schemes. According to the report he stated:

National folk-songs divide themselves into two great classes. One class is that in which an imperfect scale—generally speaking, a five-tone scale—is employed in their construction [e.g. as in Scotland]. The other class of national song is that which is constructed more or less largely around the old ecclesiastical modes.\(^7\)

The rhythm of dance music constitutes the other primary factor in establishing distinctions between national musics. As would be expected, much of the discussion focuses upon folk dance, but not to the exclusion of court dances which were also frequently mentioned. In essence, each may be representative of national temperament, geography, and climate. As the following writer asserted, the dance music of various countries is so tied to the culture that the listener is practically transported through the medium.

There is something equally characteristic in the dance-music [as in the songs] of the different nations. It is in some Highland glen, amid the wild "skirling" of the "pipes" that "Thulichen," "Tullochgorum," or "The De'il among the Tailors," comes off best. We can scarcely imagine a phlegmatic German or a courtly Frenchman joining in the "hooching" of a genuine Scottish reel, or taking part in the rattling fun of an Irish jig. The light and tripping Tarantella is meant for an Italian sky; and the elegant yet formal gallantry of the Frenchman sets off to best advantage the stately Sarabande\(^8\) or Minuet. The very measure of a country-dance seems to transport us to some pleasant village green where English lads and lasses are making merry under the maypole; while the free and open "Ländler" carries us off in a trice to the mountain-air of Styria.\(^9\)

The same writer distinguished the dance music of Russia, Ireland, and the Celtic parts of Scotland as revealing a "wide and reckless gaiety which is not found in the music of any other country, except, perhaps, Hungary."\(^10\)

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\(^7\)"Nationality in Music," lecture by H. Sandiford Turner, reported in MS, n.ill.s., 7 (15 April 1916): 281-82.

\(^8\)Note that the Sarabande (Spanish in origin) is cited as being characteristically French.


\(^10\)Ibid.
Yorke Trotter, in his previously-quoted RMA paper, stated that one of the essential differences between the music of the church and the music of the people was the latter's "rhythmical melody." He stated: "Rhythm is the very essence of the art, and it is to the folk-music [dance and song] that we are indebted for rhythm and all that results from it." And further: "The superiority of folk-music over its rival the Church . . . is no doubt due to the natural rhythmic sense" which it exhibits.

According to Yorke Trotter, because "every kind of feeling finds its outcome in the dance" the habit of dancing is universal and timeless. Yet each nation has cultivated its own particular style. He then proceeded to name various dances associated with particular countries: Cushion-Dance and Morris-Dance (England), Fandango, Seguidilla, and Bolero (Spain), Russjaka and Cossack (Russia), Polonaise and Mazurka (Poland), Csardas (Hungary). He admitted, however, that there were certain countries (e.g. Germany, France, Italy), not appearing on the above list, with a less developed rhythmic instinct associated with the dance.

Crucial to the vitality of the dance music is the variety inherent in the dance itself. This feature overflows into the entire corpus of folk music.

Each country has its own special characteristics, a study of which yields most interesting results. Not only do we find characteristic rhythmic periods and differences in accent, but the time-signatures vary in accordance with the rhythms of the favourite dances in each country. Hungary . . . favours duple or common time; Spain, Austria, and Poland, triple time; Italy, compound time, and so on. We can find in Finnish music examples of five beats in a bar, and that this time is not unnatural may be shown from the fact that such a barbarous nation as the Soudanese use this time for their dances. And at the present time in Spain we can hear popular songs in five time.

84 Ibid., 18.
85 Ibid., 23.
"Oh, how much does music owe to the joyful, graceful, poetic motions of the terpsichorean art!" exclaimed Maud Matras. "It would be truly difficult to over-estimate the value of national dances in their relation to national music, for in treading each measure the feet of a nation ever step in unison with the pulsations of its heart."  

F. Gilbert Webb listed the rhythmic factor as one of his foundations of national music. He divided characteristic rhythmic figures into three categories: figures in which dotted notes occur; figures of three notes variously accented played within the time of two notes, namely triplets; and "phrases not distinguished by these peculiarities but possessing wider intervals and flowing character," namely a series of notes of equal value. Each of these rhythmic features "is traceable to different races or fusions of races." Webb provided two important qualifications to his theory. First of all, he asserted that the "characteristics of the music of one race or fusion of races will at times be found in the music of another," thus he did not intend to imply that each of these is the exclusive property of but one race. The second qualification is related to the first. The emotions that are expressed through these rhythmic figures are common to all mankind, so cross-fertilization will be naturally inevitable.  

His paper explored each of these areas. Of particular interest is the discussion of the first of these characteristic figures which separates into two kinds, the trochaeus and iambus. Depending on where the accent is placed, these rhythmic figures, Webb believed, were as revealing of the character and temperament of a people as was their language. In fact, both rhythm and language were interrelated products of the national temperament.

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88 Ibid., 115.  
89 Webb was in the Chair thirteen years later when Yorke Trotter delivered his "Rhythm in National Music" lecture to the Royal Musical Association. During the discussion period Webb linked
The trochaeus, or "Scotch snap," having the accent upon the short note, is the "musical expression of great muscular strength allied with highly-developed nervous force—I mean rapidity of nervous action, or transmission of thought to the muscular mechanism, which proceeds from great determination of mind and quick decision." But if that insight was not sufficient, Webb also found a people's ethical orientation to be revealed by the rhythmic figure. In the Scotch snap he discerned a sure sign of a teleological ethical orientation. "It is the language of relentless resolution, of a mind which once fixed on the acquisition of an object cares not what consequences may result to itself or others so long as the end in view is attained." The iambus, on the other hand, finds the accent changed to the long note which "implies a less impulsive action but a greater staying power—determinative action proceeding from previous careful consideration—it is the expression of conviction based on experience and calculation."

It should be clear from the preceding discussion—which offered only selected examples—that there were many writers presenting views as to the part played by observable factors in distinguishing musics of various nations, and that there was considerable variety in the weight and influence of those factors. But the question remains: How do those factors combine to create music with a specific national identity? We shall now turn to consider the national music of Germany, France, Russia, Hungary, and

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91Ibid.

92Ibid., 123.
Bohemia. A frequent feature that accompanies many discourses upon the music of other nations is the question, stated or implied, of what England can learn from the experience of other nationalistic movements and translate to its own soil. We must leave this question for the moment until we have formed a more substantial idea of the response of English writers and critics to those national movements.

**Specific National Identities**

In the thought and criticism of the day, writers interested in the national question were drawn to the musical life of many countries. Thus, any number could be included in this discussion. The basis for the choice of five was simply the extent and inherent interest of the thought respecting those countries.\(^{93}\)

In the various articles dealing with specific national musical identities it is difficult to escape the word “spirit” as the writers were trying to discuss exactly what made German music “German” or Russian music “Russian.” One gets the distinct impression that, according to many writers, national identity in music is an undeniable reality, but at the same time is virtually immeasurable and perhaps even incapable of deliberate cultivation. Many would say that when a composer is truly sincere and most honest with himself then he will by nature compose national music and thus become a nationalistic composer. He will display a national spirit. They might be able by way of analogy to suggest correspondences with other aspects of a nation’s life, such as climate, temperament, food, and others but it is the “spirit” which makes a national composer. As A. E. Keeton observed:

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\(^{93}\)By their inclusion, the writer does not intend to imply deliberate national consciousness on the part of all of the composers mentioned. In many instances, this certainly does not seem to have been the case. Our primary interest is in the perceptions by musical writers and critics of national differences for whatever reason, conscious or unconscious.
It is easy to speak of nationality in music; to explain definitely the meaning of the term is difficult enough. As often as not the quality betrays itself more in the spirit of the work than in its outward form. We are perfectly aware of its existence, but it seems almost too subtly indefinite and intangible to express in words. We think of Chopin, Glinka, Smetana, Dvorak, Grieg, as the composers who have most prominently displayed this nationality.  

In her list of nationalist composers Keeton proceeded to include Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms, and Wagner, asking who but Germans could have composed the most representative and significant works of these men. Why do we not think of them principally as nationalist composers? According to Keeton, those geniuses so dominated the world and their music achieved such a high level that it became "the exclusive model for other nations." Consequently, "we have long ago ceased to individualise it as purely German."  

So what is "purely German" music? George Lowe found a correspondence between the spirit of the nation and its music in mathematics, philosophy, and romantic literature. The insights of Kepler and Kant have their analogy in the music of Bach and Beethoven, respectively. Both Kepler and Bach find their commonality in mathematical laws. In Kant as well as Beethoven, "the emotions of the human soul are felt soaring above the more materialistic instincts. We feel the power of the deep thinker and of the questioner as to the true meaning of the universe." The effect of the German romantic literature of Goethe and Schiller upon Schubert and Weber enabled them "to relax the strictures of form of the older masters and to let inspiration take a freer course."

According to Lowe, Wagner was the quintessential German, standing as "the incarnation of  

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the combined mathematical, philosophical and romantic spirit and [seizing] upon what was best in each.”  

Rutland Boughton, the English composer, wrote that the “German nature is slow, heavy, careful, strict, and sensuous. It has a love for largeness and weight; but at the same time can become absolutely engrossed upon the most trivial point of detail if a preconceived idea is disturbed.” While he would undoubtedly admit exceptions, Boughton held that a German looks “for constructive beauty and emotional life.” The German character is most perfectly expressed in the music of Bach and Max Reger. “The large, steady, almost ponderous progress of a Bach fugue or a Reger piece is well ordered from beginning to end. Nearly all its details are well packed in and subordinated to the general outline of the work.”  

Parry noted the German preoccupation with emotion evident in the operatic reforms of Gluck, asking “what are they but protests against the formalities which obstructed the true expression of human feelings?” The point of contact for the beginnings and growth of German music, Parry felt, was the “inspiring influences of their religious reforming ardour.” He continues:

The effect of the Teutonic instinct is to bring music into touch with realities, to express something which is human, to add immeasurably to the power of great thoughts, and to stir noble emotions. Not to leave the being merely in a pleasant state of indefinite exaltation by abstract beauty and abstract ideas, but to make men feel what is eloquent enhanced by an eloquence which transcends mere speech. To give men trembling on the verge of materialism a new revelation of spiritual possibilities, and extinguish pessimism by giving a new meaning to life.  

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97 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
100 Parry, Style, 169.
101 Ibid., 170.
It will be remembered that Parry looked at the entire human race in light of only two possible musical orientations. Each individual was either a German or an Italian.

Another writer who considered German music to be more easily defined when compared and contrasted with Italian music was Francesco Berger. In an article written for *Musical Opinion*, Berger was particularly interested in the differing approaches toward opera as an explanation for the Germans' lack of success in that genre. He omitted Wagner, but cited Beethoven, Mozart, and Weber as exceptions to the comparative failure of German opera.

The German sets out to discover new harmonic combinations, new chords, new orchestral effects. The Italian seeks lovely melodies, tunes which express in music what the drama represents on the stage. If, in the course of three entire acts, the German has succeeded in introducing "augmented fifths" that resolve into "diminished ninths" or in allotting to a tuba the kind of phrase generally allotted to a piccolo, he is happy... Not so the Italian. He cares not for chords, casts harmonies to the dogs: instrumentation is his handmaid, not his mistress. His object is to invent... tunes that shall embody and emphasize the action or sentiment of the moment and live for ever after in the hearts of his audience. Tunes that the public can sing, or whistle, and cherish... The German devotes too much attention to detail, losing sight of the outline; the Italian concerns himself chiefly with the outline and lets detail take care of itself. The one is grammatically accurate and artistically wrong; the other is artistically right but grammatically faulty.  

If the "spirit" of German music is mathematical, philosophical, and romantic, the same writer observed that "the leading spirit of France is aesthetic and artistic--France devotes herself rather to social intercourse than to thought. She is the country of chivalry, of elegance, of grace and sentiment." Lowe conceded that France, of course, had her scientists but they did not express the national spirit as did the German thought-leaders. He maintained that the French spirit was best seen in her literature, particularly in the writings of Molière and even more so in Balzac. "The emotions lie very near the surface, but at the same time they are very real. The sentiments of love and of passion exist as they exist in

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103 Ibid.
no other nation, except perhaps in Italy; and the sense of refinement and of courtesy rules all actions."^104

Saint-Saëns, Massenet and Delibes serve as musical counterparts to the above writers. In their works "the French grace and delicacy have full sway and the emotions of love are depicted with graphic force. This love is not deep, but rather is a sensual love which throbs with passion carrying one away."^105 Lowe excluded Debussy from the list of composers who truly exemplify characteristic French traits for he is "too much of a Wagnerite to be considered a truly national composer."^106

Parry found the French disposition very much different from the German in its minimal attention to abstract artistic principles and in lack of "expression of deep feeling." Citing the two components of the French musical aesthetic to be "rhythm and dexterity of presentation," he stated that the "French have always seemed to regard music as the minister of gaiety."^107 In Parry's view, the French have little regard for substance when compared with style, or seriousness when compared with lightheartedness. He continues: "They seem disposed to regard manner as of almost more consequence than matter, and in music at all events they look askance at serious subjects because they may tend to weightiness. The unforgivable thing is to bore, and if art is looked upon as a minister to gaiety, the moment it becomes serious boredom is in dangerous proximity."^108

In an article that appeared in Musical Opinion, G. Jean-Aubry drew a parallel between the reawakening of music in France and the possibilities for a similar revival in

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^105 Ibid.

^106 Newman was no doubt interested to learn that! (See page 15)

^107 Parry, Style, 162.

^108 Ibid.
England. The writer found that the French composers had essentially two sources for the rediscovery of the French musical art, popular song and the music of the past. Through a study of these two media, musicians attempted to locate characteristics that were thoroughly French. Jean-Aubry writes:

Convinced that true French music had existed; they were now assured to discover its secret; they felt attracted by picturesqueness, simplicity and sensibility—all of which are thoroughly French—and applying to popular things, or rather to themes very near popular strains, the aesthetical principles which had guided the intimate art of Couperin, Rameau, Mehul, and Boieldieu, they found again the secret of a French art.\(^{109}\)

Eaglefield Hull observed that French national characteristics were exhibited in their modern music, listing those characteristics as “their love for daring originality, their subtle feeling for romance, their passion for clarity and ‘nattiness’ have produced entirely new art methods.”\(^{110}\) Even Ernest Newman was willing to admit that there are forces which are distinctly French that are not characteristic of the English musical scene. In contrast to Jean-Aubry who, as we have seen, suggested parallels between the musical revivals in England and France, Newman contends that there are significant differences between the artistic cultures of the two countries. Writing in 1918 he stated: “What has happened during the last twenty-five years or so in French music, resulting in giving France a great deal of music that is truly and finely her own, has been the outcome of certain forces peculiar to French civilisation and French culture as a whole.”\(^{111}\)

In the fourth chapter we shall address the question of what England could learn from the nationalistic movements of other countries to foster its own national music. For


the present, however, we shall simply point out that Newman's argument provides a sharp
distinction between national artistic cultures and implies a significance that perhaps
Newman himself would not acknowledge. He stated that French art tended toward greater
self-consciousness and was "more closely connected with French literature and politics."
In essence, he determined French artistic culture to be considerably more unified
aesthetically than was its English counterpart.\textsuperscript{112}

Thus, the picture of French musical culture, as provided by many writers, was
quite unified. Its spirit was artistic and aesthetic with particular regard for style, elegance,
and refinement. The principle aim of the music was to communicate gaiety, not to
overburden the listener with rigid formalism and academicism. The emotions it conveyed,
particularly love, should be sensual, lying very near the surface. Finally, because there
was an interrelatedness between all of the French arts they all point to a shared aesthetic
end.

A number of writers found musical characteristics held in common by all of the
Slavonic peoples, be they Russian, Hungarian, Bohemian, or Polish. G.W. wrote in the
Musical Times:

The chief feature of Slavonic music is the powerful manner in which it expresses the
rapid fluctuations of mental excitement. This it does by the ardent expression and
exaggerated accentuation of emotional phases. Its love is wild passion, its desire is
unutterable yearning. Its exaltation is frenzy, its despondency is hopeless despair. The
cry of the animal is heard in its speech, and barbaric splendour characterises the glow
of its colouring.\textsuperscript{113}

Another writer also found a barbaric, primitive, and earthy aspect to the music of
the Slavic peoples. "Wild, weird, witchlike melodies, broken rhythms and bold harmonic
transitions are its prevailing characteristics. It is the language of unstable impulsive

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{113}G. W., "Slavonic Music," MT 36 (October 1895): 655.
passion, deep and fierce, of inexpressible tenderness and unbridled fury; in a word, the very antithesis of English."^114

The years just prior to and following 1900 found substantial interest among English writers in Russian music. Among the more important articles appearing in the journals at this time were those by A. E. Keeton, Rosa Newmarch, Montagu Montagu-Nathan and Edward A. Baughan. Many of these dealt specifically with the foundations of Russian nationalism, looking particularly at the activities of Glinka, Dargomyzhsky, and the “Five.”

A. E. Keeton, in an article from which we have previously quoted, found in Russian music:

the strangest paradox—it owes more to the music of other countries than any other school, yet no music is more thoroughly individual and unmistakable. It clothes itself after the form and fashion of its neighbours, but beneath its garb peeps out a physiognomy indubitably Slavonic. Its utterances impress us as the most modern—yet the student who would correctly analyse many of its unique characteristics of harmony and modulation is often obliged to take a flying leap backwards over a space of centuries in order to investigate old Church modes or Persian and Arabian scale systems, both so ancient as to be well-nigh forgotten in Western Europe.115

Keeton characterized Russian music, as many writers have, as a music of the people. Glinka sought this idiom generally in vocal music, specifically in the operatic genre. Keeton affirmed “any music which claims to proceed from the very heart of the Russian people must contain a vocal element. So universal a love of singing as exists throughout Russia is to be met with in no other country.”116 Furthermore, this love of song “applies as much to the noble as to the peasant.”

The topic of Glinka’s nationalism was taken up the following year by Rosa Newmarch, who presented a paper before the Royal Musical Association. She also saw


^115Keeton, "Glinka," 413.

^116Ibid., 416.
the development of national opera and the desire to appeal to his fellow countrymen as being Glinka's chief goals in establishing a national music. She quoted a letter of Glinka written to a friend in which he stated his desire "to compose an opera that shall be entirely national. Not only the subject, but the music itself. I should like my fellow countrymen to feel quite at home with it." Newmarch then explained what it meant to be national, which in her estimation far exceeded the mere employment of folk song, "that artless and direct expression of national musical feeling." Others had tried but failed to produce "national music in the same sense as Glinka." She continued: "To be truly national, to express the soul of a people, it is necessary to go to the root--to the national life itself." This could only be achieved by penetrating deeply into the "conditions of national life" as Glinka had. "He was at home in the world, not only of Slavonic melody, but of Slavonic sentiment and Slavonic history, and he employs this wealth of colour, form, and emotion with the confidence born of life-long knowledge." Thus, he created the national opera *A Life for the Tsar* through the inclusion of national source materials, the use of balalaika effect, the prominence of the bass voice of the lead character Ivan Sousanin, and the use of mode.

Two years later, Newmarch presented a second paper in which she continued her narrative of the development of Russian national opera. In this lecture her attention was directed to the works of Dargomyzhsky, Musorgsky, and Serov--none of whom, she felt, "belong entirely to that school of national lyric opera inaugurated by Glinka."

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118 Ibid., 63.

119 Ibid.

Newmarch quoted a letter from Dargomyzhsky to Prince Odowsky written in the early 1850s in which Dargomyzhsky compared his national aesthetic to Glinka’s, whom he believed to have touched only one aspect of a many-sided Russian art. “In ‘The Roussalka’ I shall endeavour as much as possible to bring out the dramatic and humourous elements of our national music. I shall be glad if I achieve this, though it may seem a half-protest against Glinka.”

According to Newmarch, however, it was not *Russalka* that most perfectly exemplified Dargomyzhsky’s “Russianness” but *The Stone Guest*. “It unites, as in a focus, most of the dominant ideas and tendencies of the school that proceeded from Glinka and Dargomijsky, and proves that neither nationality of subject nor of melody constitutes nationality of *style*, and that a subject which bears the stamp and colour of the south may become completely Russian when moulded by Russian hands.”

Musorgsky, however, in her estimation achieved the Russian musical idiom most convincingly. “It would be impossible to point to anything in Russian music more intensely and touchingly national than [his] prelude to ‘Khovantshina’.” Prior to concluding her article Newmarch, in the interest of completeness, looked at some of the composers whose works exhibit a “leaning towards cosmopolitanism,” namely Rubinstein, Tchaikovsky, and specifically Serov.

A different basis for Russian nationalism was argued by George Lowe, who saw the unifying thread of Russian music not primarily in its use of folk song, simulation of folk instruments, or subject matter, but rather in its sad and pessimistic character. This quality of hopelessness was extended to all of the Russian arts, particularly poetry and literature. In Lowe’s opinion, the four composers who best exemplify Russian national

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music are Balakirev, Borodin, Tchaikovsky, and Arensky. In the Pathetic symphony "is the cry of a spirit groping in the dark: gloomy, passionate and hopeless. Even in the lighter works of Russian composers... an undertone of sadness is observable peering through the veil of gaiety."^24

In 1913 E. A. Baughan, former editor of the Musical Standard, wrote a penetrating article for the Fortnightly Review on the subject of Musorgsky's operas.125 The chief interest of this article lies in Baughan's wrestling with two significant issues. The first issue concerned the relationship between the artistic expression of an original genius and the establishment of an aesthetic basis upon a derived universal artistic truth. In other words, if Musorgsky used folk music to great effect in Boris Godunov and thereby achieved a distinctly Russian idiom, are we then correct in drawing an aesthetic conclusion that the use of folk music will invariably produce a national idiom. Baughan did not limit the implications of the question to Russian music but extended his inquiry of the possibilities to other nations.

The second issue, which is related to the first and in fact proceeds from it, was the question of exactly how Musorgsky's operas achieved their national quality. In comparison with Rimsky-Korsakov's Ivan the Terrible, Baughan found the Russian quality of Musorgsky's music not so much in the folk character of the music but in the authentic portrayal of the Russian people and their history. It is the realistic fashion in which he communicates the "spirit" of the period that makes his operas much more convincing than those of Rimsky-Korsakov. While Ivan the Terrible contains music which "is more skillfully written and... more shapely in design" and is thus more "artistic" than

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either of Musorgsky's operas, "it is much more the ordinary product of an artist who desires to depict a period in history for the sake of its romantic glamour." Musorgsky's operas find their nationalist quality in the life-blood of the Russian people. "The protagonists of his drama are the Russian people, the suffering people on whose bodies and spirits the 'great' men of the nation carved their will." Quoting a letter written to Stasov, Baughan finds Musorgsky's aesthetic aim. "To seek assiduously the most delicate and subtle features of human nature--of the human crowd--to follow them into unknown regions, to make them our own: this seems to me the true vocation of the artist . . . to feed upon humanity as a healthy diet which has been neglected--there lies the whole problem of art."  

What role does folk song play? Folk song provided knowledge--revealing the essence and spirit--of the people Musorgsky wished to portray. His effectiveness was due largely to the success with which he assimilated its language and spirit. Musorgsky "had so saturated his mind with the music of his nation that some of the tunes he himself has invented cannot be distinguished from genuine folk-music."

The chief detractor from the possibility of Russian national music was Ernest Newman who, in his 1914 article "Russian Opera and Russian 'Nationalism,'" took issue with the opinion that the Russian operas were "national in subject or in musical idiom." Newman's article is a comparatively lengthy one; therefore we can only summarize the substance of his arguments.

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126 Ibid., 540.
127 Ibid., 542.
128 Ibid., 541. [translation by Rosa Newmarch]
129 Ibid., 543.
130 Ernest Newman, "Russian Opera and Russian 'Nationalism',' MT 55 (August 1914): 505.
First: he accused the “nationalists” of confusing the terms “national” with “historical” when speaking of operatic plots. Second: he defined nation in strictly a geographical and political sense, as “any body of people who live within the same geographical boundary and under the same political constitution.” “National” has no implications for homogeneity of any kind. Thus, there is no such thing as a national consciousness. Third: national consciousness, if there was such a thing, would imply a shared interest in national stories and events. Fourth: he suggested that the advocates of national opera believed that the mere placing of historical characters on stage creates a national opera. Fifth: folk song provides no basis for a national idiom nor does it reveal a national consciousness. Sixth: national advocates err as they were prone to look at nations as “lumps” when in reality a nation is a highly heterogeneous body. Seventh: national character is an elusive quality. Newman here cited Rosa Newmarch, who held that even a Russian, such as Serov, might be without the right national spirit, or another, for instance, Glinka, might not be fully in touch with the Russian character, and thus can express no more than a fragment of Russian character. If two Russians are necessary to produce the sum total of Russian character, as she proposed Glinka and Dargomyzhsky, how then, asked Newman, can we believe that the “English national character is fully expressed in the folk-songs of a few humble country singers of several generations ago.” It follows that there is no national character, and even if there were, no one formula could guarantee it nor could one person perfectly capture it. Eighth: of the three factors that together make up an artist—namely race, personality, and environment—race matters least. Ninth: Russian composers merely made a return to nature. Folk song in time became a burden and thus, the next generation of Russian composers (e.g. Rachmaninov, Glazounov, Scriabin, 

131 Ibid., 505.
132 Ibid., 507.
Tcherepnine, Medtner, Stravinsky) had to throw it off. Newman challenged anyone to
guess the composer's nationality when listening to an unfamiliar piece by one of this
generation. Although Newman specifically addressed his comments toward the Russian
national opera situation, the concerns expressed there nicely encapsulate his primary
difficulties concerning national-music cultivation.

With regard to the music of Hungary, two features occur most frequently in
writers' observations—the passionate character of the music itself and the relationship of
musical accent to the Hungarian language. In his lecture before the Royal Musical
Association, cited earlier, F. Gilbert Webb made the following observation:

From the warm temperament of the people and their habits, customs, and history, this
music more than that of any other nation may be said to depict the phases of passion
unbridled by social conventionalities and old-world musical forms, and consequently it
often reflects the state of mind which mistakes madness for strength and incoherence
for sublimity.¹³³

G. W. also found Hungarian music to be dominated by emotional content,
specifically with quick and contrasting changes of mood. He observed:

The rapid alternations of sentiment and tempo of Hungarian music point clearly to its
source. It is the nature of emotional states to generate and to be followed by their
opposites, whereas intellectual progress is achieved by associative development . . .
music, in which the sensory element dominates the intellectual, can only sustain the
interest of the listener by rapid changes of sentiment or rhythm and vivid contrast of
tone.¹³⁴

D. C. Parker, writing in the Musical Standard, echoed this sentiment and also
considered a significant aspect of Hungarian music to be the alternation of contrasting
moods. "There is a fire and vitality in their dances which remind you of the lamps of the
tavern, but these alternate with a languor and a gentle melancholy fit only for the shadow of
the mosque."¹³⁵


The second feature that writers observed in the music of Hungary was the close relationship between music and language. Webb suggested that the rhythmic irregularity of Hungarian music was its most distinctive feature when compared to the music of other nations. The "extreme variableness of accent" in the music is attributable to the character and inflections of the Hungarian language, which he characterized as possessing "numerous and delicate shades of emphasis."\(^{136}\)

G. W. came to a very similar conclusion linking the character of the rhythm to the inflections of the language. "In Hungarian the accents are not only more numerous and varied than in any European tongue, but they are distinct from those common to Indo-Germanic languages, and belong exclusively to the Ural-Altaic family. Hence the rhythm forms one of the most distinguishable features of Hungarian music."\(^{137}\)

Writers looking into the national music of Bohemia also found an important correlation between the language and the music of a people. One article, in particular, cited the influence of the Czech language on Bedrich Smetana. The Prague correspondent B. D. of the *Musical Standard* wrote in response to an earlier article appearing in the same journal in which the position was taken against the use of folk songs in modern music.\(^{138}\) B. D. began stating that Smetana had settled the question regarding the use of folk songs as a basis for national music. As of about 1880, the writer continued, there were two factions of national composers in Bohemia. One group, the conservative musicians, sought to create national music based upon folk songs. But the folk songs themselves contained the seeds of their own failure. In an age which found Czech musicians "thoroughly acquainted

\(^{135}\)Parker, "Temperamental Music," 390.


with the stirring achievements of Berlioz and Wagner,” the folk songs were seen as “lacking breadth, variety of style and, above all, dramatic power.” Believing that slavish adherence to the folk-song model was severely limiting, Smetana sought and “was able to trace the real source of true national music.” Turning to the Czech language, he felt that the “peculiarities [found there] its accent, its structure, must undoubtedly lead to the foundation of the Czech School.” His vocal music, specifically the comic and serious operas and songs “owe their national spirit to perfect declamation.” The writer elaborates: “When composing songs Smetana used to recite the poetry until the musical idea struck him, and his melody was closely connected with the text, having been caused by its contents: it was, as it were, a translation of the words into appropriate music.” While this provided an effective basis for vocal music B. D. confessed that the achievement of a national quality in orchestral music was more difficult and did not venture to speculate as to the effects of Smetana’s attention to speech declamation upon his instrumental music.

The Benefits vs. the Liabilities of Nationality in Music

The inevitable question that accompanies much of the discussion of nationality in music is “Cui bono?” Why should it matter whether or not music has a national identity? Does national identity make art somehow better or worse? What correlation is there, if any, between nationality in music and quality of art, between national identity and universal acceptance?

At times, it is difficult to separate these questions from the related issue of what constitutes the truest basis for national music. There were writers who would applaud

\[139\text{Ibid.}\]

\[140\text{Ibid.}\]

\[141\text{Ibid.}\]
national identity in music, but deplore the use of folk song to attain that identity. Some, for instance, would argue that sincerity is all that is required. The composer who is sincere will reveal his nationality just as surely as he will exhibit the distinctiveness of his handwriting on the manuscript. As compelling as this issue is, it must wait to be addressed in later chapters. For the present, our concern is a more general one. Is nationality in music, irrespective of how it is attained, something to be desired or avoided?

A good starting place for our inquiry is a lively debate that took place in the pages of the *Musical Standard* between March and August of 1908. The discussion was precipitated by an article entitled "The Music of the People" by Frederick Kitchener.¹⁴² Kitchener's primary concern, as demonstrated in his "Back to the Land" battle cry, was to advocate the use of folk song in establishing national art. The response that followed the initial article soon relegated Kitchener's original purpose to the background, and took up the larger issue of why music should be national at all.

An outspoken respondent was A. Seymour Reeves who took issue not only with Kitchener's advocacy of folk song in achieving nationality in music, but even more so with his nationalist orientation. According to Reeves, composers either aimed primarily "at the creation of good music--fine thought expressed in fine form with inspiration and execution of an equally high standard" or they necessarily subordinated this concern in the interest of achieving a "music which has distinctly national characteristics."¹⁴³ Reeves asked: "Are not the great works of art distinguished by the subordination, rather than the predomination of national qualities and peculiarities?" Looking at the Russian situation, he argued that the composers whose works showed the most definite national qualities "never approach greatness,--being small, local and insular." He cited Tchaikovsky, on the other hand, as


¹⁴³A. Seymour Reeves, "Nationalism in Music," MS, ill.s., 29 (6 June 1908): 355.
the composer whose "greatest utterances were not dominated by national
caracteristics."\textsuperscript{144}

Kitchener's first point of retaliation was in reference to Reeves's suggestion that by
creating music with national characteristics the composer would necessarily consign
workmanship to secondary importance. Going one step further, Kitchener stated that he
continued "to find national characteristics in a high degree in the works of the masters
recognised as greatest in Art."\textsuperscript{145} One cannot divorce the thought of a country's inhabitant
from the influences of the "peculiarities of climate, of scenery, and of mode of living."
Nationalism is seen in the British "vast, vague, un-formal style" of Shakespeare and in the
German "studied, polished, and formal manner" of Goethe.\textsuperscript{146}

Another respondent to Kitchener was the critic for the \textit{Saturday Review}, John F.
Runciman, who held that sincerity was the desired virtue in a composer.\textsuperscript{147} According to
Runciman, a British composer "writing sincerely" would achieve two ends with a single
stroke. He would write fine music and "would of necessity express his inmost nature,"
thereby creating fine British music. To sum up, he paraphrased Polonius saying: "to thine
own self be true and it must follow as night the day that you will be true to your nationality
--whatever nationality it may happen to be. If you are English, your music will be English;
if Irish, if Scotch--etc."\textsuperscript{148} An important point to insert here is that Runciman did not argue
against nationality in art; his quibble was over how best to achieve it. To this issue, as
stated before, we shall return later.

\textsuperscript{144}Ibid.


\textsuperscript{146}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{147}John F. Runciman, "Nationalism in Music," \textit{MS}, ill.s., 29 (27 June 1908): 400-01.

\textsuperscript{148}Ibid.
But Reeves was not finished. True nationalism, he felt, was to "take the national qualities (for better or for worse) with their faults and weaknesses no less than with their virtues and strengths."¹⁴⁹ This was the only way a national style could be produced. If this was so, it followed that the "standard for material and workmanship must necessarily be of secondary consideration" unless one was to study and be influenced by "all that is best in music irrespective of nationality." A "religion of national qualities and ideals" necessitated absolutely "no qualified acceptance nor any trifling with the art methods of other countries."¹⁵⁰ To do so would be to dilute its national qualities, thus excluding it from being purely national art.

This last point is an important one in the discussion of the benefits vs. the limitations of nationality in music. Is a composer desirous of finding a national identity obliged to shun all influences which originate outside the geographical and political limits of his country? If so, in the view of many writers, nationalism would be not only a limitation having a disastrous effect upon a composer's music, but would be in effect a sheer impossibility. But is this sort of parochialism demanded of the national composer? What do the writers say regarding the benefits vs. the liabilities of nationality in music? We shall first consider those who stressed the positive aspects of the issue.

Many writers who argued on behalf of the nationalist movement in music cited two primary reasons for its viability. The first was rooted in the belief that movements of nationalism brought about revival in musical composition within a number of countries. Joseph Bennett, in a paper entitled "The Possibilities of Welsh Music" read before the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, stated: "All music is founded upon national music." He also referred to national music as "the destined saviour of the art from the

¹⁴⁹A. Seymour Reeves, "Nationalism in Music," MS, ill.s., 29 (27 June 1908): 400-01.

¹⁵⁰Ibid.
artificialisms and conventionalities of the schools.”¹⁵¹ A. E. Keeton in her article on Mikhail Glinka, to which reference has already been made, argued that the “ingredient” of nationality in music is “no dernier cri of fashion; on the contrary, it has always been and ever will be the mainspring of each revelation of art which can touch the hearts of its public and leave there a lasting conviction of sincerity and truth.”¹⁵²

The French writer G. Jean-Aubry in his two-part article to *Musical Opinion*, which drew a number of parallels between the resurgence of musical composition in France and England, provides a larger context for those artistic awakenings. Writing in 1917 he stated: “During the last fifty years we have witnessed a succession of national-music revivals, or rather successive blossomings of thoroughly nationalised music.”¹⁵³ These movements saw “the artist [come into] closer contact with the popular soul, nearer to the native soil, and music . . . became the mirror in which the landscape of a country, the joys and the sorrows of a people, its general tendencies, its spiritual inclinations, its philosophical or aesthetical thesis, and in short its national character were by turns pictured.”¹⁵⁴

The second reason for advocating nationality in music was a historical and social one. With the advancing technology witnessed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a number of writers saw an increased movement toward a cosmopolitan society. They saw the cultivation and preservation of national identity in music to be of increasing importance. Herbert Antcliffe developed this argument in an


¹⁵³Jean-Aubry, “French Musical Renaissance,” 286. He listed chronologically Russia, Bohemia, Hungary, Norway, Finland, France, Spain, England, and predicted that Italy would be the next to experience a national revival.

¹⁵⁴Ibid.
article entitled "Traits of Nationality," which appeared in Musical Opinion in 1905. According to Antcliffe, while all of mankind shares common characteristics, there was a stronger link "between those individuals who form a certain race or nation."\footnote{Herbert Antcliffe, "Traits of Nationality," MO 28 (June 1905): 688.} Both the general features of humanity and the distinctive features of nationality are found in the greatest art and artists. Secondly, "the strong desire for cosmopolitanism on the part of composers" was neutralizing the nationalistic aspects of art which had been characteristic of its greatest manifestations.\footnote{Ibid., 689.} Antcliffe contended that it was the desire to imitate that led to the establishment of schools of composition, which in turn "tend to destroy purely national characteristics. Especially is this so now, when students and artists are all more or less travellers, and the Berne Convention has aided the spread of printed matter all the world over. Yet we prize the signs of a pure nationality now more than at any previous time; possibly this is because of its comparative disappearance."\footnote{Ibid.} How is this "pure nationality" attained? Not by copying other composers, but by going "back to the land." The return to nature was the key to national identity which in turn brought the promise of individuality. "The more national we are the greater individuality we shall acquire. The truest test of genius is a individuality which will appeal to all ages both present and to come!"\footnote{Ibid.}

George Lowe spoke even more directly to the increased value of nationalism to a society that was growing more cosmopolitan and nations growing less distinct. "This nationalism in music becomes of more value to-day, because the keen line of distinction is 

\footnote{Ibid.}
likely to become less pronounced in the future than it has been in the past.” He cited substantial developments in intercommunication that had brought about unprecedented knowledge of the artistic contributions of various countries, which had in turn fostered cross fertilization thereby lessening distinctive national characteristics.

Differing race characteristics must still, however, to a great extent continue; but they will be moulded by the broader knowledge of the time. Modern music is already, as a result of these changes, losing a great deal of its simplicity and is becoming increasingly intricate in character. In many cases, one must confess, it attempts to pass the limits of what is possible and becomes farcical.

Lowe expressed an optimistic view that, despite the potential for limiting national identity, these influences would ultimately “prove beneficial” to music. The dissemination of knowledge will increase and thus make the “field of contest of far greater extent than formerly and the competitors more numerous.” He concluded: “Let us hope, then that the victors in this ‘struggle for existence’ of their creative achievements may produce work worthy of a place on the loftiest pinnacle of Olympus, -music that shall be not merely contemporary but eternal.”

On the other side of the issue were the numerous writers who held that music with a specific national identity was inferior music. They would cite differing reasons for this pronouncement, but the end was always the same--national music was second-rate music. One reason, provided by H. Adams in the correspondence section of the Musical Times, was that national distinctiveness is imitative, over against personal distinctiveness which is by nature original and is “a universal property of genius.” He added: “National distinctiveness . . . has always been avoided by the greatest masters of the Art.”

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159 Lowe, “Nationalism in Music,” 428.
160 Ibid.
161 Ibid.
Another writer found that “the assumption of national manner . . . is merely a sort of pleasant, musical masquerading.”163 This writer noted what Antcliffe and Lowe had seen, but expressed little regret for the dawn of an increased cosmopolitanism as he stated almost flippantly that “the broad lines of art have swept away all narrow methods of thought; just as constantly increasing international intercourse is sweeping away so many long-cherished local distinctions.”164 The composer who uses “local styles or mannerisms in art” can now provide no more than “picturesque adjuncts to general artistic effect.”165

A third reason to shun a national idiom was due to its limited expressive possibilities. Some focused their criticism upon those composers who included folk songs in their symphonies. For instance, a lead article entitled “Folk Songs in Modern Music,” expressed the opinion that to use the folk song in art music was to grasp the parochial and forfeit the universal.

The truth is great music has another message to give than to chronicle national characteristics. It is an almost universal language, and the greater it is the more universal it is, capable of conveying emotions too deep for words, too sublime for common-sense to measure, and its wings should not be cut for the sake of reflecting the thoughts and emotions of peasants. For, after all, folk-songs are the expression of peasants, very beautiful sometimes, not as art but in the very inarticulateness of their pathos, and therefore we look to our composers to give us something more sublime—something healthier, less contracted in vision and larger in scope of thought, fuller of those intuitions which are but dimly felt, if felt at all, by peasants and their like.166

Other writers did not limit their criticism of national music to the use of the folk song, but included within their scope any glimpse toward the past which sought a precedent upon which to build a national style. In the Magazine of Music of April 1895 the following opinion appeared in an announcement of the proposed Irish music festival. “Are


164Ibid.

165Ibid.

we not hearing just a little too much about national music in these days? The national in art is, after all, the narrow, the limited, the parochial; and it is at best a foolish business to recommend the garnering in of the relics of the past in order that inspiration may be got for the present."\(^{167}\)

If a national identity established upon the basis of folk song or historical precedent was condemned because it was regarded as being far too limiting, still other writers with one stroke of the pen denounced any movement to create a national idiom. Edward A. Baughan stated:

If you turn to the great composers you will not find that folk-music has had much influence. You will not even find in the greatest of the masters that there is any decided national characteristic. In fact, I am afraid, I must hurt the feelings of the literary gentlemen who discourse on nationality in art by dividing composers into two classes: (1) Those whose music is cosmopolitan, and (2) those who are more or less national, either in their sentiment or in their use of folk-music.\(^{168}\)

Baughan proceeded to list in the first class the names Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner. The second class consisted of “the smaller men” and lists the names Haydn, Brahms, Chopin, Schumann, Tchaikovsky, and Liszt.\(^{169}\) The writer then blurred the distinction, stating that he did “not wish it to be understood that I refuse to recognize that the nationality of a composer of the first class comes out in his music.”\(^{170}\) Baughan was forced to admit that it did, but then qualifies it as not being “folk-music nationality, but rather a question of a kind of basis of temperament.”\(^{171}\) Here we must ask exactly what is the difference between the national “sentiment” and, in Baughan's words,

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\(^{167}\)MagMus 12 (April 1895): 61-62.

\(^{168}\)Edward A. Baughan, “Wanted, an English School of Composition,” MMR 30 (April 1900): 79.

\(^{169}\)Ibid.

\(^{170}\)Ibid.

\(^{171}\)Ibid.
"a question of a kind of basis of temperament?" It appears that national "sentiment" consigns "the smaller men" to the second list and national "temperament" exalts the greater men to the first list. Though he did not say it in so many words, we may guess that Baughan was making a distinction between art that is national by intention and art that is national by accident. Baughan might add that it is the deliberate cultivation of national art which consigns it to second-rate status. But, like a number of other writers, he seems to be uncomfortable in defining the nature and content of nationalism. If art is national in any tangible way he condemns it, if, on the other hand, it is unspecifically national, (national by reason of "a question of a kind of basis of temperament") he allows it. In a similar vein Ernest Newman wrote: "The truly great artists are citizens of the world. It is only the little ones who cannot see, or do not want to see, beyond their parish, their province, or even their country."\textsuperscript{172}

Another group of writers and composers took a moderate stance upon the issue. They believed that nationality had value, but was never as an end in itself. In 1900 an interview with composer Sir Alexander Mackenzie appeared in the \textit{Harrogate Advertiser}. To the question of whether or not he "echoed the painters' cry for cosmopolitanism and denationalization in art," Mackenzie gave the following response.

No. I think every nation has its own characteristics, and it is a mistake to attempt to obliterate them entirely in one's work, but I think I have already done enough in the "National" direction. A style should have a distinct flavour, an aroma in which the artist's country, surroundings, and ancestry should reinforce and add a richness to his personal resources. Just as no one should attempt to write in a style borrowed from another nation (in which case it is sure to be superficial and more or less suggestive of trick), so there is some music which could only have been composed by a Scotchman, and the same with other nations. . . . At the same time, art is far too great to submit to any national limitations. A great composer is never tied to a single style. The people who always work at the same half-inch of ground may be fashionable for a time, but

\textsuperscript{172}Newman, "Folk-Song Fallacy," 268.
their weakness sooner or later becomes obvious. There should be in every man's work much that could not be ascribed to any particular nationality.\textsuperscript{173}

Mackenzie's attitude reveals remarkable balance. Two aspects of his answer are especially worth highlighting. He accepted the national quality as being an essential aspect of a composer's work and distinctive compositional personality. To deny this national quality by attempting to obliterate those characteristics was to detach oneself from one's own identity. The composer's second point is that art cannot be bound by national limitations and, thus, in any great artist's work there is much that transcends nationality.

With few exceptions, the most eloquently written articles that balance the virtues of nationalism with the desire for the universal stem from the late and post-war years, specifically 1917-1919. Many of these writers, while accepting the value of nationality, emphasized its secondary nature, quite likely as a result of the recent sting of national aggression. As Eaglefield Hull remarked: "Nationality [is] only a quality of secondary value in reality... the English, slowly but surely, are now laying the foundation stones of practically a new art. Let us not then pin our faith too much to nationality."\textsuperscript{174}

Two years later Hull again dealt with the issue, echoing his previously-held belief. "Whilst in an art which is pre-eminently the expression of the national voice nationality must assuredly count, I cannot imagine any really great or sincere composer writing music for his own countrymen alone; for music is a universal language."\textsuperscript{175} In the same article Hull quoted the remarks of Edward Dent who asked: "Is nationality worth cultivating, and if so, with what object?"\textsuperscript{176} Dent provided his own answer. "It will be an evil day for

\textsuperscript{173}Alexander Mackenzie, interview with the \textit{Harrogate Advertiser}, quoted in MS, ill.s., 14 (15 September 1900): 67.

\textsuperscript{174}Hull, "Nationality and Modernism," 151-52.

music in this country if critics and audiences are more concerned with national work than its intrinsic beauty.” He continued: “Nationality—if it is any virtue at all—is like certain other forms of virtue, the more loudly it is proclaimed the less one is inclined to treat it with honour.” Hull concluded by affirming that there would be “sufficient nationality” in the works of English composers as long as they were “well trained in the wonderful music of our country” and if “they are sincere and not merely imitative.”

We conclude this chapter with a lengthy statement by Arthur L. Salmon from an article written in the *Musical Times* of 1 December 1919. This article shows remarkable craft, navigating skillfully between the Scylla of disembodied idealistic universalism and the Charybdis of stubborn parochialism. Written but one year after the close of the First World War, it is an eloquent plea for the value of music to reaffirm the universal brotherhood of mankind, rather than to reinforce the boundary lines between nations.

Nationality, with all its grades leading downward to the provincial and the parochial, may have its value, its attractive features, its piquancy; but nationality at its best should never be more than secondary. Our first regard should be for the universal. Morality may tell each one of us to be good in the family, good in citizenship, good as patriots; but it must go still farther unless it is to be stunted and narrowing: it must tell us to be good as citizens of the world. Does not the same “must” apply in matters of art as well? The ideal is not for the home alone, for the country alone, but for humanity. . . . Homer's secondary characteristics were Greek, as Dante's were Italian and Shakespeare's English: but their primary qualifications, those things that ensured their vitality and endurance, belonged to human nature at large, and by these alone they have affected and influenced readers at the four corners of the earth. . . . Music, with the other arts, makes a claim to universality, and is a voice that speaks for something more widely spread than manner or costume or dialect.

What, then, does nationality in music mean? Unless, it applies to secondary features only, it must be a sheer limitation, a segregation, a division into camps, a breach of the unity that should be the ideal of all art. Music will never be the better because it is English or Russian or French, though it may seem better to some hearers—just as there are persons who care to read only their local newspaper. . . . When

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176 *Ibid.* The source of Dent's remarks was an unidentified programme note written in 1918 for an unidentified orchestral concert.


hearing the best music, as when reading the best poetry, we are absorbed by its universality; we are not constantly reminding ourselves that "this man is a Russian, or a German, or an Englishman." If we are thus constantly reminded, there is something in which the work falls short of the highest. There may of course be a local idiom or an individual idiom which at times recalls the composer's identity; but this does not so obtrude as to veil the greater unity, that whole of which the individual is a part. A touch of local accent may be very charming, but it does not really add value to that which is said, except when it lends attraction to the trivial and the unimportant.

Music is a universal language, and speaks for that which is universal. We are gradually to escape from the limitations of Babel; we are trying to understand and meet each other, to break down partitions, to attain an ideal of wide brotherhood. In music such a condition is already existent. The great man is coloured by his surroundings, but not produced by them. . . . Art must satisfy two requirements that may seem contraries but are really complementaries: it must be both individual and universal. There is no room for the merely national.¹⁷⁹

Thus, the chapter ends essentially as it started, with Parker's "supreme paradox" still intact. While the national-music discussion in England included a number of vital issues, many writers on the topic were far from satisfied with the mere pursuit of an abstract aesthetic of nationalism. The more immediate English context demanded that the debate include a practical dimension as composers and critics sought both an English musical idiom and an audience for native music.

CHAPTER II
THE QUESTION OF ENGLISH MUSICALITY

The controversy that surrounded the general subject of nationality in music—seen in chapter one—was no less evident as composers and critics discussed and debated the possibility of a national music for England. A further parallel may be suggested as the writings demonstrate considerable diversity of opinion among the critics and composers. Rosa Newmarch observed in 1912 that the English stance regarding national music was characterized by a lack of unanimity and even of individual consistency.¹

As one canvasses the writings of the period many questions arise. Can music be “English?” If so, what are the sources for an English music? What characteristics of English music distinguish it from the music of other nations? What is the relationship of birth to compositional style? Does it follow that an English composer will necessarily write English music, or does English composition require a deliberate and conscious choice on the composer’s part?

While these questions figure prominently in the literature, there is one that claims greater priority—in fact, undergirding all others. An important issue often linked to the possibility of English music is the question of the musicality of the English people. “Are the English a musical people?” was a frequently asked question in the writings about music between 1880 and 1920.² Most writers saw that England must first be shown to be a


²This jibe was not limited to this time frame, but existed before and after. Provoked by German slander it was a question, often rhetorical, asked throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th. See George A. Macfarren, "Is England a Musical Nation," *Cornhill Magazine* 18 (September 1868): 344-63 and Oscar A. H. Schmitz, *The Land Without Music* (London: Jarrolds, 1925)
musical nation before there could be any convincing argument regarding English music. As the thesis went: If the English are not a musical people it is ridiculous, even for the most ardent nationalist, to speak of an English music. On the other hand, if the English are indeed a musical people, the possibility for an English music may at least be argued.

Even those writers who were cynical regarding the question saw the connectedness of the two ideas. Edward A. Baughan writing in 1900 observed: "I must begin with an apology. The title of this article ["Wanted, An English School of Composition"] is not mine, but a stereotyped heading of a hundred articles which have appeared in the Press during a hundred years. Whenever a certain type of musical writer is short of ideas, he either asks if we are a musical nation, or else he advertises our lack of an English school of composition. Practically both articles are identical in subject matter." But why would the musical status of the English nation be open to question? What, in the eyes of her critics, was wrong with English music?

The Problem with English Music

In the writings during the period with which we are concerned, the problem with English music or, more specifically, with the English people from a musical point of view was multifaceted. Numerous factors cited by many writers suggested the unhappy conclusion that England was not a musical nation. While these factors exhibit considerable variety--ranging from the need for greater musical education to the lack of an instrumental idiom--seven principal concerns appear repeatedly in the writings of the period and are particularly relevant to our study: (1) a two hundred year period of dormancy in native musical composition; (2) the absence of a recent English composer of genius; (3) a long

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3Edward A. Baughan, "Wanted, an English School of Composition," MMR 30 (1 April 1900): 78-79.
infatuation with foreign musicians on the part of the English public combined with the neglect of the native-born composer; (4) the imitation of foreign models by English composers; (5) the general musical ignorance on the part of the English public; (6) the English temperament, which was felt to be one not given to musical expression; (7) the prevailing English attitude that held music to be nothing more than entertainment.

In order to provide a sense of the multifaceted nature of the problem we shall include a rather lengthy quotation from an article by C. Fred Kenyon. The article, "Are we a Musical Nation?," appeared in 1905 in the *Musical Standard* and effectively demonstrates the interrelatedness of these concerns. Kenyon writes:

Since the days of Purcell and Byrde, England has produced no great composer. The fact is patent and never disputed; we admit it with a shrug of the shoulders that implies no sense of responsibility on our part. We condemn the public, but we, as individual units, are exempt from all blame. We are accustomed to the accusation that we are an unmusical nation, but we have always resented and still resent the imputation without any clear idea of why we do so. We put forth timid arguments with the intention of proving that the absence of great composers in our midst does not preclude the possibility of the populace having a true appreciation of music, and we parade the Napoleonic label of "nation of shopkeepers" as a joke too good to be forgotten, the inference being that by advertising it the sting will be lost. Whatever may be said for us in the worlds of Art and Literature, nothing can be put forth in support of our musical claim. So far a music is concerned, we are indeed a nation of shopkeepers. . . . Amateurism lies at the root of the evil. Music is to us a plaything to which we devote our leisure half-hours; commerce and sport claim our more serious attention. . . .

It cannot be denied that we have living among us at the present moment many gifted young composers. Stanford, Mackenzie, Elgar, Cowen and certain of the younger men who are rapidly coming to the front have all done good and talented work, but Elgar is the only one of whom it may be said that he has genius. Within the last hundred years what English composer has given us work that will live? France has her Berlioz, Bizet and Gounod; Bohemia, her Dvorak; Poland, her Chopin; Germany, her Brahms, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Schubert; Italy, her Verdi; Norway, her Grieg; Russia, her Glinka and her Tchaikovsky; but England? There is no one. Our home life is responsible for this; we have no musical atmosphere, no artistic spirit. Those of us who are not striving for civic honours are roaring ourselves hoarse at football matches or taking our lady friends to watch other people play cricket.

The truth of the matter is, we have no national school of music. Our composers are, and always have been, too cosmopolitan in their tastes. At one period of our history we imitated the Italian school; at another period, Mendelssohn was our leader; then came Wagner, and it was considered necessary to copy his faults and ignore his merits; and now we are all blindly following the Russian school. It is very pitiable, is it
not, that the people of Great Britain should prefer to imitate the feeling and national characteristics of other countries rather than seek inspiration from their own? We are not content to learn and understand the amazingly difficult orchestration of Berlioz and Richard Strauss, but we must needs imitate their worst faults. We have no discrimination; at all hazards, we must be up-to-date: that is the eternal cry. The consequence is that we find in our present-day music the influence of the national life of every country except our own: we have ignored our glorious traditions for the sake of appearing clever and abreast of the times. Truly, our birthright has been bartered for a sorry mess of pottage!"\textsuperscript{4}

In the above quotation Kenyon succinctly presents no less than seven problems noticed by many other writers. Although the issues mentioned above will be treated separately, it must be emphasized that they are related concerns.

The first problem with music in England stemmed from the long period of dormancy which preceded the period of this study. By the year 1880 England had experienced a lapse of nearly a two centuries in significant native musical composition. As Kenyon's words suggest, even as late as 1905 Henry Purcell was lauded as the last English composer of unquestionable genius. His premature death in 1695 initiated a dark period in English musical history that saw the eclipse of England as a musical force in Europe for nearly two centuries. Writing specifically of the period from 1700-1850, Vaughan Williams remarked that it:

\begin{quote}
    is usually looked upon as the blackest of English musical history. It began with the tyranny of Handel and ended with the tyranny of Mendelssohn; and between these periods came that of fashionable Italian Opera, fashionable foreign fiddlers, and the "something-aen singers" of Dickens, "of whome three howled while the fourth grunted."\textsuperscript{5}
\end{quote}

During these centuries, as many writers have pointed out, Englishmen were preoccupied with other concerns, most notably warfare, trade, commerce, and industry.

\textsuperscript{4}C. Fred Kenyon, "Are we a Musical Nation?," \textit{MS}, ill.s., 23 (25 February 1905): 118. An important point Kenyon made should be underlined. He stated that a key factor in the problem with music in England is the lack of a national school of music. Kenyon implies that the founding of a national school would go a long way toward solving England's musical woes. This is an argument to which we will return in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{5}Ralph Vaughan Williams, "British Music in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," \textit{MuStud} 7 (December 1914): 63.
With the possible exception of church music, native English music languished during the Georgian and Victorian periods as a result of this neglect and preoccupation with other endeavors. Consequently, for the Englishman, music came to be considered an imported good, placed on a par with tea, sugar, and cigars.

The observation that Purcell was the last great English composer leads to the second concern, closely related to the first. The lack of an English composer of genius for two centuries further called into question the musicality of the English nation. If the English were indeed a musical people, surely a great or at least near-great composer would have appeared within recent generations. Within the sphere of church music many writers would concede that there had been composers of distinction (e.g. Croft, Wesley) but none of a calibre to turn Continental heads. Kenyon, in an earlier article from 1901, sighed: "Whatever else may be put forward in favour of English music, it cannot be said that it is 'great:' it is distinguished, refined, graceful, and even original, but it is never great."

After listing Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner; and "second rate men" such as Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Brahms, the writer iaments, "the only name one feels at all tempted to put on a level with these is Purcell." Though Kenyon cited many contemporary English composers as doing significant work, including Stanford, Cowen, Mackenzie, Sullivan, and Elgar, none could be favorably compared even to the second-rate geniuses of the Continent.

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7C. Fred Kenyon, "Wanted: An English School of Music," MO 24 (January 1901): 251

8The year of the above cited article is not without significance. The two works that heralded Elgar as the great hope for English music were the "Enigma" Variations and The Dream of Gerontius, which appeared in 1899 and 1900, respectively.
The third factor, again proceeding from those previous, was the long period of England's musical dependence upon foreign composers. As George Lowe remarked in 1907: "For many years past the prevailing fashion in music has been to depreciate English musical art and English composers and artists and to hail with an exaggerated and often a ludicrous welcome any talent coming to us from the continent."\(^9\) From the early eighteenth century onward, the English public had welcomed the foreign musician and embraced his compositions. Handelian oratorio and Italian opera ruled the day in the eighteenth century before yielding to the German influence of Mendelssohn, Schumann, Wagner, and Brahms in the nineteenth. Ernest Newman cited Italian opera, Mendelssohn and the passion for oratorio as being "the three main forces that retarded the development of English music."\(^10\) In the words of Charles Kennedy Scott written during the First World War: "We followed false gods, and gave them habitation here. We persuaded ourselves that the genius of France was our genius, that Handel was our Messiah, and Mendelssohn our true prophet."\(^11\)

This love affair between the English public and foreign-born composer, not surprisingly, severely affected the native composer, resulting in substantial neglect of his work. In 1912 Vaughan Williams would pose the question as a title to his now-famous article "Who wants the English composer?."\(^12\) In an article written for the short-lived *Vocalist* magazine a decade earlier the same writer had observed that this neglect of the English composer forced him "either to change his name or his nature."\(^13\) In his effort to


\(^12\)R.C.M. Magazine 9 (Christmas Term, 1912): 11-15.
be taken seriously the English musician could be found discarding "Mr." in favor of "Signor" or "Herr," and at times even feigning an accent. In the same year as Vaughan Williams's Vocalist article the following poem appeared in Punch. The poem, likely written by C. L. Graves, catches succinctly the plight of the native-born composer in England at the time.

I am a British composer, priding myself on my nous,
Trained in the methods of Wagner, steeped in the science of Strauss,
Ev'ry device of the moderns I have a perfect command,
I can be strenuous, subtle, vicious, volcanic and bland--
Bold as a portrait by Sargent, weird as a novel by James--
Mine is the finest equipment linked to the highest of aims.
Physics, psychology, Tolstoi, Nietzsche, Lombroso, Verlaine,
All have gone into my music, all are stored up in my brain.
Ev'rything have I digested--ev'rything under the sun,
Till I am blest in possessing ev'ry advantage--save one.
I am a British composer, elbowed aside in the race--
Even a hearing denied me, doomed to enduring disgrace.

Would it, I frequently wonder, give me the ghost of a chance
If I renounced my relations, borrowed a surname from France?
Shall I become a Bohemian, shall I inscribe on my score,
"This is no English production, this is the work of a Boer"?
Or is a Muscovite suffix, imsky, or offsky, or vitch,
Solely and wholly essential Englishmen's ears to bewitch?
Must I insure my left elbow, must I develop a look
Less like a thoroughbred Briton than a diseased pastry-cook?
Tell me, O Concert Directors, tell me that I may begin
Changing my name and my nation, sloughing my insular skin.

We are no megalomaniacs, planners of boycotting schemes,
Bent upon turning the tables, flying to hostile extremes.
Gladly we bow to the masters, yield to their conquering sway,
Only, as moderns with moderns, claim for the native fair-play;--
Claim for his highest endeavour, claim for his work at its best
Just an occasional hearing--surely a modest request:
Welcoming foreigners freely, yet, when their "place in the sun"
Comes to be reckoned in England, grudging them thirty to one.14

Vaughan Williams's other alternative, that of the English composer changing his nature, leads us to the fourth claim—that England was not a musical nation because it

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possessed no national musical style, the evidence for this being the rampant imitation of foreign styles by English composers. In the same Vocalist article Vaughan Williams stated that "all the products of our English composers were, in reality, imported from abroad, and suffered much dilution on the voyage. This state of affairs did not tend to annul the general verdict, that we were an unmusical nation." In other words, from Purcell to Elgar, from 1700 to 1900, English music meant little more than dull and shoddy imitations of foreign, specifically German, composers. Handel, Mendelssohn, Brahms, and early Wagner were the principal influences. The problem as perceived by many writers was in reality two-fold. The fact that composers would imitate foreign style at all was objectionable, but to make matters worse, they would imitate out-of-date foreign style. Newman's jibe that England was the place where good German music went when it died was seconded by many critics.

The seat of German influence was in the academic chairs within the English educational institutions. Those teachers if not German-born, were nonetheless German-trained. In fact, throughout the nineteenth century the greatest English musicians could all boast that they had studied in Germany, Leipzig in particular. William Sterndale Bennett, George Macfarren, Charles Stanford, Hubert Parry all received substantial training in Germany. It was the correlation of these two factors— the tendency toward imitation and its academic connection— that was considered to be ruinous to England's musical future.

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15 Vaughan Williams, "English School," 8.


17 The strength of this correlation led some writers, prophetically, to look for the savior of English music to come from the provinces (rather than from London) and to be self-taught (rather than academically-trained). See A. F. Tindall's correspondence in MO 21 (August 1898): 759 and MO 22 (July 1899): 671.
The fifth problem with England as a musical nation involved the ignorance of the public and of the critics upon whom the public depended. A lead article in the *Musical Standard* under the familiar title "Are the English a Musical Nation?" posed a series of questions, two of which are of particular interest. The writer asks: "Is it not true that in England musical matters are in the hands of the musical critic and that the public know so little about music as an Art; that they are quite content to submit and applaud artists according to the general criticism of the daily or weekly papers?" And as a follow up: "If this above question has even elements of truth in it, could anybody tell us what artistic knowledge the majority of our critics have, and what claim they have to practice musical criticism?"18

We can consider this double-edged criticism only briefly. Many detractors held that the English people as a whole neither loved nor understood music, and revealed their lack of musicality on many fronts. Concerts, it was claimed, were but social events.19 In their musical tastes the English were nothing more than slaves to fashion. But it was not so much in the concert hall as in the church, home, and school "that the unmusical nature of the English [found] a free and an unfettered opportunity for its disposition and its display."20

The criticism continued stating that while the English were a home-loving people, there was little, if any, music in the average English home. The church, suffering from "sentimental and unreal music," was a "powerful factor in the promotion of an unmusical and an inartistic spirit in society at large in England."21 In the schools children were not

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18 "Are the English a Musical Nation?" *MS*, n.s., 43 (29 October 1892): 345.


20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.
taught to understand music, instead they learnt to play the piano only to show off. "Among
their friends they have the reputation of being awfully clever and also romantic and musical;
in reality, they are simply intelligent young people who have been ruined by a system of
teaching which has for its object nothing save the attainment of social standards of
ability."22

Musical criticism was also responsible for the public's poor musical education. In
1887 the German-born critic of the Times, Francis Hueffer, wrote "our public labours
under the diffidence of inexperience. It is slow to form an opinion of a new work. It
prefers to wait and see what the newspapers say the next morning. This is a serious
drawback for the art which, like every other modern institution, must draw its strength
from the support of an enlightened public opinion."23 While Hueffer saw the "serious
drawback" as being the public's willingness to subject its opinion to that of the critics,
Ernest Newman fourteen years later would question the entire state of English musical
criticism. According to Newman, the quality of musical criticism paled in comparison to its
literary counterpart. "Musical literature, indeed, scarcely exists as yet in this country. This
is a defect that will need to be remedied before long, if we wish to create a public
responsive to the best work our musicians can turn out."24 The problem, as Newman saw
it, was that most professional critics were "tied to mere concert-reporting." With but one or
two exceptions, no one was lifting the discussion to a plane that would suggest a favorable
comparison with good literary criticism.

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22Ibid.

23Francis Hueffer, "English Music During the Queen's Reign," Fortnightly Review 41 (1 June
1887): 910.

The sixth argument against England's being considered a musical nation centered in the English temperament. The English temperament, it was maintained, is not a musical temperament. Many writers saw the English nature as characterized by priority of intellect, emotional restraint, stiffness, lack of warmth of passion and desire, regularity and steadiness of expression, depth rather than freshness, and common-sense practicality. While many would argue that these traits in combination had made England great in literature, the same writers were quick to point out that it is precisely the same traits which had been injurious to England's advancement in music. At least one writer found the national temperament so lacking in musicality that national music was an impossibility.

"National music is a question of national temperament: and when—as with the English—the national temperament is not one demanding musical expression, national music strictly so-called does not exist."^26

In essence, much of the criticism of English musical composition proceeded from this subject of temperament. English music may have been academically-correct, dignified and proper, tasteful to a fault; but was lacking heart and soul, an air of emotional authenticity. According to Vaughan Williams, the rising school of English composers in 1902 tripped over the "stumbling block" of good taste. "If a composer is naturally vulgar let him be frank and write vulgar music instead of hedging himself about with an artificial barrier of good taste."^27

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"Diogenes," writing in 1907, stated a similar criticism. "It is considered very bad form to allow any real display of feeling to appear in music; consequently, we are obliged to listen to works of machine-like construction,—long, complicated, turgid; but most uninspired, dull and bloodless. Why in the world should it be in such bad taste to suffer any sign of sensibility to appear in English music?"  

The seventh and last of the principal reasons cited as testimony supporting the opinion that the English were not a musical people was the English attitude toward music. In England, it was argued, music was looked upon as mere entertainment. Some writers saw the problem as one not limited to music. E. H. Turpin, for example, criticized the English tendency to regard all art as amusement, calling it the "national sin in art."  

The criticisms voiced by the writers as they bear upon the English attitude toward music in particular find their core in the thought that the Englishman saw music as somehow removed from real life experience. Music was considered from a standpoint of "detached appreciation."  

Why was this so? A number of reasons were cited. The English temperament, as we have previously seen, is not one which tends toward passionate expression, but is characterized by a sense of restraint, reserve, and even emotional detachment. A second reason was the English propensity to view music, like champagne and cigars, as an imported good. Thus, music did not proceed from the pulse of national life, but was marketed as a foreign luxury imported for those who had the money to afford it and the taste to appreciate it.

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30 Vaughan Williams's term. See his "Who wants the English Composer?"
A third point, related to the second, was that native musical composition was based upon a borrowed idiom. Its style was rooted not in the English soil, but in German Boden. These factors were seen as contributing to the breakdown of the relationship between the art of music and the people for whom and by whom it is made. Music was regarded as detached from real life, because, in fact, it was detached from real life. Vaughan Williams found a significant problem in the traditional distinction between classical and popular music and called for the abolition of that distinction. All music should be classical and all music should be popular.31

Also related to this issue of English musical attitudes was the place of the English musician within society. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries music was considered a laudable vocation for a foreigner, a desirous avocation for a woman, but certainly not a profession befitting an English gentleman.32 This attitude gradually began to change in late Victorian society, attributable in no small degree to the well-born status of both Parry and Stanford.33 Going one step further, some writers called for a greater recognition of the composer's value as a national treasure. Many appeals could be cited which called for the English public to regard the composer as a public benefactor, a true servant of the state, to be placed alongside explorers, engineers, poets; and whose works should be considered as national monuments.34


32Fuller Maitland commented upon this situation in a series of lectures given before the Royal Institution and reported in MS. In the first lecture he stated that the average English gentleman proudly admitted to knowing but two songs: one was "God save the King," the other wasn't. He also reminded his hearers of Lord Chesterfield's well-known counsel steering his son away from the violin and those who play it. See MS, ill.s., 7 (29 May 1897): 344.

33In the last of the above-cited lectures Fuller Maitland identified the rising social status of the composer as being a significant factor in bringing about the renaissance in English music. See MS, ill.s., 7 (19 June 1897): 393.
The “problem with English music,” it is necessary to point out, was not the construct of a few troublemakers, but was recognized by every major writer, English and foreign, on the topic. “Can any good thing come out of England?” was a matter of serious and widespread concern. But while writers, composers, and critics agreed that music in England was in need of reform if not rebirth, most were not inclined to abandon their belief in the inherent musicality of the English people. In their attempts to show that England was indeed a musical nation, writers strengthened their case by summoning a number of witnesses to provide evidence.

This evidence may be divided into three broad categories. The first consists of source material derived from England’s musical past. The strongest argument for the opinion that the English are a musical people is seen in the fact that the English had been a musical people. The second category of evidence stems from non-musical sources, such as artistic temperament, language, etc. If the English may be shown to be artistic, it would follow, by extension, that they are capable of musicality. The final series of arguments addresses characteristics of English music. If English music (e.g. folk song, glee, oratorio, anthem) exhibits distinctive characteristics, further testimony has been provided to demonstrate the musicality of the English people. As we shall discover, these same witnesses would be used by the nationalists as foundation stones upon which to build a national style.

34 An interesting instance of this mentality was the argument made by George Bernard Shaw and others on behalf of composers and poets for their exemption from military service during World War I. The claim was made that their work and service for Great Britain was as patriotic as that of those soldiers fighting on the front line. See George Bernard Shaw’s letter to Western Daily Press (27 August 1916), reprinted in MusMid 9 (October 1916): 60.
Folk Song as Witness

Before considering specific discussions of folk song, it is first necessary to recognize the pivotal place which folk song claims in all discussions of English national music. Many writers, chief among them Vaughan Williams, considered folk music to be the issue—far outweighing all others—in establishing England's musicality. According to Vaughan Williams, one of principal lessons taught by folk song is that "music is an inborn instinct in certain human beings." Moreover, no amount of cultivation or education could bring about musicality in one who is essentially unmusical.

What is true of individuals, he argued, was also, by extension, true of nations. If England had no folk songs, or if her folk music was of no artistic value, one must conclude that her people lack any "spontaneous musical instinct and it surely follows that to try to develop what is not there is merely ploughing the sand." In this view, no number of academic degrees, school examinations, and musical honors would make England into a musical nation. If such was the case, "we had much better stick to football and let music in England remain an expensive exotic."

Conversely, if the Englishman is musical, this trait will necessarily reveal itself in his folk songs. Thus, folk music serves as a reliable index as to the musical aptitude of a people. Vaughan Williams recommended its study, claiming that it is there where the Englishman would find his "ultimate justification." Furthermore, it is in folk music

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35 Ralph Vaughan Williams, "English Folk-Song," lecture quoted in MT 52 (1 February 1911): 103.

36 Ibid.


38 Vaughan Williams, "English Folk-Song," 103.
where one will encounter both his musical tendencies and limitations together with possibilities for development "on the lines most congenial to our own characters."^{40}

To Vaughan Williams and others the chief significance of the then-recent researches in folk music was not primarily because they provided raw materials for a ready-made English music. Rather, they served the important and vital function of reminding the English that they were indeed a musical people. He writes: "To most English musicians the recent discoveries in their native folk-song have come as a revelation and an inspiration; they have taken to them as to a well-known but long-forgotten friend."^{41}

What did the folk song reveal to the English musician? To answer that question, we need to consider the English folk song from two angles--its distinctive nature and its general characteristics. According to many writers, England might have a wealth of folk music, but if that music lacked distinctiveness little ground, if any, had been gained. In *National Music of the World*, published posthumously in 1880, H. F. Chorley saw little value in English folk song. Chorley's chief criticism was that the English tunes show a lack of style and character when compared, for instance, with the those of Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. In a word, they lacked distinction. Consequently, they "may belong to nobody or to everybody."^{42} Sir Walter Scott doubted even the existence of English song. "All the genuine legitimate races that have descended from the ancient Britons--such as the Scotch, the Welsh, and the Irish--have national airs. The English have none; because they

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40Vaughan Williams, "English Folk-Song," 103.
are not natives of the soil, or are, at least, mongrels. Their music is all made up of foreign scraps, like a harlequin's jacket, or a piece of mosaic."^{43}

Chorley's and Scott's views were not commonly held, particularly as time and research progressed. But even before the substantial research of Sharp and others there were loyalists in the land. Frank Sawyer, addressing the Brighton Literary Association on 12 October 1880, claimed that in the area of folk song no nation could equal England. Indeed, no greater mistake could be made than to hold the erroneous idea that England was not, and had never been, a musical nation.\(^{44}\)

Henry Hiles, writing of "English Music and English Orchestras" in 1891, argued: "It cannot be too positively and unflinchingly stated that the folk melodies of our land were indigenous and original, not resembling or being derived from any external source or warped by any foreign influence."\(^{45}\) There had always been in England a distinct strain of folk song which perfectly reflected the English temperament. There were "varieties of colouring" which corresponded to geographical regions, but in its essence the music was unified.

Four years later, Sir Alexander Mackenzie gave three lectures on the topic of "The Traditional and National in Music." In the second lecture, entitled "English Country Songs," Mackenzie suggested that it was the experience of a people that gave their music its distinctive quality. The folk music of England differed from that of Ireland and Scotland in its lack of sorrow and suffering. According to Mackenzie, it was precisely the kind of music one might expect from a nation that had enjoyed prosperity. "There was in English

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\(^{43}\)Sir Walter Scott, quoted in \textit{MMR} 11 (December 1881): 239.


folk-song a comfortable, pastoral sentiment, little found in the music of nations that had experienced tragedy and trouble in their history."^46

The first decade of the twentieth century saw writers becoming increasingly confident in their assertions of the value of folk music in establishing the innate musicality of the English people. This was no doubt prompted by the heightened awareness of English folk song, resulting from the extensive researches carried on at that time. In 1905 Constance Smedley wrote "the British public is always being told that it is an inartistic nation, incapable of appreciating anything of worth . . . yet the British folk songs are the most melodious of any nation."^47

In a lecture before the Royal Musical Association Frank Kidson was more modest in his claims, but nevertheless made the same basic assertion: "'England has no National Music' is the parrot-cry that has too long been accepted with apathy by Englishmen. I say that, whether in the matter of folk-tunes pure and simple, or in that class of national airs which are frequently also so named, we are not behind any nation."^48

The following year Ernest Dann contributed an article to Musical Opinion entitled "Folk Music as a Cult" in which he applauded the work of the folk-song collectors and arrangers, and saw their work as being crucial in removing the stigma concerning English music. "We should like to reduce in numbers that large and fashionable class of person who consider everything British, and more especially everything English, to be a priori

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inferior to everything foreign... we think that the efforts of the Folk Song Society and of various arrangers have gone far to redeem the English musical character.\textsuperscript{49}

Not all received the newly-found folk music with equal enthusiasm. For instance, an article written by S. O. G. in the \textit{Violin and String World Supplement} of the \textit{Musical Standard}, expressed a different point of view. The writer challenged the premise of the communal origin of the folk song, arguing for individual authorship. Consequently, he believed any claims of folk music as being the "music of the people" were ridiculous. He asserted that the national songs of England were not distinctive, but like the nation itself were cosmopolitan, revealing a variety of foreign influences. Finally, he stated his opinion that folk-song collection had become a disease. While some folk songs he felt were "worthy of preservation," the English public should not be expected to swallow every tune, irrespective of its merits, as the folk song collectors are urging us to do.\textsuperscript{50}

The criticism of the folk-music movement by S. O. G. strikes at the root of Vaughan Williams's thesis, which rested on the theory of communal origin of folk song. It was the activity of the community in a song's transmission and development that allowed folk song to bear witness to the musical vitality of that community.\textsuperscript{51} If folk music is detached from the English community it is necessarily detached from England. Furthermore, if it displays no distinctly English characteristics--only those cosmopolitan--neither may it serve to advance the opinion that the English were a musical people. If this is the case, Vaughan Williams would argue, England had better stick to football and give up any claims to being a musical nation.

\textsuperscript{49}Ernest Dann, "Folk Music as a Cult," \textit{MO} 32 (March 1909): 415.


\textsuperscript{51}See chapter five for further development of this viewpoint.
England's Musical Past as Witness

While folk song might with justification be claimed to be the primary indicator of a people's musicality, other factors were cited by writers as the fruit which bore witness to the vitality of that folk-song root. Chief among those factors was England's distinguished musical past. The pride of many writers as they considered this aspect of our discussion is caught in Algernon Ashton's pronouncement: "England was a musical nation before any of the great German composers were born." What were the reasons for such pride? Four will be considered—the high quality of composition during select periods, distinct genres which English composers created or adopted, significant stylistic contributions made by composers in England, and the greatness of particular composers.

In 1914, Vaughan Williams wrote a series of articles for the *Music Student* in which he traced the history of English music from its folk-song foundations through the mid-nineteenth century. These articles provide a useful nucleus for our discussion.

If one should ask the question "When did England achieve her musical peak?" to any informed writer at that time: the answer would unhesitatingly be: "The Tudor period, of course!" The Tudor era, more specifically the Elizabethan period, was unanimously considered to be the halcyon era of English composition. But many writers added that the period was great not only because of the high quality of composition, but also because music was truly a part of the nation's life, in touch, as it were, with the people.

Vaughan Williams was one such writer. The second article in the aforementioned series concentrates upon Tudor music. Having stated that this was the only time in England's past that she could boast a true "school" of composers, he suggested that the fact

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53 *MuStud* 7 (September-December 1914). We have already drawn substantially from the first article in this series for our discussion of RVW's concept of folk song.
that many think of the names of Byrd, Tallis, Wilbye, Weelkes, Dowland, and Gibbons as forming one great personality was testimony to the connection of music with national life. He asked: To what might the sudden flowering of music during the sixteenth century be attributed? Three causes were suggested—the effects of the religious reformation, spiritually and officially, upon Tudor church music; the belated influence of the Renaissance which yielded the secular madrigal; and the gradual alliance of the "music of the learned scholars and the music of the people" which is demonstrated by the interest of the virginal composers in national folk songs.\(^54\)

W. F. Arnold, in an article entitled "The True British Music" written the following year, also saw the Elizabethan age as the great age for English music. It was a period, he maintained, when England was decidedly in the lead, with composers of the Continental schools trailing behind. Even in instrumental music, not usually considered to be an English strength, Elizabethan England was in advance of the two otherwise great musical countries of the epoch—Italy and Netherlands.\(^55\)

According to Arnold and others, the "golden age" of English music that began in the sixteenth century carried on throughout the seventeenth, and culminated in the "transcendent genius of Henry Purcell." Purcell, of whom more will be said later, was considered by virtually all writers as the greatest musical genius in English history, followed closely by Dunstable, Byrd, and Tallis. His early death was also tragic for England as it signaled the end of the most fertile compositional period in the country. But contributions of other Stuart composers, such as Henry Lawes, John Blow, Jeremiah Clarke, and Matthew Locke were also championed.

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\(^{54}\) Ralph Vaughan Williams, "British Music of the Tudor Period," *MuStud* 7 (October 1914): 26. The impact and importance implied by this observation is more fully explored in chapter six.

Henry Hiles, in 1891, wrote of the early Stuart composer John Jenkins's contributions in the field of concerted instrumental music. In freeing instrumental music from the limitations of its choral model, Jenkins's compositions were regarded as establishing a distinct instrumental idiom. Thus, according to Hiles, Jenkins's innovations were of primary significance, at least in a potential way, for the beginnings of an English instrumental style. As Hiles remarks, Jenkins's contributions reveal that “before the dark time for English music came on, our native musicians had made considerable progress in the formation of a school of art which probably would... have laid a firm foundation for a national school of orchestral music as distinctly ours as are our schools of choral music and song.”

We have seen that during the Tudor and Stuart dynasties England enjoyed a period that was the pride of scholars, composers, and critics two centuries later. As one writer remarked: “If the promise of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had been maintained, what a splendid place in the history of music would this country have taken.” But the light of inspiration was not eternal.

In their efforts to provide an explanation for the lapse that followed upon Purcell's death, writers have offered a variety of reasons. Those appearing most frequently center upon the social and political developments in mid-seventeenth century England. For many years the rise of Puritanism was the chief suspect. The Puritans were held accountable not only for “having a damming effect upon art in general and on music in particular,” but changing the entire country's disposition. It was called a “devastating wave... that swept

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what had been 'merry England,' leaving all that was sweetly human and wholesomely mirthful besmirched with foul mud in its wake."^58

The ascendancy of the Hanoverian dynasty which fostered the influx of foreign composers was also deemed responsible for the lapse in native English composition. While Handel and Mendelssohn certainly rank as the most influential of those imported composers, interest in things foreign began with the restoration of Charles II a half-century earlier before George I crossed the channel.59 The story of Pelham Humfrey's French musical education is well-known, as is Pepys' remark concerning him that he returned from France "an absolute Monsieur."

Even with the acknowledgment that the period from 1700-1850 was characterized by uninspired native composition, some writers refused to concede that nothing of value occurred during that time. Vaughan Williams cited two "exclusively English art forms" which constituted two bright spots within the eighteenth century—the Anglican Chant and the Glee. Writing of these genres, he observed that they are "forces small in scope, and not of heroic build, but it was just in such forms as these that the English character found its true utterance."60

The presence of distinct national genres in English musical history provided further support for the opinion that England had once been a musical nation. These genres were of

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58Arnold, "The True British Music," 146. We should note that during this period musical writers began to reconsider this long-held opinion. Parry, Davey and others revised their view holding that Puritanism had only negatively affected church music. Parry wrote: "It was rather the restoration of Charles II, and his inherent levity of character, together with the re-action of licence that followed the excessive suppression of natural instincts by the Puritans, which ruined English music, and brought it to a state of practical decrepitude, upon which Handel ultimately set his heavy heel and crushed what remained of English musical energy into an obscure corner." See "Purcell," National Review 15 (November 1895): 342-43.


60Vaughan Williams, "British Music in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," 63.
two categories—those English by creation and those English by adoption. In the first class were the glee, the catch, English ballads, and Anglican church music. Oratorios and madrigals were the most significant within the second category.

The glee and catch were cited by writers as early as 1880 as being of particular value and distinctiveness. Sawyer said: "Our English glee can boast of being unique in Europe as a musical form." Chorley referred to it as "our peculiar treasure." Writing over three decades later Vaughan Williams saw in the glee, "a purely English invention." His comments help to delineate its distinct character.

It differs from the madrigal in that it moves in blocks of harmony rather than contrapuntally, and, rather like the "verse" anthem, consists of several short movements. A Glee is written for solo voices, usually those of men, the top voice being almost invariably an alto. It is this alto voice which largely helps to give a special character to the Glee, and to distinguish it honourably from the flood of music for tenor and bass chorus, which swept over Germany a little later.¹²

Vaughan Williams cited glees by Webbe, Spofforth, and Stevens which "give a good view of this very characteristic form of art, and one which could have flourished nowhere but in England."³³

Of the catch Sawyer stated it was a "greatly beloved . . . composition in which, by peculiar position of the words and wrong division of the phrases, out of a serious poem a most ludicrous play is made. Especially during the reign of Charles II, these catches were the most favoured amusement, but the morals of the age were so low that many a clever piece of musical wit had to be thrown aside."⁶⁴ It may be remembered that Chorley had no kind words for the English folk song when compared with its Irish, Scottish, and Welsh counterparts. The catch, on the other hand, Chorley considered so English a form that:

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¹¹Sawyer, "Rise and Progress, 343 and Chorley, National Music, 219.


³³Ibid., 64.

⁶⁴Sawyer, "Rise and Progress," 342.
no Scotch moss-trooper can intermeddle with--no Irish reaper can deprive us of--no Welsh antiquary carry away into the fastnesses of the Principality. . . . The old farcical humour of this form of musical composition, in which words trip up words, and rhymes and phrases jostle, with as desperate a disregard of common sense . . . can hardly be appreciated by any one save he be an Englishman born.\textsuperscript{65}

The English song in its various manifestations, art song to drawing-room ballad, was also considered a distinctly English contribution to the world's music. In an article in \textit{Magazine of Music} of 1885 the writer, despite his belief that modern times had caused national music to run its course, saw in English song the sole vestige of English nationality. “Home, Sweet Home” was cited as being “universally regarded as the very model of an English song.” The simple English ballad was considered not yet extinct, having been used to give “characteristic English flavour” in Sullivan's \textit{The Sorcerer}.\textsuperscript{66}

Ernest Newman would later write of the distinct quality of the English song, both ballad and art song, as perfectly reflective of the English temperament. Offering “Sally in the Alley” as an example, Newman called the English ballad “strong and healthy like the race itself, breathing of good living and an open-air life, with no great spiritual or emotional profundity, but of a simple and honest beauty, like an English landscape under the spring sun.”\textsuperscript{67} Newman extended his remarks to include the song literature of early nineteenth century composers Bishop, Dibdin, Balfe and Wallace, seeing in their music the same true depiction of English character. The songs of these composers presented “a picture of a fair and strong and pleasant England; of a race that ate well and drank well and slept well, that had sturdy physical health and cool, clean nerves, and was sometimes stirred to moods of tenderness or philosophic contemplation, without, however, letting the emotions interfere


\textsuperscript{66}“National Music of England,” \textit{MagMus} 1 (February 1885): 27.

\textsuperscript{67}Newman, "The English Song," 274-75.
with the main facts and business of life." The object of Newman's remarks was to bemoan the degeneration of the English song, as evidenced by the drawing-room ballad, and to call for renewal.

The heritage of English church music was a topic of particular pride. It could boast a distinguished past from the Sarum chant of medieval times, through the music of the Old Hall Manuscript of the fifteenth century, ascending to the heights of expression during Tudor and Stuart times. Furthermore, it was the only form of music in England which, arguably, could be said to have continued to flourish during the "dark period" of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Some writers, upon the strength of this historical continuity, argued that church music was the only type of music ideally suited to the English temperament. An article appearing in Twentieth Century made the following remarks:

The English mind is primarily religious, and it is beyond question that English music has to serve the purposes of this deep sentiment... Church music of every manner--the hymn, the chant, the anthem, the cantata, the oratorio--these, offspring of the seriousness and practical sobriety of the English character, are alone natural to its musical genius... Its evidences need not be looked for on concert platform and stage. It is in the country churches and in the cathedrals that lives the real soul of English music.

Other genres, while not claiming English origin, certainly acquired a distinctly English stamp, offering further testimony to the vitality of the English musical mind. Chief among these were the oratorio and the madrigal. In the above quotation, the oratorio appears in the list of church music genres that were said to be the "offspring of the seriousness and practical sobriety of the English character." To be sure, at the time of

68 Ibid.

69 To many this provided but small consolation during a time when continental instrumental and operatic idioms were experiencing significant developments.

70 Quoted in "English Genius in Music," MS, ill.s., 4 (10 August 1895): 87.
this article, the English public had demonstrated its love for the oratorio over the course of a century and a half. Handel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* were the anchors of every annual choral festival.\(^{72}\) Even as of 1900 oratorio composition offered the English composer his greatest opportunity for receiving commissions and subsequent performances. Hiles calls the oratorio "our especial property . . . that form which embodies at once the reverence, the dignity, and the solidity of the poetic side of our temperament."\(^{73}\) Newman, on the other hand, saw the oratorio obsession of the English public as a major hindrance to the advancement of first-rate native composition. "It certainly seems hopeless to expect very much from a country in which almost any oratorio, no matter how banal or how uninteresting, is sure of a patient hearing and a fairly long life; where every village organist publishes his anthem, or his Te Deum, or his Magnificat, each one more unoriginal than the one that went before."\(^{74}\)

The English madrigal, while Italian in origin, was considered by many writers to be characteristically English and an object of special pride, being the product of the glorious Tudor period. In 1880, Sawyer claimed that the English madrigal excelled its Italian counterpart. Vaughan Williams's appraisal was more reserved but nonetheless credited the English madrigal school with first finding a sense of secular style in music. Noting the lack of distinction between continental secular and church music, he found in the rhythmic vitality of Morley's balletts and the tuneful quality of Dowland's ayres examples of a distinct secular idiom.\(^{75}\)

\(^{71}\)Ibid.

\(^{72}\)The choral festival was a mainstay in English musical life. The most famous among the choral festivals was the Three Choirs Festival which began in 1724, and featured the choirs of Gloucester, Worcester and Hereford.


\(^{74}\)Newman, "The English Song," 274.
While Vaughan Williams looked with pride to the stylistic advances of the Tudor School, other writers would support his opinion with earlier evidence. As late-Victorian and Edwardian writers looked back, two contributions stood out and continually occupied a key place in their writings. The first was the thirteenth-century Reading rota, *Sumer is icumen in*, which signaled the rise of indigenous English music. Writers remind us that it has been called the “greatest enigma in musical history” because it was so far ahead of its time. How, it was asked, could a landmark composition such as this be the product of an unmusical people? The esteem in which this composition was held is clearly demonstrated in Henry Hiles’s *Musical Opinion* article of 1891. Of “the canon of the Monk of Reading,” Hiles writes:

> it [is] impossible to speak too highly. It remains to us a perfectly unique possession; and we vainly search elsewhere for anything approaching it. “Summer is a coming in” is especially valuable as an unquestionable example of the happiest union of learning and melodic freedom; as an evidence of that blending of theory and practice, of the church and the secular branches of our English school, of which we find later, but not more conclusive, proof in the madrigals wherein our musicians fairly rivalled those of the continent.

The other great English contribution celebrated by many writers was the early fifteenth-century contrapuntal style of John Dunstable. As Sawyer asserted: “When the rest of Europe lay half savage Britain had its Bede, and its Dunstable (who invented ‘counterpoint’), and its Cotton, and its Hamtois.” Later writers would connect, even more specifically, the contribution of Dunstable with England’s claim to musicality. As W. F. Arnold reminded his readers:

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78 Sawyer, “Rise and Progress,” 342.
Another fact which is not sufficiently remembered and insisted on, and which those who argue that we are not a musical nation would do well to lay to heart, is that the real invention of independent contrapuntal writing—that is, of the art of composition—was English, and that the chief of the school was John of Dunstable (d. 1453) an achievement of which Englishmen may be justly proud.  

With the appearance of such genius, and English genius at that, how could anyone possibly question the musicality of the English people. Furthermore, England was not limited to, but would build upon the genius of Dunstable with other English-born geniuses, most notably William Byrd, Thomas Tallis, Orlando Gibbons, John Jenkins, William and Henry Lawes, and, of course, Henry Purcell.

Purcell occupied the central place in English musical history. Vaughan Williams called him "our great national composer," and "not only our greatest English composer, but one of the greatest composers the world has ever seen." The same writer also referred to him as "our most distinctly English composer." As of 1894, Purcell was considered by at least one writer, quoting Joseph Addison, as being the model for setting the English language to music. E. D. Rendall, while apologizing for the antiquated sound of Purcell's music, saw in his setting of the English language a technique to be imitated.

Living in an age, when music was in its boyhood, he affected many puerilities of imitation, and antiquated ornaments, now long discarded, but in understanding the capabilities of expression contained in our mother tongue, he has never been equalled. The advent of Handel crushed him out of the recollection of his compatriots, although Handel, as a foreigner, was in this respect infinitely his inferior.

The fact that Purcell's premature death signaled the demise of English music further enhanced his stature in the minds of his countrymen. Many pondered the question of the course of English music had Purcell not died prematurely and had Handel never set foot on

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80 Vaughan Williams, "The Age of Purcell," MuStud 7 (November 1914): 47.
81 Ibid., 48.
English soil. The answers to such questions remain forever hidden. What is clear, however, is the fact that as knowledge of Purcell's musical genius grew during the decades surrounding the dawn of the twentieth century, the musical writers looked for a second Purcell as the saviour of English music.

While many writers saw England's musical past as containing much of which they could be proud, it is interesting to note even toward the conclusion of the four decades the differing perspectives as they sought to make sense of it. In 1919, Eaglefield Hull writing in the *British Music Society Bulletin*—an organization founded for the advancement of British music—complained that English musical history was still inexcusably shrouded in darkness. In this article Hull stated without qualification that "no nation has a more glorious musical past than England." While continental inattention to the important role played by England in music history was regrettable, even more deplorable was the ignorance of this fact on the part of Englishmen.

A nation which possesses the oldest piece of polyphonic music in existence—the most valuable musical manuscript in the world; a nation which can boast of a fifteenth-century composer recognised all over Europe in his time as the inventor of the art of music, its *fons et origo*; which can claim an unequalled school of madrigalian composers; which produced a Purcell and a Byrd, a Bull and a Farnaby; such a nation can no longer sit still under the unforgivable indifference of musical historians.

A very different perspective appears in the report of a lecture to the Midland Branch of Incorporated Society of Musicians given by Sydney Grew which appeared in the *Musical Times*. In this lecture, entitled “The Musical Mind in England,” Grew announced that the English had been unmusical only two times during the past thousand years. At first flush this observation sounds quite favorable, but as he continued Grew

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stated that each of those periods covered roughly two hundred and fifty years, 1300-1550 and 1625-1875. He rejoiced, urging that even when England was unmusical she produced two very great musicians in John Dunstable and Henry Purcell, and that when she was musical she was the chief musical nation of Europe. Grew consoled the taken-aback hearer suggesting that "such stretches of time are not great as time goes." Perhaps not in light of eternity, but they are certainly significant blocks within the history of Western music. What Grew said was that within a period of nearly six centuries--ranging from the time period shortly after that of Franco of Cologne to the era of Wagner, Verdi and Brahms--England could boast but seventy-five years of being musical. This is not a strong argument in favor of England's claim to musicality.

An important aspect of Grew's article is his description of the English mind, seeing it as "fundamentally tranquil" and characterized by a quality of "brooding thoughtfulness." The "humanitarian" quality of the English mind makes it the "chief poetic mind of the human race," capable of being musical only when "music has rested on poetry rather than 'abstract' principles."^86

While it is difficult to find much encouragement in Grew's view of English musical history, he made an important connection to which we must now turn--that of the English temperament as a musical temperament. Previously, we saw that the temperament of the English people was considered as an argument against the musicality of the English nation. The English disposition, in essence, was considered too stiff, restrained, practical, detached--in a word, too proper--to be capable of great musical expression. Music was essentially an emotional art, the English were essentially an intellectual race. As Parry observed "it is not reason which governs men's actions, but their moods, and it is the

^86 Ibid.

^87 Ibid.
moods of men which are represented by music." But a number of writers saw in the English temperament a further witness to her musicality.

**Temperament as a Witness**

One of the earlier and more significant expositions of this issue is Gilbert Webb's 1891 lecture before the Royal Musical Association on the topic, "The Foundations of National Music." Webb's stated purpose was to show that distinctions between national styles in music are substantially deeper than mere superficial differences due to peculiarities of languages, instruments, and scales used. An important aspect of his argument was the role of temperament in musical expression. He claimed that English music:

> has existed for centuries . . . and it is just as characteristic of our national temperament as that of any other nation. What is the character of the majority of ordinary Englishmen? A well-balanced mind which regards everything in an intensely practical light and which submits everything to the question: "What good will that do to my pecuniary or social position?" We hate display. All extravagance of language, dress, and gesture; we look upon the impulsive man with suspicion and upon the exaggerator with disgust, and regard enthusiasm as dangerous; we fear to let ourselves "go" lest we should excite ridicule; in a word, we lack "passion." On the other hand, we are magnanimous and chivalrous, whether the object be worthy or no; emotional on social subjects, patriotic, and home-loving. What should be the music of such a people? Just what it is; good, honest, bold, straightforward strains, rich in melody, and breathing strong, healthy, human affection or simple-hearted gaiety, but innocent alike of exaggerated sentimentality, intellectual subtleties, or maddening mysticism.

To Webb the issue was not whether a temperament was inherently musical or not, but how fully and honestly the music of a people reflected that temperament. Without apology he described the English temperament as practical, expedient, unpretentious,

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deliberate, reserved, charitable, honourable, socially conscientious, and patriotic, and finds her music correspondent to those qualities. Putting Webb's point in other words, the greatest argument against England's musicality did not hinge on the nature of her temperament, but on whether or not she had a music to express that temperament. But writers were divided on the topic.

Two lead articles appearing in the *Musical Standard* from the mid-1890s shed significant light upon this issue. The first, entitled "Emotion in British Music," was a report of a lecture by Sir Joseph Barnby which had been delivered the previous week at the London Institution. As reported by an anonymous writer, Barnby cited the lack of emotional expression as being a significant weakness in British music. In stark contrast with German music, which revealed a natural tendency toward the emotional, English music, according to Barnby, was:

restrained and awkward. It possesses scholarship and academic grace; it often attains a high standard of noble and ample expression; but the fatal tendency of the English mind to compromise, its staginess of emotion, its solid common-sense, prevent it attaining that free, inspired utterance which responds to every note of the gamut of human passion, and carries the feelings into an ecstasy of idealism.

In commenting upon Barnby's lecture the reporter took issue not with the emotional limitations of British music, but with the place of intellectuality in music. The writer granted that there was a national innate dislike of appearing foolish, and that the tendency to exhibit one's emotions was indeed foolish, more befitting a foreigner than an Englishman. To the Englishman, emotion was a thing to be suspected, and appropriate only in private (as in poetry) rather than in public display as when passionate love-song is sung. While English literature possessed some of the finest love-lyrics of the world, it was also characterized by restraint--"passion tinged with intellectuality." The English propensity

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91 Ibid.
to refer everything back to the intellect made the English nation great in literature. The writer commented that one should not mistake the manner of expression for the substance of expression. "As a nation we are manly in our way of expressing ourselves . . . but it were rash [sic] to suppose that we do not therefore feel." The writer did concede, however, that the very restraint which was so important for literature, which appealed to the intellect first and subsequently to the emotions, was "out of place in music." In this view, British musicians were limited by the national dislike of being emotional. They fall prey to the very characteristic that makes English literature great, namely restraint in the expression of emotion. But where literature appeals first to the intellect and by extension to the emotions, music appeals to the intellect through the emotions. We are reminded that "the cause of music is feeling and the end of it is the arousing of feeling, and that is what so many of our British composers, clever and talented as they are, will not understand or cannot put into practice." 

A second article on the topic appeared as a lead article eight months later in the same journal under the title "English Genius in Music." It was occasioned by a discussion that appeared in Twentieth Century dealing with the difference between English, French, Italian and German temperaments. In a lengthy quotation we learn that "sentimentalism, sensuousness, and romance have nothing to do with the colder temperament of the English nature." The Twentieth Century writer continues, stating that music:

must naturally exhibit the same tendencies and the same limitations as are to be found in the other arts. Here once more there will be seriousness, there will be perspicuity, and, beyond all, there will be the same tendency to develop music just where it may prove to

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92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 Quoted in "English Genius in Music," 87-89.
be of practical use, or to express in moving manner the deep and ever-present feelings of the race.\(^{95}\)

According to the writer, music written for the church has proven to be the most successful in England because the English mind is primarily religious.

In his commentary on the above, the writer for the *Musical Standard* leveled a number of criticisms of this viewpoint. He fundamentally challenged the assertion that all expressions of art exhibit the same tendencies, and referred the reader to literature and the plastic arts as revelatory of the sentimental, sensuous, and romantic aspects of the English nature. Furthermore, were we to deduce the characteristics of English nature from literature and the plastic arts we should say:

The main qualities are intensity of imagination, a slightly materialistic way of looking at things (our practical side), a saving quality of humour, much energy and force, a very highly developed sense of the ridiculous (too much developed, perhaps), solidity of workmanship, a real love of the outside world of sea and land, and, in the main, a quite remarkable clearness of thought. All these qualities are bound in the iron band of reserve, which happily prevents our tearing a passion to tatters.\(^{96}\)

The reason for the preoccupation with church music, the writer argued, had more to do with tender than temperament. It is the "only serious form of the art that really pays in Great Britain."\(^{97}\) The writer held the opinion that music in England was limited in its abilities to mirror the English temperament, but there was nothing to suggest fault with the English temperament itself. In fact, he was clearly optimistic in regard to the future of English music. In time English music will exhibit the same qualities evidenced in the masterpieces of literature and the plastic arts, namely "romance of feeling, passion of a restrained and dignified sort, and intense imagination."\(^{98}\)

\(^{95}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{96}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{97}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{98}\) *Ibid.*
Newman saw the greatest threat to English musical quality not in her reserved quality, but rather in the outgoing side of her temperament. Comparing English song with its German counterpart Newman writes:

The soil was not so favourable to great music as the German: the national consumption of beef and ale, the national enjoyment of outdoor sports, the national optimism and self-satisfaction, were all against those subtler vibrations of the nerves that made the German song so great; but such as it was the life was honest and had its own honest expression in art.\(^9\)

Thus, even if the English temperament could not produce great art it could at least produce honest art.

One final statement provides further insight into the possibilities and limitations of musical side of the English temperament. Herbert Antcliffe's article, "British Music and Its Affluents," appeared in the *Monthly Musical Record*. According to Antcliffe, artistic progress is a two-pronged phenomenon, namely creativity and assimilation. It is achieved by the "ability to conceive new ideas," and also through the "receptivity of and ability to apply ideas conceived by others."\(^{100}\) Likening artistic progress to the development of a plant, the writer asserted that there must be life both from the root and from the surrounding atmosphere. Applying this paradigm to music, he noted that musical history of England was one better characterized by nourishment from the atmosphere, than from the root. One reason for this situation was the cosmopolitan character of the English nation, of which Antcliffe wrote: "Like our blood and our language . . . our music has always been a complex amalgam of that of other peoples of a more primary racial content."\(^{101}\) The other reason resided in the "lack of keen imaginative powers and passionate feeling" seen in the temperamental makeup of the English people.

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\(^{100}\)Antcliffe, "British Music and Its Affluents," 246.

\(^{101}\)Ibid.
The music which attracts and which creates new schools and excites original and striking utterance, is full of the warmth of passion and desire. Englishmen have but little of this, and our love and hate, our appreciation of beauty and our distaste of ugliness, are colder and slower to move than those of most other nations. Consequently, most of the beauty of our work is that which comes from finished labour, from a regularity and steadiness of expression, and from depth rather than freshness of thought.\textsuperscript{102}

Antcliffe's estimate of the English temperament was in agreement with the other writers we have seen. Furthermore, he saw the English temperament as capable of musicality—a distinctly English musicality that truly mirrored a distinctly English temperament. As we have stated previously, the greatest threat to England's musicality as noted by Gilbert Webb was not her temperament, but whether she had music to express that temperament.

To this point we have looked at three primary factors which many writers offered as evidence that England is a musical nation—her folk music, her musical history, and her temperament. The overriding issue that connects all of these is the quality of distinctiveness. The fact that England possesses folk music is certainly one to be respected, but the recognition of its distinctive character is greater testimony to her claim to be musical. The same holds true for her musical history. The importance of that history may be seen in the distinctive quality of her great composers, native genres, and significant contributions. The attributes that distinguish the English temperament are well recognized by every writer on the subject. Music that reflects that temperament will necessarily be thoroughly English in character.

We now must turn to the final, and in many ways most decisive, phase in the discussion. Has English music any distinctive characteristics? If so, what are they? Have they evolved and even changed over the course of history or are they supra-historical?

\textsuperscript{102}Ibid., 247.
Finally, how does the presence or absence of distinctive musical characteristics influence our answer to the question, "Is England a musical nation?"

**Characteristics of English Music as a Witness**

In this discussion the characteristics of English music will be considered from two viewpoints—musical and non-musical descriptions. In the period prior to World War I, with few exceptions, the overwhelming tendency on the part of writers was to describe English music in terms of temperamental attributes. Adjectives such as "dignified," "manly," "honest," "straightforward" appear frequently in these descriptions. During the war years the focus shifted as more attention was given to specific musical aspects of the question.

An important early article appeared in the 24 June 1882 number of the *Musical Standard*. In this article the author, E. H. Turpin, defined national characteristics of English music and presented them as being historically consistent. Turpin was not an ardent nationalist. In fact, he saw music as gradually becoming more cosmopolitan, and believed that the time for the establishment of exclusively national schools of music had passed. Nevertheless, he claimed that England "has had, and has still, a national tone of musical thought" and, in turn, had been an important influence in musical history.103 In his discussion, Turpin concentrated upon musical characteristics revealed in England's art music and church music, citing composers from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries.

What are those characteristics? "They are a thorough understanding and a special utilization of the never-to-be-exhausted progressions of the diatonic scale, and a consequent vigorous contrapuntal power; a clear, logical method of rhythm; a discreet use of

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ornamentation, and a sense of propriety as regards style and expression.” Of the first attribute, Turpin urges us to “look at the pure, honest, frank, diatonic, melodic progressions “of composers such as Tallis, Byrd, Blow, Purcell, Arne, Boyce, Wesley, and Sterndale Bennett, and unspecified living composers. He proceeds to suggest that English counterpoint has been positively affected as a result of the characteristic preference for the diatonic genus. According to the writer, Handel “grew in this manly, diatonic, truthful English spirit, and . . . his genius . . . became English to the backbone.”

Rhythm has been a distinct attribute of English secular music from the seventeenth century onward. The fourth trait of English music throughout history involves its “discreet and reserved use of figures of ornamentation,” always immune to the “artificialities of the Italian Opera.” England has further distinguished itself from the music of the continent in its “note of propriety” which has not only “characterised our national music,” but also has “preserved our church music from . . . worldliness and theatrical colouring.” While in his conclusion Turpin acknowledged that all had not been satisfactory with the encouragement and performance opportunities of native music, in retrospect he applauded the men, past and present, “who have given to us a national school stamped with such genuine characteristics of a high order” and who, consequently, had contributed to the “advancement of the art.”

In his description of English melody, Turpin used the adjectives “pure, honest, frank.” Others described English music in similar terms. For instance, Gilbert Webb relating English music to English temperament commented that it moved in “good, honest,
A number of years later a writer "C" saw in English melody a "simple idyllic strain [that] points to extraordinary reserve which keeps our lips from passion and our limbs from violence until the time for real action has come." As the article progresses we see the writer moving toward a more specific discussion. Citing folk songs, national songs, and glees as examples, "C" derived the following attributes of English melody: "no passionate longing"; a "thread of gentle sweetness"; a "dignified strain"; a "pastoral idyllic strain"; and finally, "mild, but pregnant with reserve, couched in a strain of smooth tenderness not to be found to the same degree elsewhere."

Like Turpin, Webb, and "C", W. F. Arnold also saw a stream of recognizable characteristics consistent throughout English musical history. In his 1915 article, "A True British Music," Arnold, writing of "the unmistakable English musical idiom," noted: "We all know it exists and have made its acquaintance in the compositions of the Elizabethans and of Purcell and Arne, in the songs of Bishop and Hatton, in the miscellaneous works of Sullivan and Edward German, in 'Drink to me only with thine eyes,' 'Cherry ripe,' and the rest of our national songs." He traced English melody to the folk songs of the peaceful countryside and characterized them as possessing "perfectly formed and beautifully rounded outline" containing "no awkward jumps or ragged edges." They are restrained and show no superficiality.

In Geoffrey Shaw's article "English traditional music" in the *Music Student*, we find a marked attempt to look at melody in terms of musical categories. The chief

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characteristics of folk song reside in four attributes--range, modality, rhythm, and music/text relationship. When compared with German folk song, English melody shows "wonderful freedom of movement between the highest and lowest notes of the range." Shaw saw the modality of English melody as producing a peculiar "bite" or "sting." His brother, Martin Shaw, in a lecture delivered at the Welsh Church Music Congress the following year, asserted that church music revealed most accurately the national characteristics, it being the only surviving stronghold of national music. Citing "King's Lynn" as an example of English music, he commented upon its strong modal flavour, the absence of a leading note, and the "thoroughly Elizabethan quality of sturdy independence and unconventionality." He also found the "bite" and flavour as being characteristically English, evidenced in the first four notes followed by a rise to the seventh scale degree.

In their attempts to isolate national musical traits, writers were most often drawn to the subject of melody, but English harmony was also considered distinctive. Geoffrey Shaw, in an article written again for the *Music Student*, complained that a number of "faults" which students were taught to avoid in German-influenced textbooks were, in reality, essential characteristics of English music. He cited three traits where the English idiom historically deviated from continental practice. The first two instances applied to chord progressions that utilize mediant and supertonic triads, respectively. The final English harmonic trait involved the use of false relations, a long-recognized feature of the

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116See chapter six for a specific discussion of his argument.
English musical idiom. Shaw defended the use of the false relation against harmony books which commented on its ugliness and lack of polish, countering that its "roughness is glorious." He concluded: "There is a penetrating shrewdness about the false relation that is characteristically English."\(^{117}\)

When writing of rhythm in English music, many writers were struck by its absence or at least its lack of prominence when compared to the music of other nations. "C" considered the lack of rhythmic energy to be a distinctive feature of English melody.\(^{118}\) Rutland Boughton, two years later, also characterized English music as lacking in rhythmic vitality.\(^{119}\) Geoffrey Shaw, on the other hand, held that strength and freedom of rhythm distinguished the folk music of England. The characteristic rhythm of English folk song was an energetic 6/8, and 5/4 time was not uncommon.\(^{120}\) Three years later in a lecture on the same topic Shaw would reaffirm the liberated rhythmic quality of English folk songs where five or seven beats to the bar would appear, in contrast to the regular, "stodgy" rhythm of German folk songs.\(^{121}\)

Another feature which further contributed to the distinctive quality of English music was the nature of the language. Previously, reference was made to an article appearing in the *Musical Times* of 1 September 1894 entitled "English Music." The primary focus of this article was the musical expression of the English language as seen in works of Purcell, Handel, and Parry. Purcell is exalted as the model for setting the English language to

\(^{117}\) Shaw, "Quo Vadis?", 209-10.

\(^{118}\) C., "English Melody," 54-55.


\(^{120}\) Shaw, "British Music of To-Day, I," 23.

music. Rendall, the author, compared settings by Purcell and Handel of identical texts and found that where "Purcell's extraordinary striving for expression almost chokes his utterance . . . Handel for the most part contents himself with the commonplace of Italian tradition."\textsuperscript{122} The most significant part of the article is in Rendall's assertion of the parallel between Purcell and Parry. Citing *Prometheus Unbound* as essentially Wagnerian in character, the writer states that Parry "has gradually developed . . . into a style, which is a far truer expression of what is essentially English."\textsuperscript{123} As Parry's style evolved, his music had progressively achieved a distinctly English cast. This was most evident in his settings of the language that mirror Purcell's syncopations and frequent dotted-rhythms—the result of the verbal peculiarities of the English language.

While many writers sought distinctive musical characteristics as they rummaged through English musical history, others, many more in number, described and identified English music according to non-musical categories. We now turn to consider those characteristics of English music generated by the distinctiveness of the English temperament. It is significant to note that these descriptions of English music do not change during the period under review, but remain remarkably consistent throughout. Elsie Home in a lecture/recital given in 1918 would claim that the principal attributes of English music (i.e. humor, strong sentiment, sincerity, freshness of idea) had remained "unchanged since the earliest times." Many writers saw English music as characterized by dignity, straightforward manliness, and fresh, vigorous gaiety. It is "honest with no trace of false sentiment, cautious and deliberate."\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{122}Rendall, "English Music," 593.

\textsuperscript{123}\textit{Ibid.}

Gilbert Webb, we have previously noted, in his 1891 address to the Royal Musical Association observed the parallel between English music and English temperament. According to him English music consisted of good, honest, straightforward strains, breathing strong, healthy, human affection. Furthermore it was innocent of exaggerated sentimentality, intellectual subtleties, or maddening mysticism.\textsuperscript{125} Also focusing upon the relationship between English character and music was the writer for \textit{Twentieth Century} quoted in the \textit{Musical Standard} of August 1895. In this view, English music reflected the stateliness and dignity of English character. It had the masterly restraint and true sobriety of a genius that was sure of itself. It was scholarly without being pedantic; fresh, vigorous and refined, exhibiting no trace of of false sentiment or morbid passion.\textsuperscript{126} W. T. Arnold would later state that it was "devoid of superficial and shallow sentimentality."\textsuperscript{127}

The great characteristic of English music, according to Filson Young, was its gaiety. Young saw this attribute as being generated historically by village songs, dances and games of the English countryside. Interestingly, the same writer felt that this aspect did not represent English character, yet did bear a relationship to it, serving as a necessary counterweight to the dignified sternness of that character. The attribute of gaiety was further necessitated by the heavy English climate with its grey cloudy skies.\textsuperscript{128}

In 1917 Christopher à Becket Williams compared the musical attributes of a number of countries of his day with what they had been a century earlier. He concluded that

\textsuperscript{125}Webb, "Foundations" 131.
\textsuperscript{126}Quoted in "English Genius in Music," 87-89.
\textsuperscript{127}Arnold, "The True British Music," 746.
\textsuperscript{128}Filson Young, "The Place of Music in Modern Life," \textit{English Review} 7 (February 1911): 497.
England shared common musical traits with a number of countries. For example, English music resembled the French in its brightness and vivacity, the German in its imagination and scholarship, but lacked superficiality and passion characteristic of Italian music. The distinctive aspect of English music was its blend of dignity and humor, as evident in the music of Sullivan and Elgar, where one sees both “dignified humor” and “humorous dignity.”

Sydney Grew, speaking more metaphysically, found the central characteristic of English music to be its “language of affirmation.” According to Grew, music which is truly English “expresses only positive moods, and particularly those of confidence, tranquility, spiritual serenity, and grave and sympathetic understanding of matters of universal significance.”

Conclusion

The issue of whether or not England was a musical nation occupied writers throughout the four decades of this study. While the topic was not a concern solely of this period—having been argued during the century previous as well as in the years following—there was, nevertheless, an intensification of the debate between 1880 and 1920. As pro-nationalist writers sought to discover and cultivate a national musical idiom they saw that the question of English musicality was preliminary to any serious future discussion and endeavors. If the English were not a musical people, there was certainly no possibility of cultivating a national style that would be reflective of that people. On the other hand, if the

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English were a musical people, an important stronghold had been established. From this position the battle for the cultivation of a native idiom could be fought. In their attempts to demonstrate the inherent musicality of the English, writers and composers had cited key witnesses—chief among them English folk song and England's musical past. In their efforts to cultivate a national musical style, writers and composers would again look to the same sources—this time not as testimony from the past but as foundation stones for the future.
PART TWO

TOWARD A NATIONAL MUSIC
While the "preliminary questions" generated substantial debate among the critics and composers, those concerns that related to the cultivation of a distinctly English musical idiom sparked even greater controversy. Here we find substantial differences of opinion not only between those on either side of the national-music question, but also among the nationalists themselves as they became divided over the problem of methodology. The chapters which follow in part two deal with the controversy surrounding the call for and cultivation of a national musical idiom in England.

The present chapter focuses upon the call for a national idiom in English music. Three aspects of the discussion will be considered—the recognition of a renaissance in native musical composition beginning about 1880; the growing intensity of that renaissance, which generated the call for a distinctly national idiom; and initial attempts to answer concerns of whether or not an English school was possible and suggestions as to how it could be achieved.

Recognizing the Renaissance

Even the most superficial survey of the criticism and musical writings produced between 1880 and 1920 creates the undeniable impression that English native composition was, at that time, in the thrust of a renaissance. The following quotations may serve as a representative sample.
The present position of the English School... is one of rare promise, and displays the presence of earnestness and a love of sound workmanship not to be surpassed in any other country.¹

England held a noble position in the glorious era of vocal art 300 years ago, and we are sanguine enough to believe that she will, at no distant date, show the results of her recent mighty awakening in music, by triumphs which will eclipse her former madrigalian honours, and place her in an unassailable position among the nations of the world, as something nobler than "a race of shopkeepers."²

There never was a period in our history and very few, I venture to think in that of other countries, when so great a number of earnest and really gifted young composers were to be found together as are now to be heard in London.³

Never in the annals of musical history has England held such a prominent place in the musical world as she now occupies.⁴

As these quotations show, there seems to have been common acceptance of the notion that something happened to change the course of English music during the decades prior to 1900. The specific details of this renaissance, however, were not so obvious: the exact date of its beginning; the factors that contributed to its appearance; the composer or composers responsible for the awakening. But one overriding aspect of the renaissance must be emphasized—it brought with it an overwhelming sense of optimism in regard to the future of English music.

Throughout the forty-year period that marks this study, writers would suggest that the steady progress of English music, as well as its increased favor with the English public, began about 1880. In the Monthly Musical Record of October 1892 the author although conceding that art is cosmopolitan by nature contended that it is also a matter of national pride. After parroting the question: "Can anything really great come out of England?" the

writer observed that each year saw an increase in the production of serious English compositions—symphonies, cantatas, oratorios, and operas. When did this increase begin? “We believe that if anyone will take the trouble to look over our magazines and papers during the last ten or fifteen years, they will find, taking one view with another, that English musical art is treated with greater respect than ever. . . . The present time is one of special interest, and it seems as if there were a bright future in store for English art.”

Throughout the twentieth century it has been a commonly-held view that 1880 marks the starting-point for the English musical renaissance. Many writers, those both contemporaneous and more recent, have sought to provide a precise date for its beginning—specifically 7 September 1880—when Parry's cantata *Scenes from Shelley's Prometheus Unbound* was performed in Gloucester during the annual Three Choirs Festival. This work received considerable attention and mixed reception in the press. Yet many critics, from that time and onward, have seen this occasion as a watershed in English musical history. While many believed that Parry's music suffered from the too-considerable influence of Wagner, there nevertheless remained the sense that Parry had sounded a new voice in English music heralding an optimistic future.

An article by W. H. Hadow which appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* of October 1906 provides a wider view of the rise and progress of the English musical renaissance. Hadow placed the beginning of the renaissance in 1862, at least in its incipient form, with the appearance of Sullivan's music for *The Tempest*, followed shortly thereafter by [Sterndale] Bennett's *Paradise and Peri* overture. While their works and others’ showed

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signs of hope for the future, Hadow believed that neither Sullivan nor Bennett were endowed with the temperament or sufficient strength of genius to "lead the advance."

Parry and Stanford were the key players in enabling the renaissance fully to take hold—the two vital compositions being *Prometheus* (1880) and the *Elegiac Symphony* (1882).

Hadow, fourteen years later, in an address delivered to the British Music Society would state: "I am most embarrassed [sic] in alluding to the beginning of our great English Renaissance, seeing here one of the two men to whom it was mainly due; but I know Sir Charles Stanford will forgive me if I ask the British Music Society and its successors to hold in undying memory the debt which this country owes to him and Sir Hubert Parry. The days which saw the production of the Irish Symphony [1887] and of Prometheus were our passage of the Red Sea, the days that took us out of the house of bondage."

Another article, appearing toward the end of the four decades of this study, also placed the beginning of the renaissance in 1880. Eaglefield Hull, writing in celebration of the 500th number of *Musical Opinion* in 1919, glanced back to the 1870s when the journal began. According to Hull:

> The picture of national music in 1870 is indeed a "wilderness enow" with hardly any signs of an oasis. The last forty years have witnessed the rise of Parry, Mackenzie and Stanford; Cowen, Thomas and Delius. ... Parry is one of those great men to whom it is difficult to do justice. His "Prometheus" in 1890 heralded the dawn of the new schools.

This position has not been unchallenged. A variety of opinion, prevalent in more recent studies, was evident also a century ago. In a lead article that appeared in the

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8Parry had died in October 1918.


10A. Eaglefield Hull, "The Renaissance of British Music," *MO* 42 (May 1919): 488. Obviously the date is a typographical error—it was 1880.
Musical Standard, the author was occupied primarily with the question of whether or not there was an English school of music at the time of his writing. The ready answer to the question was that England had no school of music outside of the church idiom. But the writer continued, affirming that English composers for the last fifty years [since 1839] "have been furnishing the works of which future generations will be proud, which they will classify, and out of which they will carve an English school."12

Two points warrant emphasis. First, the date for a renaissance in English music was extended back to the early-to-mid part of the century.13 Secondly, the reality of this renaissance preceded any conscious establishment of an English school. The writer maintained that it would be up to future generations, through classification, to determine inductively what constitutes (or has constituted) the English school of music.

Ernest Newman considered the 1890s to be the landmark decade of significant English composition. Writing in the Contemporary Review of 1901 Newman held that the men composing fifteen years ago [1886] were already "hoary with antiquity" even though they were still in middle age. Ten years prior to the article's appearance [1891] saw the emergence of a little group whose music was marked by "unprecedented charm and daintiness of melody." But five years later [1896] "a remarkable change has come on the spirit and the outlook of young musical England." Newman's analysis of recent English musical life is a witty and irresistible one.

A modern poet, with a taste for the cosmogonical epic, might write the history of English music during the last fifty years in a series of geological and biological


12"Have we an English School of Music," MS, n.s., 36 (9 February 1889): 108.

13The author provides a list of composers, dead and living, among whom are found the names of Sterndale Bennett (1816-75), George Macfarren (1813-87), Ebenezer Prout (1835-1909), and John Stainer (1840-1901). It is interesting to find that Parry does not even make the list, although Stanford does.
pictures. We begin, about half a century ago, with little better than sheer chaos; the musical state of that day was the primeval ooze, in which some tiny germs were struggling for life and air. Then came the epoch of the mammoth and the mastodon, of the fabulous big men who had learned all that Germany could teach them, except to write interestingly. These were the great days of symphonies and cantatas and oratorios, and of fearful and wonderful musical criticism in the London Press. Some of the giant beasts of that great day still survive, and are very useful for educational purposes, like the big skeletons in the museums. It is said that their superior height enables them to look down with contempt upon the smaller musical organisms that now run round them, and occasionally into them; but they feel the cold somewhat acutely. This epoch was succeeded by that of the little songbirds, who really sang very prettily indeed for a time, and of the artificial shepherds who did some quite charming tricks in the way of dancing. But their little throats soon became very tired, and their little ways began to pall on the public. They had, however, done one service to English music; they had substituted melody and grace for stodginess and boredom. Finally, there came the present school, who have done things, of which their fellow-countrymen have no need to be ashamed. Men like Mr. Edward Elgar and Mr. Granville Bantock are of a type hitherto unknown in English music. They have a science that would turn the mammoths and the mastodons green with envy; but their technique is a native, not a foreign technique, and is used for native ends.¹⁴

In summary, although it has not been an unchallenged view, most writers are agreed that 1880 marks a turning-point for English music. To claim that Parry's *Prometheus Unbound* initiated a new era, however, is not to claim that it was "English." Parry was a great admirer of Wagner and the *Prometheus* music betrays that admiration. But it is obvious that the generation of Parry and Stanford, as well as the next generation who studied under them, recognized the debt owed to Parry's Gloucester achievement and would look back to this event as the first noteworthy manifestation from the pen of an English composer in several decades. The renaissance, however, was more than one work, one man, one performance.

A key exposition in the contemporaneous accounts that describe the renaissance is Fuller Maitland's 1902 volume entitled *English Music in the Nineteenth Century*. Stating outright that it was impossible to provide a precise date for the renaissance due to the gradual nature of the changing musical conditions, Fuller Maitland located "the first dawn

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of the renaissance” in 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition. He quickly pointed out that
music played a considerably less than prominent place in the Exhibition but nevertheless
held that it was “somewhere about the middle of the century that the dawning of the new
day of English music took place.” Essential to his argument was the contention that the
renaissance occurred not because the composers of that day were more gifted than those of
previous generations, but because the composers born in the 40s and 50s “grew up in
conditions far more favorable to their musical well-being.”

In an earlier lecture, reported in the *Musical Standard*, Fuller Maitland had cited
Parry and Stanford as leaders in the renaissance as much for social as for musical reasons.
According to Fuller Maitland, Parry and Stanford illustrated the changing social status of
the musician. No longer was the musician necessarily born into the profession but was
now frequently “a man of good birth who had received the general culture of his class.” As
a result, “the musical profession . . . is now-a-days largely recruited from the upper classes
of society . . . I venture to think that this is one of the causes of the present improvement
in national music, but is a very distinct sign of the enlargement of musical culture among
the nation.”

Five years later, the author further developed this theme in *English Music of the
Nineteenth Century*. Fuller Maitland saw the renaissance to be a result of the cultivation of
an environment that nurtured the English composer. The author provided three key areas
of change: the general attitude of the public toward art; the great advance of knowledge and

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16 The major players in the Renaissance were born within a period of less than two decades—
Sullivan (1842), Bridge (1844), Mackenzie (1847), Parry (1848), Thomas (1851), Stanford (1852), Cowen
(1852), Corder (1852), White (1855), Elgar (1857), Ashton (1859).

17 Fuller Maitland, "The Renaissance," 393.
practice among those who were engaged in music; greater interest in the scientific side of music. The public's attitude respecting the art resulted in a number of benefits, e.g. social respectability for musicians, increased interest in music as an art beyond the parlour, increase in number of concert venues, more music-schools, more developed musical taste on the part of audiences. Both amateurs and professionals had given more serious attention to musical study which raised the standard of the profession. The scientific side of music included musicological developments, e.g. the study of old music, restoration of old instruments, re-editing new and authentic editions of older classics, the scholarly work which resulted in significant musical literature, as Grove's Dictionary, first published in 1879-80.

An important aspect of his argument is Fuller Maitland's extensive description of the steady rise of institutions that occurred during the latter half of the nineteenth century. It was the ascendency of those institutions that cultivated the soil which nurtured the seed of English musical talent and transformed the possibilities and opportunities for public education. Fuller Maitland did not limit himself in his understanding of institutions, but extended his reach to encompass "all undertakings which give opportunities for young musicians to educate themselves by hearing music, all concert-enterprises founded with a purely artistic purpose, and in general everything which provides a favourable atmosphere for the progress of the art."^18

^18 Fuller Maitland, English Music, 140.
Institutions as presented in Fuller Maitland,

*English Music in the Nineteenth Century* (1902)

**Institutions established prior to 1851**
- Philharmonic Society [1813; became Royal Philharmonic Society in 1912]
- Royal Academy of Music [1823-]
- Sacred Harmonic Society [1832-1882; new Society 1882-1888]
- Musical Union [1845-1880]
- Society of British Musicians [1834-1865]
- Wednesday Concerts [1848-]
- Amateur Musical Society [1847-1861]
- Bach Society [1849-1870]
- St. Martin's Hall [1850-1860]

**Institutions established after 1851**
- New Philharmonic Society [1852-]
- Harmonic Union [1852-54]
- Quartet Association [1852-1854]
- Crystal Palace [1852-1936, destroyed by fire]
  - Saturday Concerts presented the works of classical masters
- Leslie's Choir [1855-]
- Vocal Association [1856-]
- Halle Concerts [Manchester, 1857-]
- Musical Society of London [1858-1867]
- St. James Hall Popular Concerts [1859-]
  - Monday evening concerts [1859-]
  - Saturday afternoon concerts [1865- ]; initially were public rehearsals for Monday evening concerts, later developed different programs
- Halle's Pianoforte recitals [1861-]
- Rea's Newcastle Orchestra Concerts [1867-1876]
- Working Men's Society [1867-]
- Albert Hall [1871-]
- Walter Bache's annual concerts [1871-]
- Guild of Amateur Musicians [1874-]
Musical Association [1874-]
National Training School of Music [1870s]
   -in 1882 became the Royal College of Music
Bach Choir [1874-]
Dannreuther's Private Concerts [1874-1893]
London Musical Society [1878-1887]
People's Concert Society [1878-]
Richter Concerts [1879-]
Guildhall School of Music [1880-]
Handel Society [1882-]
Royal College of Music [1882-]
   -originally the National Training School of Music [1870s]
Henschel's London Symphony Orchestra Concerts [1885-1897]
Magpie Madrigal Society [1886-1911]
   -originally the Magpie Minstrels (1886) name altered to above (1896)
Queen's Hall [1893-]
   -Symphony concerts
   -Promenade concerts

An institution not included on the above list, but one more fully developed by Fuller Maitland in a later chapter, is the English light opera of Arthur Sullivan. According to Fuller Maitland, the English light opera incorporated elements from other operetta traditions but was distinctly English and as such “was indirectly a factor of no little force in the renaissance of music.” In contrast to the continental light operas, which displayed musical and textual vulgarity, was the English “conviction that light and amusing music need not be always associated with this undesirable element.”21 Sullivan's greatest and, at

19Ibid., 165.

20Fuller Maitland had written: "the element of 'naughtiness' was never very far away from any work of Offenbach and his school." Ibid., 166.

21Fuller Maitland, English Music, 166.
the same time, worst trait was his "fastidious taste, a hatred of anything like vulgarity" that drove him to create the great Savoy operas on the one hand and some of the most banal music imaginable, on the other.

Fuller Maitland, however, did not include Sullivan in his list of the leaders of the renaissance, but considered him to be more an institution that nurtured the environment. His contribution to the renaissance was in appealing to "the taste of average men" thus being the "first Englishman who contrived to excite enthusiasm in his countrymen."

Others, writing later in the decade, would claim Sullivan as the leader of the renaissance. We have already cited Hadow's *Edinburgh Review* article of October 1906 in which Sullivan's "Tempest" music of 1862 was named as giving rise to an incipient renaissance. But Hadow considered Sullivan's genius to be too slender to spearhead the movement fully.

A. E. Keeton writing in the *Contemporary Review* of February 1908 took issue with Fuller Maitland's identification of the leaders of the renaissance and dismissed that group as representing "stereotypical, academical methods." Keeton advanced Sullivan as the "first true generator of the modern British composer" stating that he "daringly discarded the mantle of pedantic imitation which others have so frequently used to cloak their singular lack of inspiration, and expressed himself honestly in his own language." Keeton agreed with Fuller Maitland that the English comic opera, as exemplified by the Savoy models,

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23Fuller Maitland's Renaissance leaders were Parry, Stanford, Mackenzie, Thomas, and Cowen.


was distinct from its continental counterparts, which to her was a point of no little significance. That Sullivan was composing within a distinctly English genre set him apart from his contemporaries, and thereby marked him as the first nationalistic composer and the leader of the English musical renaissance.27

Fuller Maitland presented five composers as leaders of the renaissance, all born within the same half-decade: Alexander Mackenzie (1847), Hubert Parry (1848), Arthur Goring Thomas (1850), Frederic Cowen (1852), and Charles Villiers Stanford (1852). The author focused upon a few aspects which set those composers apart from all others: all showed a breadth of general culture and education which generated broad views toward art and life; most came from a class which up to that time had not been represented in music; finally, their music exhibits a recognizably British note. He concluded that while there was an aspect of individuality to each, the five composers as a group "can be compared with any school that the world of music has seen."28

The 1880s were important in Fuller Maitland's view not because of the work of any single individual--all of these composers were well established by 1880--but because it was during this decade that the "streams of [their] work converged."29 Special mention was made by the writer of Stanford's organization of a 1887 performance of representative works by these composers to which was added Sullivan's *Golden Legend.*

As time progressed, Edward Elgar became more frequently cited as the initiator of the renaissance. Elgar was looked upon by many as the first English composer since

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27 It is important to note that by 1908 more writers were connecting the concept of the renaissance and its full fruition with the production of a national idiom.


29 *Ibid.*, 188.
Sullivan to appeal to the average lover of music. As music critic and editor Edward A. Baughan wrote in 1913:

I do not think it is extravagant to assign the present activity and enterprise of the British school to Sir Edward Elgar. His music has induced the British public to take an interest in native composition. Before the day of his popularity much sterling work had been done by our own composers, but they had written music which one respected rather than enjoyed. To the concert-going public, which really does not care a brass farthing for the nationality of a composer, British music meant dull imitations of Brahms or futile essays in the style of Mendelssohn, or, to be very advanced, in the manner of the early Wagner, Elgar’s music, whether highly original or not, was found to be worth hearing. At last there was a British composer, the first since Sullivan, who appealed to the average lover of music.\(^{30}\)

Gustav Holst during the following decade would specifically cite Elgar’s “*Enigma*” Variations as heralding the dawn of the English musical renaissance for him personally.\(^{31}\)

While many writers considered the renaissance a *fait accompli*, others linked its full maturity with the development of a national musical idiom. In 1895, there appeared a number of articles which tied the renaissance to the development of a national musical style. Early in that year Alexander Mackenzie delivered three lectures to the Royal Institution on the subject, “The National in Music” in which he connected the achievement of the “recent mighty awakening in music” with the proposed foundation of a national idiom.\(^{32}\)

Later that year, an article entitled “The Rise of British Music” appeared in the *Musical Standard* of 22 June 1895. It observed that from the recent “increase in the love for music must soon spring a new birth in British composition.” The problem, according to the writer, was that English music did not possess national characteristics, rather it showed “too openly the influence of Brahms [who was] German to the core.”\(^{33}\)

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\(^{32}\)The reports of these lectures, as we have seen, appear in *MS* and *MusN*.

As the years progressed the subject intensified, especially between 1905 and 1916. *Musical Opinion* in August 1905, reprinted an article from the *Manchester Courier* written by Henry Saint-George, entitled “The Outlook for British Music.” The writer, after dealing with the question of English musicality, proceeded to evaluate the renaissance. “The unmistakable signs of the times show that British music is renascent, faultily so.”

While the author admitted that the current situation in English music comprised a necessary stage in her development, he stated, nevertheless, “this is not the English school of music for which we have been waiting.” In his view, the renaissance would not be complete until an English school had been established.

Hadow, in the 1906 article already cited, endorsed this opinion. Writing of the renaissance Hadow remarked that the England of 1906 was considerably in advance over what it had been in the 1870s. Of chief significance is his observation that England was no longer content with musical imitations of German and Italian models. According to Hadow, “we have emancipated our native thought, we have rediscovered our native speech, we are beginning once more to resume the place which, ever since the seventeenth century, we had forfeited by our carelessness and indifference. We have not yet attained our end.” The contributions of Parry, Stanford, and Elgar were reiterated and evaluated before Hadow turned to admonish the new generation to leave off imitation and to cultivate a firm and strong English character in its music.

We have our own language to speak, we have our own message to deliver, we have our own ideals to maintain; our leaders have arisen to point the road, and it is to them that the younger men will most profitably look for direction and guidance. Every great musician has learned something from foreign schools; not one has ever been absorbed

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35 Ibid.

by them. The technical equipment of art is of the common interchange of human society; the truth which it depicts is of native inheritance of the artist.\textsuperscript{37}

During World War I writers, particularly composers, became increasingly militant in the pro-national stance. The reality of the renaissance became so intertwined with the development of a national idiom that some doubted whether or not the former had yet taken place. Vaughan Williams was a prominent spokesperson for this viewpoint.

We talk much nowadays of the “renaissance” \textit{[sic]} of English music, and we all hope and believe that \textit{it is coming}. \textit{[italics mine]} But who is sowing the seed and setting the plant growing? Not perhaps the well-known names (the “serious” composers of today), but possibly some quite insignificant writer of music-hall tunes or dance music in whom the germ of a great national style of the future has begun to fructify.\textsuperscript{38}

Two articles appearing the following year also strongly advanced this idea and went even further, making strong and deliberate distinctions between music written by an English composer, on the one hand, and music that is truly English, on the other. Geoffrey Shaw asked: “Have we not grown into thinking that music written by English composers is therefore English music?” In a lengthy “contentious” article Shaw took up a number of points to which we shall later return. While he stated that there were works by Parry, Stanford and others that had no trace of foreign influence, Shaw especially cited Vaughan Williams and Cecil Sharp for their efforts on behalf of English national music. Of the latter he wrote: “If ever the ‘renaissance’ of British music becomes a really live movement and not a pretence, we shall realise what a big part in the movement he has played.”\textsuperscript{39}

W. F. Arnold, writing the following month in the \textit{Musical Opinion}, would echo Shaw’s sentiment. “Let us be honest with ourselves, we British composers. We are not

\textsuperscript{37}\textit{Ibid.}, 24.

\textsuperscript{38}Ralph Vaughan Williams, "British Music in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," \textit{MuStud 7} (December 1914): 63.

\textsuperscript{39}Geoffrey Shaw, "What is British Music? A Contentious Article," \textit{MuStud 7} (July 1915): 211.
writing British music. Let us face the fact that not one of our compositions is British music merely because it was written by a British subject."^40 Arnold, like Vaughan Williams and Shaw, would ask whether it was possible to celebrate a renaissance prior to achieving a national idiom. A key point in Arnold's thesis is that the public recognition the English composers sought would never be acquired until a national identity was found. All of these writers saw the predominant spirit of imitation to be the chief obstacle to the establishment of a national style. Thus, they called for a distinctly English musical identity which was clearly distinct from the mere imitation of continental styles.

The Call for English Music

The call for English music was sounded loudly by a number of composers and critics who, while recognizing the immense strides achieved by the renaissance, saw its logical culmination in the establishment of an English school of musical composition. While the achievements of Parry, Stanford and others were celebrated during the 1880s, the following decade saw the beginnings of impatience with styles that were arguably continental. Mackenzie in the first of his lectures on national music, previously cited, took issue with composers whose music was national in matter (i.e. incorporating folk songs or dances), but still in manner continued to be imitatively continental. "A Scottish composer who makes use of the traditional melodies of his native land, but treats them in the style of Wagner, for example, founds no Scottish school, but produces an incongruous result."^41

As time progressed, writers became more determined to see English composers detach themselves from the imitation of continental, specifically Germanic, models. One writer observed in the *Musical Standard* of 2 December 1899:

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There is no great English music, but there are many composers of genuine gifts and a hopeful sign of the times is that modern British compositions, especially by younger men, are not old-fashioned and show that our composers are in the movement... it is [the modern and younger] school which owes no particular allegiance either to Brahms or Wagner to which we look for our music of the future, and not to the Stanfords or Parrys. When the history of English music comes to be written these composers will bulk largely as the first in the renaissance of British music, as the first to raise it from its blind worship of Mendelssohn; but good as the work of the Stanford-Parry school has been it has been rather disfigured by a certain stiff-necked dulness [sic] which may be intellectually very admirable but it is hardly what we ask of genuine music.42

The next issue of the same journal would find presumably the same writer further elucidating his comments stating “we have passed, or are passing out of the imitative period, in the same way as each individual composer has to pass through that period of his development, and we are beginning to have a music of our own.”43

A few months later there appeared in the Musical Standard a lead article that bears further upon the question. This piece was stimulated by an article by J. D. H. that had appeared in the Review of the Week. J. D. H., quoted at length by the Musical Standard writer, claimed: “We have, in fact, got English schools of music, but what we have not got, and what we want very badly, is a school of English music.”44 As J. D. H. continued, he suggested that the Germans predominance over English musical style was the result of German training and the transmission of German thought and ideals from one generation to the next. As a result J. D. H. concluded: “English music of the present day is a parasitical growth, and the parent from which it derives its nourishment is not, as it should be, the old national music of its native land. It has cut itself free from that, and it now clings desperately to the products of modern Germany. In fact, our composers think it infra dig. to write national music.” The music of every nation, according to J. D. H.,

42“Comments and Opinions,” MS, ill.s., 12 (2 December 1899): 352.
43“Comments and Opinions,” MS, ill.s., 12 (9 December 1899): 368.
traced its roots to the heart of the people, but in the case of England “a slip was grafted on
to the German tree. We are now asked to accept this bastard growth as national music.”
What we need, the author argued, is a school of English composers that will again touch
the hearts of the common people rather than force-feeding the public with cheap imitations
of German music.\footnote{Ibid.}

The \textit{Musical Standard} writer endorsed J. D. H.’s argument, in essence, but accused
him of pressing the issue too far. The chief quibble was over the manner of achieving that
English style. The writer stated that “the work of our younger men is not really German,
nor Russian, nor French, nor Italian. It is English in straightforwardness and healthiness--
and, above all, it is cosmopolitan in style, for we are a cosmopolitan nation.”\footnote{Ibid.}

In general, the pro-nationalist writers saw two enemies in the establishment of a
national musical idiom—one was the “pusillanimous spirit of imitation,”\footnote{Newman’s phrase.} the other was
cosmopolitanism. As we have seen, the first occupied much of the discussion during the
1890s, the second would be an issue still not completely resolved even by 1920. The
situation was not easily resolved. Many who were sympathetic with the national movement
saw cosmopolitan style to be representatively English. The English nation, it was argued,
was a cosmopolitan nation—should not its music also be cosmopolitan? But others saw the
growing cosmopolitanism as a real threat to national distinctiveness.

The \textit{Musical Standard} article, quoted above, prompted a letter from C. Fred
Kenyon, a writer who would play a rather interesting role in the controversy over
nationalism. Kenyon recognized the reality of growing cosmopolitanism in England with
its accompanying influence on literature, art and music. Yet it was the composer, he
claimed, who was particularly prone to the danger of cosmopolitanism. According to Kenyon, the reason for the composers' collective failure to make significant advances in the art "has been mainly owing to our want of a really national school of music." While he granted that cosmopolitan attitudes increased breadth and variety, Kenyon saw the English composer desperately in need of an identity which could only be gained by insularity that would generate "directiveness and intensity." He wrote:

> It is astonishing to what a small degree English music of the last fifty years reflects our national life: as our nation grows older our music becomes more cosmopolitan; and though it is quite true that in the way it gives variety and a certain amount of freshness, yet acquisition of native thought, feeling and idiom would more than make up for the loss of any superficial variety of sentiment. ... As soon as we are able to express our national independence, our national pride and our national manliness in our music we shall be so much the nearer producing a great musician who will be to the England of to-day what Purcell was to the England generations ago.

The following year would see Kenyon expanding his arguments in an article written for *Musical Opinion*. He condemned English composers, as well as the English audiences, for being too cosmopolitan in their respective tastes. The English composers:

> have lost those characteristics which are native to them, and they have made themselves more or less feeble imitators of men infinitely greater than themselves. ... They borrow colour from foreign climes instead of attempting to obtain it from their own. We see reflected in what passes for English music the national life of every country in Europe save our own.

Kenyon's article provoked an outburst from Vivian Carter, writing in the *Musical Standard*. Carter declared war on the cause of nationalism in music, taking issue with Kenyon's points from first to last. He admitted that England had enjoyed a tremendous amount of composition and performance in recent years, but asserted that not one name could be mentioned in the same breath with even a third-rate continental composer. Not

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48 C. Fred Kenyon, letter to MS, ill.s., 13 (31 March 1900): 202-03.

49 Ibid.

impressed by what others saw as a dawning renaissance, Carter stated: “England remains floundering in the mist of mediocrity, and year after year brings us not nearer the promised salvation.” Whatever chance there was for a national movement in England died long ago “before Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin and their legions of satellites led us into a morass of romanticism.” With the increased influence of Wagner, Brahms and Tchaikovsky, he continued, surely cosmopolitanism ruled the day in England, and “it is among the cosmopolitans that we must look for our musical Messiah. Our real idiom is world-music, that un-national, impersonal, universal language which inspired Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert in the symphonies.”

In the previous chapter we quoted at length from an article by Kenyon which appeared in the *Musical Standard* of 25 February 1905. The reader will recall that the article considered the question of whether or not England could be considered a musical nation. Having cited a litany of woes affecting English musical life, Kenyon stated: “The truth of the matter is, we have no national school of music. Our composers are, and always have been, too cosmopolitan in their tastes.” According to Kenyon, the development of a national school of music would show the world that England took her music seriously and would redeem her from the Napoleonic label of “nation of shopkeepers.”

While momentum was growing in certain circles toward the call for a national idiom, not all were equally convinced that this was the remedy for England's musical

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53 *Ibid.* It is interesting to note that the music of Austro-Germanic composers has become identified with world music. See Keeton’s “Glinka,” 420.

problems. On the "Comments and Opinions" page of the *Musical Standard* of 22 July 1905 there appeared the opinion that the presence of the foreign element in British music was advantageous. "The German school has influenced and is influencing the music of our British composers. But that seems to us a distinctly good thing." Arguing against a parochial mentality that seemed to characterize the nationalistic movement the writer maintained that all great music and composers should be studied. If a composer has anything to offer, as did Elgar, an individual style will be found. Even in the case of the great British composers, such as Purcell and Sullivan, the writer found nothing particularly British. In short, nationality in music, when deliberately sought, was contrived and superficial.

The above writer raises an important issue that relates to the national vs. cosmopolitan controversy, namely the individual vs. school debate. On this topic we will once again turn to the outspoken C. Fred Kenyon, but this time under his assumed pen-name of Gerald Cumberland. Kenyon (now Cumberland) wrote of the need for a British school of composition whose members' work is connected by a "unifying principle." What detracts from the attainment of this principle?--"a cosmopolitanism that chokes and swamps the stirrings of their national genius." Elgar, Bantock, Holbrooke and Delius were summarily dismissed as cosmopolitan and un-English. After listing a host of younger composers--among them Rutland Boughton, William Wallace, Havergal Brian, Hamilton Harty, Walford Davies, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Ralph Vaughan Williams--Cumberland stated that only two, Wallace and Davies, had produced work that is "unmistakably

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56 See obituary in *MT* 67 (1 August 1926): 749.

57 Gerald Cumberland, "Plea for a British School of Music," *MO* 31 (June 1908): 663-64.
British.” In these “undeservedly little known composers we have the seeds of a national art.”

While this article provoked a number of impassioned responses, there was no detractor from the views expressed there that was more militant than Cumberland himself, writing a few years later in the same journal. A comparison of his article from the June 1912 issue of *Musical Opinion* with Cumberland’s own previously expressed opinions will illustrate the extent to which he had now done a complete about-face.

For some years—precisely how many I do not know—there has been a conscious effort on the part of writers to form what they rather grandiloquently call a British school of music. [*MO* June 1912]

These writers assert that the source of artistic strength is to be found in national characteristics; that cosmopolitanism is fatal to inspiration; and that all the prejudices inevitably associated with an insular outlook are to be encouraged rather than destroyed. [*MO* June 1912]

Cosmopolitanism, we are told, is fatal to genius, therefore, it is necessary to be “national.” [*MO* June 1912]

We have English composers undoubtedly, and a very fair number of them; but unfortunately they do not form an English School. [*MO* June 1901]

The root of the matter lies in this: we are too cosmopolitan . . . I do not by any means advocate a narrow insularity, which would serve no purpose save to start the growth of native genius; but even insularity has its advantages. [*MO* January 1901]

Our composers are, and always have been, too cosmopolitan in their tastes. [*MS 25 February 1905]*

[Our younger composers] are all imbued with a cosmopolitanism that chokes and swamps the stirrings of their native genius. [*MO* June 1908]

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I draw this comparison not to suggest that Gerald Cumberland/C. Fred Kenyon suffered from aesthetic schizophrenia, but to show that writers did reverse their opinions—often arguing from both sides of the fence with impassioned eloquence.

We have seen that the call for a national idiom was first of all a call away from imitation and cosmopolitanism. But it was not merely that, it was also a call toward the development of music rooted in English genres, English models, English temperament and English characteristics. The difficulty was not so much in arguing the need for a national idiom, but in determining exactly how to accomplish the task of developing it.

In evaluating initial attempts in suggesting how an English school of composition could be achieved, we may first consider the problem from a chronological standpoint. The decade of the 1880s saw many writers addressing the issue of national genres. For many years the English composers' best hopes for seeing their works performed was in composing music either for the church or for the large annual choral festivals. Consequently, the principal musical genres in which composers worked were anthems and service music—more specifically, oratorios and cantatas. Many writers saw the expansion of English native composition as bound with the expansion of genres and called for composers not to forsake the oratorio and cantata (i.e. the standard choral festival fare), but to expand themselves by working more in the medium of opera and instrumental composition.60

An insightful article by E. D. Rendall, entitled "English Music," appeared in the Musical Times of 1 September 1894. The article was provoked by a review of Parry's The Art of Music which had appeared in a recent issue of the World. The specific point Rendall addressed was the World critic's advice to Parry to leave off oratorio composition and turn to instrumental music.

It is the fashion to point the critical finger of scorn at our Cantatas and Oratorios; to call them "Festival manufacture" (as indeed they are, but why to their disadvantage?) and, in general, to attempt to discourage the only national school of music we possess. The majority of these productions may be of the nature of occasional music; the commonplace of the age, and of little value to the world at large, but even they are useful to us. Chorus-singing is the one thing that we do more, and perhaps better, than any nation in the world. We must have something new to sing... It must, therefore, be in this direction that any greatness that is to fall to our lot will come upon us.61

In continuing, Rendall stated that to urge Parry to forsake choral writing was in essence to urge him to forsake English music, since England had "no instrumental traditions," and because Parry's most national attribute was his handling of the English language.

Leonard Spaulding, writing two decades later, took up the topic of genre even more drastically. Spaulding suggested that genre was not incidental to musical nationality, but very much intrinsically bound to the issue. "We assume without thinking the matter out for ourselves, that because the grand operatic and classical forms of music express the nationality of the Continental countries it therefore follows they can express ours; that, in fact, music hardly is music unless it belongs to these forms."62 The truth of the matter, as Spaulding argued, was that these musical forms were not expressive of English nationality. The music in which the English temperament found expression was the "folk-art" of the present day—i.e. musical comedies, revues, etc. Gilbert and Sullivan light operas touch British hearts, as does Wagner's Ring its German counterparts. To Spaulding this was not a matter of national pride or national disgrace, but simply a reality with which one must reckon.

Perhaps no one saw the methodological difficulty of cultivating a national school better than Alexander Mackenzie. Speaking of the "wistfulness" with which many longed for the founding of a national school, Mackenzie dealt with many aspects of the nationality


question—most particularly the difficulty of determining and cultivating national characteristics. The first matter he addressed was the question of English music as opposed to British music, advocating decentralization. Admitting that what had been commonly termed English music was in essence inclusive of Scotch, Irish and Welsh music, Mackenzie saw future musical success to be rooted "in the direction of developing the independent characteristics of the various sub-divisions of the empire." The foundation of a national school which is based upon those distinctive qualities is more easily suggested than accomplished. "Theories have never founded schools; for that great work, living, emotional men are requisite, nay, giants." Mackenzie, like a number of others, saw the solution to the national question not so much in the objective deliberations over determining the "particularities and special characteristics which the new school should bear," but rather in the "development of individual character." The appearance of one or more composers of genius--of the stature of Purcell--would settle the issue. But Mackenzie did not suggest that England sit back with arms folded waiting for such a Messiah to "solve the problem at a single blow." Much preparatory work was needed and already had been accomplished with the work of Parry, Stanford, Cowen and others. Particularly in instrumental music in which England had no national past, "the combined efforts of several men of distinctive genius [will be needed] to counteract the immense

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64 Ibid.
influence of the powerful Continental schools, and it still remains to be seen whether we yet possess such men."  

Like Mackenzie, Kenyon had earlier seen the answer to questions of national music in the appearance of composers of genius. Furthermore, he saw the expression of “our national independence, our national pride and our national manliness” as necessary prerequisites for the appearance of such composers. For Kenyon, when the composer of genius appeared he would answer every question of musical nationality, including national musical characteristics, national idiom and sentiment as well as distinctions within the characteristics among the British peoples (Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and English). In his most eloquent appeal Kenyon writes:

At the present moment all our composers are wandering about with no one to guide them; each goes his own way, supported by no one, encouraged by no example, with no definite goal before them. . . . The land before our composers is unmapped; the sea uncharted. No roads are made; all is wild forest and a great confusion of undergrowth. Even great men require a leader in order that they may find themselves. And it is so here in Britain. When we have a commanding figure in British music, his genius will clear away the forest and the jungle, will make great open spaces and will fertilise and water the soil. His British contemporaries will have their genius fused into a common aim; the work of one will encourage and inspire the others.  

The War and The Call

Any discussion of the factors leading to the call for a national idiom in England must take account of the impact of World War I. In this and in previous chapters we have quoted from articles written between the years 1914 and 1918, e.g. Vaughan Williams's Music Student articles on the history, development, and nature of English music, but it

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68Ibid.

69C. Fred Kenyon, "English Music of To-Day," MS, ill.s., 13 (31 March 1900): 202-03.


71Cumberland, "Plea for a British School," 664.
remains for us to demonstrate the many ways in which the war intensified and brought to a head the ongoing debate that had grown steadily over a period of more than 30 years.

Isidore de Lara was one who saw early the opportunities that existed for national art due to the war. Not only did he establish a series of concerts designed to feature the work of native composers, but also wrote on the topic of musical nationality. The tone of de Lara's concern is shown in an article written for the 1 May 1915 number of the *Fortnightly Review* entitled “English Music and German Masters.” Criticizing those “aesthetic snobs” who insisted that “art is above nationality,” de Lara declared that the time had come for emancipation from foreign artistic tyranny. “When the sword is drawn to defend our home and our liberty, nationality is before everything, even men of different creeds fraternise and fight for the common cause, and the greatest music is that which expresses the essence of a national temperament, the Soul of a people.”

De Lara noted that France had made rapid strides in its musical reaction against Germany and recognized that among British composers some had ventured forth upon “new paths.” Audiences also had forsaken German music “having no wish to-day to listen to Wagner and Brahms.” In undisguised contempt for German musicians and their influence upon English musicians for more than two centuries, de Lara urged the young “hero-composer” to exclude from his library all music of Handel, Mendelssohn, Wagner, Brahms, and Richard Strauss. The threat to the achievement of a national idiom was also to be found in composers of the allied nations, as in “the charm of Debussy's atmospheric sonorities” and in “the enharmonics of the ultra-modern Russian school.” To whom

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should the young composer look? The national composer is advised to look to England’s musical past as demonstrated in the works of Byrd, Purcell, Arne, and to her folk songs.\textsuperscript{75}

Geoffrey Shaw’s “contentious article”\textsuperscript{76} appeared in the \textit{Musical Student} a few months later. In this article Shaw inquired as to what British music truly was. Shaw first distinguished between music written by English composers and music that was truly English. According to Shaw, the concert series of de Lara, Holbrooke, and Dunhill had done little toward the cause of national music, but had aided the cause of the native composer who was composing foreign music, i.e. that inspired by Eastern art, or the modern German, French, and Russian schools.\textsuperscript{77}

Shaw’s second topic of discussion was the matter of nationality and internationality in music. Taking issue with those who insisted that art was cosmopolitan and above nationality, Shaw insisted on “the fact that the greatest things in art have always been inseparable from nationality.”\textsuperscript{78} Not a stubborn isolationist, Shaw saw the appeal of Debussy and Ravel in England to be first and foremost attributable to their Frenchness, and secondly to their work as artists. According to Shaw, England could understand the distinctiveness of her own music only after she had acquired the ability to understand foreign music well.

\textsuperscript{75}Ibid.


\textsuperscript{77}W. F. Arnold writing in August 1915 would demonstrate that Shaw was not alone in this sentiment. “Let us be honest with ourselves, we British composers. We are not writing British music. Let us face the fact that not one of our compositions is British music merely because it was written by a British subject. Neither would a novel written by one of us in the German language be an English novel . . . our concerts of so-called British music, written by members of the so-called ‘British school,’” are a delusion and a snare.” \textit{MO} 38 (August 1915): 746.

\textsuperscript{78}Shaw, “What is British Music,” 212.
A third issue raised by Shaw is one we have found previously in other articles written during the war by Vaughan Williams and others, namely art music vs. life music. When composers imitate continental models or come under other national influences English music becomes divorced from English life. Much of the problem with lukewarm reception of native composition was attributable to this lack of a living national music.

Like Isidore de Lara, Vaughan Williams and others, Shaw saw the key to a national school of composition in a reacquaintance with England's musical past, to be achieved through a study of folk song and great composers from her history. "I consider that the inability to understand the spirit of the past is one of the chief sources of the failure of our composers to produce English music. We have of our own accord snapped the links in the chain connecting the past with the present; it is our work now to re-forge and weld together these links once more. Continuity of spirit and feeling is everything to us."\(^79\) According to Shaw, the past was not only misunderstood, but was something of which many showed great ignorance.

Shaw's article, not altogether removed from his intent, provoked considerable response, the most important being from two significant names in the field, Thomas Dunhill and Hubert Bath. Dunhill cited Holst's setting of the *Rig Veda* songs as being an "ample refutation" of Shaw's contention that English music could not legitimately be based upon Eastern influence.\(^80\)

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\(^79\) *Ibid.*

\(^80\) Holst would write in a letter to *MH*, no., 810 (September 1915). "Critics write glibly about British composers being too frequently inspired by foreign subjects, and suggest that they are less British when they do so, forgetting that 'in art, everything matters except the subject.' Wagner is Wagner whether writing of Cornwall or of Nuremberg. Elgar is Elgar whether writing of Poland or of the Severn Valley. Gounod showed his nationality most clearly in a German subject, Bizet in a Spanish one. We should be tempted to say that the great characteristic of English artists is their inability to 'shut themselves up to the contemplation of their local concerns', if we did not find the same characteristic everywhere else."
Exception was taken by Dunhill also to Shaw's second point that the greatest things in art are "inseparable from nationality." The contrasts between Mozart and Beethoven, and Grieg and Sibelius were cited as evidence of the truthfulness of this rejoinder. In essence, Dunhill found Shaw's view to be much too limiting and in fact rather naive, since both of Shaw's great nationalistic composers--Purcell and Vaughan Williams--came under French influence. Dunhill did find a point of agreement with Shaw's dissatisfaction with the lack of knowledge regarding English musical history.

Bath, in contrast to Dunhill, applauded Shaw's arguments and went him one further. The critic-snobs "obsessed by Brahms, Bach and Beethoven" demonstrated an inability to "recognize any real British element in a work" and consequently formed a major stumbling-block to the cause of nationality.

W. F. Arnold's article "The True British Music" would express many concerns parallel with those of Geoffrey Shaw, and stands as a rather complete statement of national concerns during the war. Arnold saw the solution to the English composers' collective cry for recognition to be in the achievement of a national style. But exactly how that national style could be achieved was not quite so obvious to him. Arnold did argue, however, that in order to write music which is recognizably British the composer must "be true to the traditions of British music."

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82 The connection between the French court and that of Charles II is well known. Vaughan Williams spent three months during 1908 studying with Ravel.


85 Arnold, "The True British Music," 745. The bouncing back and forth between "British" and "English" terminology in our discussion reflects that of the article.
After surveying the history of English music from the "Reading rota" up through the nineteenth century, the author addressed the characteristics of true British music. First, true British music was "music peculiar to the race, impossible of imitation by any composer of foreign nationality." According to Arnold, Sullivan was the last English composer who wrote music that "could not have been written with equal success by a foreigner." The distinctive attributes of English music are located neither in the form employed nor in the manner in which the elements are combined.

No, the characteristic features of English music are to be found in the spirit and atmosphere which pervade it. Lucidity, simplicity, dignity, strength and downrightness. A matter-of-fact statement of the musical idea, devoid of superficial and shallow sentimentality... A quality of melody to be traced back to the beautiful folk songs of our peaceful English country side. According to Arnold, these characteristics "constitute the unmistakable English musical idiom."

Arnold's complaint regarding the work of many contemporary English composers was not that their work lacked cleverness or originality, but that it was not "fundamentally British." Neither did he consider the mere dishing up of folk melodies in the "foreign sauce" of ultra-modern harmonies to be any movement toward establishing a national style.

Arnold believed that Arthur Sullivan and Edward German showed clear kinship with English musical tradition, specifically with that of the Elizabethans. Consequently, they were successful in writing music that could be called typically English. In addition, their popularity demonstrated the truth that the public was not indifferent toward English music, only indifferent toward English composers writing imitation continental music.

According to Arnold, the English composer would not achieve the recognition of his
countrymen through complaining or through preaching, only by writing music that “is true
to the traditions of the race.”

It is time the British composer ceased to rail at the long suffering public and set
about putting his own house in order. Let us have done with all this futile chatter about
the alleged indifference of the public towards British music. It is time we got down to
fundamentals, and realised what British music really is and what is implied by the title
“British composer”.

The chief arguments against the views expressed by Shaw, Vaughan Williams,
Arnold and others centered upon issues already encountered in this study. First, music
was an international language and could not be considered as national. In its loftiest
expression music becomes de-nationalized and consequently we cannot refer to Beethoven,
Schubert, Brahms, Wagner as being truly German composers. Secondly, many would
contend that there are but two kinds of music, good and bad. National identity did not
make music better or more popular. Thirdly, even in her musical past England had not been
free of continental influences, thus to go back to Purcell was still to rely upon a model that
was not purely English.

In this chapter we have been concerned primarily with demonstrating that the
recognition of the renaissance of English musical composition generated a call for a national
idiom in music. Both the recognition and call were widely felt. For some, the achievement
of a national idiom was the desired next step in advancing the renaissance that began in the
1880s. Others, more deliberately nationalistic in sentiment, connected the establishment of
English music with the reality of the renaissance. To them, any talk of an English
renaissance was premature until the English could boast a national school.

90Ibid.
91Ibid.
92See chapter one.
To summarize: the 1880s were a decade of excitement initiated by the 7 September 1880 performance of Parry's *Prometheus Unbound* at the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival. Many were encouraged during this decade to see the arrival of a number of composers of distinction, e.g. Parry, Mackenzie, Stanford, Cowen, Goring Thomas. The following decade of the 1890s saw many writers calling for a more deliberate sense of national style over and above continental imitations. A significant problem was in the identification of national characteristics upon which a national style could be built. How could an English school be founded? To whom or to what should composers look? This stage in English musical thought and criticism is more clearly seen in its negative aspects: what do we *not* want?

The beginning of the new century brought with it new hopes and new light for English music. Developments during the first decade would make positive contributions to the discussion. The immediate legacy of Arthur Sullivan (d. 1900) and subsequent evaluation of his influence upon English music and musical theater, the research of Rosa Newmarch and others into the nationalistic movements in Slavic lands, the collection and study of English folk song by Cecil Sharp, as well as the antiquarian interests of the Purcell Society and revival in Tudor scholarship would each generate significant debate and discussion in respect to the cultivation of a national musical idiom. The next four chapters will address those issues.
CHAPTER IV
ENGLAND AND OTHER NATIONS

When compared with national-music movements in other countries, the call for a national musical idiom in England was sounded rather late in the day. Movements in nationalist music were widespread during the nineteenth century, occurring in Germany, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Russia, Bohemia, and Norway. The particular progress and exact tone of the respective movements varied, reflecting the country's aesthetic, cultural, political and social climate.

As they sought a platform upon which to initiate and cultivate a national style it was only natural that English nationalist composers and critics would draw inspiration from the experiences of earlier national movements. Yet many sought not only inspiration, but looked also with a view toward methodology. To what extent could the process of achieving a national idiom be transplanted from one country's soil to another's? If a Russian national music was achieved through folk song, could the same instrument

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accomplish similar ends in England? If opera was an effective vehicle for German nationalism, would it follow that the same ought to hold true in England? Through research into national movements and acquaintance with the music itself English scholars, composers, and critics were confronted with the inevitable question--might we also do something like this at home? Of particular interest to the pro-nationalists were the movements in Russia, Bohemia, and France.

Rosa Newmarch, perhaps more than any other single writer, must be credited with acquainting the English public with the activities and accomplishments of the Russian nationalists. Between the years 1897 and 1915 she made several trips to Russia. Her articles for Grove's Dictionary, translations of Russian letters and librettos, and numerous lectures all contributed to increased English awareness of the names and contributions of Glinka, Dargomyzhsky, Balakirev, Cui, Borodin, Musorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov.

Between 1900 and 1905 she presented a series of five lectures to the Musical Association on the subject "The Development of National Opera in Russia." These lectures are significant, as they constitute her earliest systematic efforts in presenting the operatic accomplishments of Glinka, Dargomyzhsky, Musorgsky, Borodin, Tchaikovsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov.

In her first lecture, presented in January 1900, she surveyed the history of Russian music from the middle ages to the present. The history of Russian music she summarized as falling into four periods: (a) early national music (until 1000); (b) a time of decadence

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2 Other important writers on this topic were A. E. Keeton, see "Glinka, the Father of Russian Opera," Contemporary Review 76 (September 1899): 413-24; and Montagu Montagu-Nathan, see A History of Russian Music (London: William Reeves, 1914) and "Music in Russia," MT 57 (1 August 1916): 364-65,

3 Newmarch would later extend the scope of her research to include other national-music movements. See her "The Music of Czecho-Slovak Races," MT 59 (September-December 1918): 391ff, Music of Czechoslovakia (1942) and Sibelius (1944)
(until the late seventeenth century); (c) a reawakening of national impulse which steadily increased until Glinka; and (d) the expansion of nationalism throughout the nineteenth century. It was the triumph of Glinka, specifically in *A Life for the Tsar* (1836), that "inaugurated a fourth period in the history of national art, the limits of which have yet to be ultimately defined."4

Her stated purpose in this lecture was to focus upon the work of Glinka and his immediate predecessors. Important in the transitional period which immediately preceded Glinka's time was the invasion of 1812 which in Newmarch's words "awoke the slumbering conscience of the nation." As a result, the "craze for everything foreign... gave place to ultra-patriotic enthusiasm."5

According to Newmarch, Glinka stood in contrast to his predecessors in at least three ways. First, he deepened the concept of national opera. Prior to Glinka, composers had felt that "national opera" meant little more than a work based upon a Russian subject that included popular airs. Denouncing these works as "pseudo-national" operas, Glinka dismissed this superficial conception of national opera and sought to penetrate the essence of nationality in the music itself. While the subject matter might carry national content, the music was of greater importance in conveying nationality.

A second aspect of Glinka's contribution, Newmarch points out, was his belief that audience reception constituted an element of national style. As Glinka wrote in one of his letters: "I should like my fellow countrymen to feel quite at home with it."6 This sense of popular appeal was an important component of Glinka's nationalist musical thought. A music may be inspired by or even based upon a nation's folk music and folk dances but if

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4Rosa Newmarch, "The Development of National Opera in Russia," *PRMA* 26 (1899-1900): 59

5Ibid., 61.

the compositional product does not, at root, appeal to the hearts of one's countrymen, no national style has been found. Thus, the notion of popular reception also figured prominently in distinguishing Glinka's contribution from that of his predecessors.

Newmarch observed that Glinka's use of folk music provided a third element as it invested his music with a distinctive voice. Folk song had played a role in the music of composers as Schubert, Haydn, Liszt, but Newmarch held that none of them "produced national music in the same sense as Glinka. Nationality does not lie in a theme. To be truly national, to express the soul of a people, it is necessary to go to the root--to the national life itself . . . Glinka penetrated more deeply into the conditions of national life."^7

The operas A Life for the Tsar (1836) and Russian and Ludmilla (1842) stand as Glinka's most successful nationalistic works, jointly demonstrating the Western and Oriental aspects of the Russian people. A Life for the Tsar 8 exhibits a number of nationalistic traits--the use of music to contrast the character of the nations of Poland and Russia, the inclusion of national musical material, the use of orchestral instruments in imitation of folk instruments, modal utilization, etc. On the other hand, as Newmarch remarked, Russian and Ludmilla reveals the Oriental element in the Russian nature in the use of actual oriental melodies as well as scale patterns.

In concluding her lecture, Newmarch called Glinka one of the first and greatest interpreters of the Russian nationalists and added that "a knowledge of his music and of his writings is an indispensable introduction to the study of modern Russian music, for they form the key to all that has been attempted since."^9

^8 Performed in Italian at Covent Garden in 1887.
Many English nationalist sympathizers saw more in Glinka’s music and Newmarch’s research than merely a key to modern Russian music. Perhaps the study of Glinka could provide the necessary impulse to generate and cultivate a school of English music.\(^\text{10}\) In his comments following her lecture, session chairman Charles Maclean, after the usual accolades and thanks to the lecturer, made some remarks upon the significance of her research. After reviewing the limited opportunities available at that time in England for acquaintance with nineteenth-century developments within Russian music, Maclean applauded both the ground-breaking work of Newmarch and the accomplishments of the Russian nationalists—the first wave being that of Verstovsky and Glinka, the second coming a quarter-century later in the work of the Nationalist Five.\(^\text{11}\) Drawing an analogy to current thought in England, Maclean stated:

> I do not at all say that this Russian music is technically a model for our imitation. I say that we should imitate the national zeal, the zeal for Holy Russia, which pushed the whole art of music forward by creating a new style. For ourselves, I do not think we shall get anything from following our Teutonic brethren; I do not think we shall get much from our Anglo-Saxon lineage; but we shall get a great deal by going back to our Celtic antecedents. What the Slav can do, the Celt can do.\(^\text{12}\)

In her second address before the same forum (11 February 1902) Newmarch continued her survey of Russian national opera in a paper evaluating the contributions of Dargomyzhsky, Musorgsky and Serov. Two years after her initial lecture, Newmarch again affirmed the significance of the Russian accomplishment in transcending a superficial attitude toward musical nationality—one satisfied with mere obvious features such as subject matter and folk melody.

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\(^\text{10}\) Obviously her lectures dealt most directly with national opera, a topic that will be treated in chapter seven of the present study.

\(^\text{11}\) the *Moguchaya Kuchka* or “the Mighty Fistful”

\(^\text{12}\) Charles Maclean, discussion quoted in *PRMA* 26 (1899-1900): 74.
In Dargomyzhsky's last opera *The Stone Guest* (left unfinished at the time of his death in January 1869), Newmarch found the work that united most of the dominant ideas and tendencies of the school that proceeded from Glinka and Dargomyzhsky. This opera, based upon Pushkin's poem on the subject of Don Juan, demonstrated the point she suggested earlier, that "neither nationality of subject nor of melody constitutes nationality of style, and that a subject which bears the stamp and colour of the south is completely Russian when moulded by Russian hands."^{13}

The distinctive nature of Musorgsky's national expression was in its realism—by bringing music "into closer relationship with actual life."^{14} Although she cited *Boris Godounov* as displaying Musorgsky at "the zenith of his power" Newmarch admitted that it would be "impossible to point to anything in Russian music more intensely national than [the] prelude to *Khovantschina.*" This national evocation is multi-faceted: the use of national airs, the presentation of dawn on the Moskva river, the use of bells ringing for Matins, and the portrayal of the sun rising on Moscow's Red Square—"that Holy of Holies to all Russian hearts."^{15}

Newmarch would continue to develop her topic before the Musical Association on three more occasions. Two comments made by Newmarch during the presentation and discussion of her two final papers are particularly significant. In a response during the discussion which followed her lecture on Tchaikovsky, delivered 9 February 1904, she presented the following analysis of the reception of the composer's music as it related to national expression.

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^{14}Ibid., 74.

^{15}Ibid., 79.
With reference to Mr. [Thomas] Southgate's remarks as to what I said about the comparative unpopularity of Tchaikovsky's operas, I meant it not so much in regard to England as to Russia itself. There is no doubt that only two of his operas [*Eugene Onegin* and *The Queen of Spades*] have attained popularity in his native land; and this seems strange when we consider the extraordinary popularity of his instrumental music. Abroad I think too much stress has been laid on the fact of Tchaikovsky being a very national composer. Personally I think the humanity of his music is more conspicuous than its nationality; and this is the reason why his instrumental music has been so well received all over the civilized world; whereas music that is purely national in character could hardly be expected to become popular in England or other countries.16

In her final lecture of 4 April 1905, specifically dealing with Rimsky-Korsakov, Newmarch began by addressing the tension between the universal and the national in music. She stated that the present musical situation in England "stands between two great dangers." On the one side was the danger of lack of musical identity brought about by "excessive imitation" and confused striving after a "multiplicity of ideals." The other danger resided in the cultivation of a "snarling protectionist spirit and of setting up an insincere standard of patriotism."17

Upon continuing she made important distinctions between universality and nationality in music. Universality was not an intrinsic attribute, but a later attainment determined by the vitality and extent of the music's reception. "The origin of all that has been acclaimed as supreme in art and literature has surely been rooted in nationality." Further on she claims: "it is from the starting point of *race* that all enduring manifestations of art have gone forth in the world."18

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16Rosa Newmarch, "The Development of National Opera in Russia," *PRMA* 30 (9 February 1904): 73. During the discussion that followed her paper Southgate had expressed the following opinion: "Tchaikovsky is a particularly national composer. He loved his country, and he endeavoured to put into his music just those national accents which belong to the music of his own country; one is not quite certain when these are transplanted whether they would be so thoroughly appreciated as they are in Russia." (72).


18Ibid., 111-12.
As to the significance of her research when applied to English musical life, she drew her own conclusions. First, the Russian school grew by "spreading its branches east and west" all the while maintaining its roots firmly "imbedded in the soil of nationality." Second, nationalist composers were primarily products not of musical colleges, but home-training. Third, the early lives of nationalist composers were spent "among the people" whose customs, language, and folk music they came to know and love.19

The comments of the respondents are noteworthy as they considered the importance of the connection between national opera and the cause of national music. Charles Maclean, who served as chairman of four of the five sessions in which Newmarch's papers were read, spoke to the significance of her contribution. He assessed the primary value of her research to be "to suggest to us a sense of what we might do ourselves."20 Yorke Trotter stated the issue more strongly, arguing "if ever we hope to revive the national opera in England we must go to national music."21

While many saw the opportunities afforded by Newmarch's research, she was cautious in her appraisal of the English public's willingness to listen to and learn from Russian national opera.

I said I was dealing with an unpopular subject which some might consider unprofitable because it had no bearing on the music we hear everyday. We do not hear Russian Opera, and I fear a long time must elapse before there can be any practical test of the truth or value of my remarks. The English public is like a dog that cannot pick up a new bone until it has dropped the old one. At present it is still busily engaged in worrying the bone of Wagnerism.22

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19Ibid., 112.


21Yorke Trotter, discussion quoted in, PRMA 31 (4 April 1905): 126.

22Newmarch, discussion quoted in PRMA 31 (4 April 1905): 128.
When addressing the question of whether or not English composers could derive a national style from the experiences in other countries, many writers saw national temperament to be the chief obstacle. Nationalist cross-fertilization between English composers and other nationalist composers could be successful only if there was a similarity in temperament. In commenting upon the prevailing German influence on the majority of nineteenth-century English composers, Edward Baughan stated that "it cannot be too often asserted that we are not really sympathetic to German reflectiveness. We are a nation of impulse and action, and even in the conduct of our matter-of-fact affairs we show a quite reprehensible want of scientific method."\(^{23}\)

Drawing closer to the time of his writing, Baughan questioned whether the influence of Tchaikovsky and Dvorák were any better assimilated into English style than were Mendelssohn and Brahms. While one might find points of contact between the temperament of various nations, no national school of music could be said to have been achieved until that music more perfectly reflected the English temperament. Baughan was far from insular in his outlook for English national music. In fact, he stated that "the English school must not be expected to have very marked national characteristics from a purely musical point of view."\(^{24}\) The principal reasons for his opinion were two: the lack of significant repository of folk songs and the cosmopolitan character of the nation. Thus, according to Baughan, the national aspect of music in England would be achieved when that music most accurately reflected the English temperament—a temperament that is "not . . . philosophic . . . not sensual . . . not always on the look out for profundities . . . not hysterically dramatic . . . not morbidly sensitive," but rather exhibits "strange practical

\(^{23}\)E. A. Baughan, "Wanted, an English School of Composition," *MMR* 30 (1 April 1900): 80.

\(^{24}\)Ibid.
poetry, a worship of open-air sanity, a rather homely sentimentality and an untiring vigour."\(^{25}\)

Ralph Vaughan Williams came out most decisively against the influence of other nationalist movements on the English nationalist movement. Writing in the Vocalist of April 1902, Vaughan Williams addressed the topic of "A School of English Music." The principal concern of the article was whether folk music could provide a legitimate basis upon which to construct a national idiom. We shall return to this article in the next chapter, but for the present shall consider the issue at hand—the transference of national method from one country to the next. Vaughan Williams initially commended the recent pioneers of the English school for their attempts at "reviving the musical prestige which England once enjoyed."\(^{26}\) But while admiring their zeal, he faulted their method, which found the answer to the nationalist question in folk song, the "universal remedy." After commenting briefly upon the nationalist movements in Russia, Bohemia, and Norway that were based upon folk song, the writer pointed out that England, in contrast, had not experienced a similar revival of song. Vaughan Williams went still further stating that in the quest for a national style, there could be no universal remedy. In his thinking, the very idea of a universal remedy undermined the reality of a national style. Thus, Vaughan Williams's concept of a national music was bound up not only in the musical product, but also extended backward to encompass the method employed in achieving that product. Simply put, the leaders of the English revival erred in that they "did not perceive that to borrow one's scheme of national music from abroad is as bad as to have no national music at all."\(^{27}\) Thus, purely English music must be generated by a purely English method.

\(^{25}\)Ibid.


\(^{27}\)Ibid.
In 1912 Vaughan Williams would further expand these ideas, written a decade earlier, in the well-known *R.C.M. Magazine* article, "Who wants the English composer?" According to RVW, sincerity—not genius—would provide the solution to the problem of the English composer's lack of acceptance with the English public. The English composer will be secure only when he finds a voice that will resonate within the hearts of his countrymen. This voice will not be found by imitation, even of the most national of composers.

We English composers are always saying, "Here are Wagner, Brahms, Grieg, Tchaikovsky, what fine fellows they are, let us try and do something like this at home," quite forgetting that the result will not sound at all like "this" when transplanted from its natural soil. It is all very well to catch at the prophet's robe, but the mantle of Elijah is apt, like all second-hand clothing, to prove the worst of misfits. We must be our own tailors, we must cut out for ourselves, try on for ourselves, and finally wear our own home-made garments, which, even if they are homely and home-spun, will at all events fit our bodies and keep them warm; otherwise, if we pick about among great ideas of foreign composers and try to cover our own nakedness with them, we are in danger of being the musical counterparts of the savage clothed in nothing but a top-hat and a string of beads.  

E. A. Baughan, writing in the *Fortnightly Review* of September 1913 on the subject of Musorgsky's operas, also addressed the difficulty of transplanting national method from one culture to another. Seemingly anticipating those who would draw parallels between Musorgsky's nationalistic accomplishments and the current hopes for an English national style Baughan wrote: "In matters of art it is difficult to assay genius at its true value. The critic is apt to found a whole aesthetic on achievements which are theoretically wrong, mistaking some expression of original genius for an immutable artistic truth." Specifically applying this observation to the subject of his article, Baughan held that folk music was successfully used in Musorgsky's operas, *Boris Godunov* and

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28 Ralph Vaughan Williams, "Who Wants the English Composer?" *R.C.M. Magazine*, 9 (Christmas term): 11-15. RVW does proceed to recommend the study of folk song—never seeing it as a quick fix, but rather as a way of cutting through the dross of imitation to the musical core of the English people. Furthermore, he does not limit his recommendations to folk song, but advocates acquaintance with peculiarly English popular musics, e.g. music-hall songs, Salvation Army hymns, street-peddler cries, etc.

Khovantschina, but less so in Rimsky-Korsakov's Ivan the Terrible. Baughan pointed out that already in English music there were sufficient examples to show that "the adaptation of folk-music to art-music is by no means successful."\textsuperscript{30}

While a number of reasons were given for commending the Russian use of folk music, Baughan warned that "more harm than good will be done if our own composers imagine they can make the same use of folk-music of these islands."\textsuperscript{31} The reasons were essentially three: Musorgsky's achievements were the result of a deliberate movement that had aged well, having begun with Glinka's work three decades earlier; the whole of modern Russian music, including that of Tchaikovsky (not a deliberate nationalist) had been influenced by that movement; Russia had a more abundant store of folk music available than do the British nations.

Two years later Edwin Evans would write "The Emancipation of Music" in the English Review in which he evaluated the national movement in England in light of developments in Russia and France. It is not an unimportant reminder to state that these two countries were Britain's allies during World War I—the crisis during which this article was written. Evans made three points in relating the movements in those countries to their English counterpart. First, while Evans noted that the Russian and French experiences were characterized by considerable diversity, he did identify two key factors which provided unity within each movement—solidarity in purpose and the love of music. These factors, sadly lacking in England, served to bind the composers in their quest for a common goal which was, as Evans stated in appropriate wartime language, "to place their national art on a secure footing and defend it against all external danger."\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., 540.

Second, Evans argued that the ideal of national music seemed inevitably to place those musicians pursuing it at odds with conservatories and similar institutions. Evans asked how one could expect English music from an English composer studying with a German-trained teacher who knows only German music. The significance of Elgar's self-tuition was not an unimportant factor as one evaluates the place he held in English musical life.

Evans's third point is perhaps his most interesting and insightful one. Referring to the relativist nature of the national element, Evans saw the national aspect of music as "no more than a means to an end." What is the desired end?—emancipation from foreign domination. "If we had never been under German influence we should not need to discuss it, but the German idiom has so eaten its way into our musical life that a counter-irritant is a valuable help towards emancipation." Folk music may be a legitimate vehicle for achieving this desired end, but must be forsaken once the emancipation has been accomplished.

As the Russians knew when to lay folk song aside once it had served its important purpose, so the present leaders in the English national movement—such as Vaughan Williams—"once emancipation has been accomplished . . . will cease to use traditional material, most likely without himself knowing why."

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34Remember Tindall's prophetic and anti-academic voice. See chapter two, fn. 17
35Evans, "The Emancipation," 186.
36Throughout this article Evans resorted to militaristic language to underscore his argument. Referring to Russia he writes of the time that the "battle was won and there was no further need of aggressive nationalism." Whereas in France the situation was one where "the enemy was domestic rather than foreign." (186-87)
The topic of French music and its renaissance continued to attract writers during the war. The *Musical Times* of 1 January 1916 contained an article written from Paris by one Pétro J. Pétridus entitled "The European War and Its Influences on the Evolution of Musical Tendencies in France." In the more substantial part of the article the author listed four factors that had influenced modern French music: patriotism as an artistic impulse during wartime; elimination of Teutonic music; and the respective influences of Russian and Oriental music in French composition. Central to the article were two rather lengthy quotations from the pens of Debussy and Lalo. Debussy contended that for a century and a half--since the death of Rameau--French musicians had been "faithless to the musical tradition of our race." He counseled the French musicians to turn to folklore and to France's great musical tradition. Lalo was quoted from the *Temps*:

In the face of the enemy,—his race, his culture, and his force organized against us for our ruin and reduction into servitude,—considering the unprecedented gravity of the day's events, there is none of us that has not felt more or less clearly the need and the duty to bring to life in himself the national sense in all its fullness; to understand and love better the ideas and the feelings that are purely of French essence; to free, to deliver them of strange manners of thinking and feeling as well as of those decadent affectations under which we had left them to die.

Geoffrey Shaw, writing the following month in the *Music Student*, commended this *Musical Times* article to his readers. Substituting the name of Purcell for that of Rameau, Shaw found remarkable parallels between the French and English situations. He quoted Debussy's denunciation of the influence of the foreign musicians in Paris and extended the application to London, which had similarly affected native English musical composition. "We adopted writing processes that are most contrary to our spirit, excesses

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39Ibid.
of language by no means compatible with our thought." As an answer to those who minimized the importance of idiom in national music, Shaw argued that idiom is vital in any language, musical as well as verbal.

The significant point of contact between the modern music of France and England, according to Shaw, was that both nations "suffer from a sham-national revival." Where is the remedy to be found? Shaw quoted the Parisian writer:

Musical France is conscious of her wanderings of the last years and of the right path to follow. This path, -- as already indicated, and avowed unanimously by those who today create music and musicians in France, -- leads to close contact with pure French folk-lore and musical tradition, and thence to a great music that shall reflect a splendid past and a glorious present.

Shaw, who had suggested a musical parallel between the two nations, now by extension, offered a similar prescription for England. Through a reacquaintance with her musical past England would develop a legitimate national revival.

This remedy for English musical revival was stated more specifically by G. Jean-Aubry in his article that appeared the following year in Musical Opinion. Jean-Aubry remarked that France had suffered the same German musical domination as did England, which resulted in a similar loss of musical identity, but recently France had taken her place in the "successive blossoming of thoroughly nationalised music." According to the writer, those very sources which generated the French national music will produce similar

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41 Writing against the view held by Thomas Dunhill and others who minimized the importance of idiom, Shaw cleverly made his point. "If I were my-offence-to-Mr. Dunhill answer like this to write, he of-hesitation-none-whatever would have in the following-advice-to-me imparting:—your head in a bag put!"


43 G. Jean-Aubry, "The French Musical Renaissance: Its Causes and Consequences," MO 40 (February 1917): 286. The author listed Russia, Bohemia, Hungary, Norway, Finland, France, Spain, stating "to-day it is England, and to-morrow it will be Italy."
results in England's parallel movement. French music found itself through reacquaintance with the popular song of Brittany, Normandy, Provence, as well as in the art of Couperin, Rameau, and Méhul. Thus, as with France, the key to England's musical future lies in her past.

If musical Great Britain, instead of following passively in the footsteps of Beethoven, Handel and Mendelssohn, had started sooner the work which is pursued so energetically today of bringing to light the forgotten treasures of Purcell's and Byrd's time and all that exquisitely admirable collection of madrigals, in order to use for the purpose of a refined, sensitive art the inexhaustible riches of the English, Welsh, Irish and Scotch folk songs, she would have much earlier found the way she has begun to tread anew and which cannot fail to lead her to a glorious future.44

After stating his faith in England's musical future—a future that would usher forth a "truly national British school," following in the footsteps of Russia, France, and Spain—Jean-Aubry offered the following counsel: "The history of present-day French music is the best of teaching for British minds anxious to impart musical glory to their country. . . . Today France stands first among musical nations. To-morrow England must stand beside her, because the future of the world rests upon our mutual friendship."45

A wider view of artistic nationality was suggested by C. N. in an article written for the Musical Standard during the same year of 1917. C. N. asked whether one could speak of the nationality of one art-form without viewing it within the wider context of other artistic expressions of the same country. Literature, above all others, was at "the root of every country's art," and when related to music revealed significant parallels. As it had in Russia, France, Norway, and Spain, the national musical style of England must proceed from the English literary "idiom" as demonstrated in the works of Shakespeare, Pepys,

44Ibid. It is worth noting that Jean-Aubry did discuss a third component in France's musical renaissance which he did not apply to England, namely its successful return to the stage, as embodied in such works as Gounod's Faust, Debussy's Pelleas et Melisande and Charpentier's Louise.

Fielding, Dickens, the Brontés and others. Not given to a philosophy of aesthetic isolationism C. N. made the following observation: “In order better to perceive the truths of our own national style, we must, of course, study also the literary styles of other countries. When we bring to bear upon musical studies the knowledge thus gained, we shall have an easier comprehension of what ‘nationality’ is—it is the expression of a people, whether in books or in music.”

It will no doubt be noticed from the tone of this chapter, and particularly of the articles written during wartime, that only the allied nations qualified as being suitable models upon which to establish English national music. It is an ironic point of history that England’s primary foe in World War I was the very one from whom she sought musical emancipation.

Many writers, among them Harold Watts and Ernest Newman, saw the inherent danger of embracing too eagerly the music of other nations merely because they happened to be “on the right side.” Watts, writing in the Musical Standard, celebrated the expulsion of the German influence on English music but lamented that the country was “losing our heads over Russian music, rather than doing our utmost to foster and develop a truly British school.” It still remained for England to initiate what Russia had accomplished over a half-century earlier when Glinka charted a new course for Russian national music. If Russia was to provide a model for England it should not be in English imitation of modern Russian music, but in inspiration derived from the spirit of Russia’s nationalist composers. “We are still waiting . . . for our Moussorgsky and our Borodin, and whose fault is it that they haven’t as yet arrived?” Watts found fault with the attitude of the

48Ibid.
English public which was seemingly driven, even during wartime, to ignore native work while it enthusiastically received the music of other countries, albeit allied countries.\textsuperscript{49}

Ernest Newman, arguing with characteristic clarity, warned that political/military concerns were best kept separate from artistic issues.\textsuperscript{50} The fact that England was at war with Germany made German music no worse. Neither was French or Russian music any better because it was the product of allied nations. Furthermore, artistic deference would amount to artistic slavery, irrespective of the issues of the war.

Newman asked: is it any better to be bound by French or Russian fetters than by those of Germany? England ought to seize the opportunity afforded by the war to produce a music which is more truly British in character. In the accomplishment of these ends she would find little help from her neighbors, friendly or otherwise. As French music was the inevitable product of French culture, so English music must proceed from English culture, her literature, her landscape. As Newman argued, Elgar's standing as a truly English composer was attributable to his thoroughly English outlook on life. Certainly not one to advocate narrow-minded insularity, Newman prophesied:

Our next big composer will have to grow in the same natural way. He will assimilate, as all great men do, whatever may be vital to his own growth in the art of other nations; but the basis of his thinking will be home-made. He will have to grow out of English soil, no matter what fertilisation that soil may have received from abroad. He will have

\textsuperscript{49}See also Charles Kennedy Scott's \textit{MT} article entitled "What of English Music?" written in response to a memorandum issued by the newly-formed Russian Music Committee which read: "A committee has been formed, under the patronage of highly-placed personages, with a view to encouraging the introduction of Russian music into the United Kingdom." Arguing that "our first duty is to ourselves," Kennedy deplored the systematic introduction of any foreign music which would subordinate English musical interests. "To show hospitality is praiseworthy; to let it operate against our rightful interests is reprehensible." \textit{MT} 57 (1 June 1916): 279-81.

In this chapter we have sought to provide some of the discussion which centered upon one aspect of nationalist cultivation, namely the influence of other national movements in England. There appears to be little doubt that all pro-nationalists were impressed and inspired by those movements, yet there existed a variety of opinions as to the extent to which England could successfully translate those movements to her own soil. Many thoughtful writers and composers were wary of the transplantation of any grandiose scheme for national music. The reader will remember Vaughan Williams's contention that the very notion of a "universal remedy" compromised the idea of a distinctly national idiom. Others saw the movements of Russia and Bohemia very instructive as to both the capabilities and limitations of national music. The Russian composers were cited and commended for knowing when to lay aside their national interests (i.e. after their emancipation from German and Italian domination was achieved). In writing of the Russian Five, Ernest Newman was not so complimentary, in noting the dual applications of a piece of rope.\(^{52}\) That which begins as a redemptive lifeline may easily become a life-threatening noose, strangling the further development of the art. As writers and composers surveyed the nationalist movements which preceded the one in England they were impressed by the presence of three threads within each of these movements: the use of folk song; the inspiration of past composers and historic genres; and the significance of the establishment of a national opera. These issues provoked such extensive consideration and controversy that they must be treated separately in the three chapters that follow.

\(^{51}\text{ibid.} \) Elgar himself had stated a parallel view in the first of his Birmingham lectures. "I plead then that the younger men shall draw their inspiration more from their own country, from their own literature—and, in spite of what many would say—from their own climate." Edward Elgar, *A Future for English Music and Other Lectures*, ed. Percy M. Young (London: Dennis Dobson, 1968), 51.

\(^{52}\) Ernest Newman, "Russian Opera and Russian 'Nationalism,'" *MT* 55 (1 August 1914): 507-08.
CHAPTER V
FOLK SONG AS A BASIS FOR NATIONAL STYLE

Introduction

When Hubert Parry stood up on 2 February 1899 as Vice-President to deliver the inaugural address at the first general meeting of the Folk-song Society a new era in English musical history had begun. The Folk-song Society, founded in January 1898 by Kate Lee and A. P. Graves with the encouragement of J. A. Fuller Maitland and others, was fully inaugurated on 16 June 1898. As its stated objectives, the Society existed for the “collection and preservation of Folk-Songs, Ballads, and Tunes, and the publication of such of these as may be deemed advisable.”¹ The Society had also been founded to foster “periodical meetings at which folk-songs will be introduced and form the subject of performance, lecture, and discussion.”²

On 2 February 1899 such a meeting was held at 7, Chesterfield Gardens; among those present were Alexander Mackenzie, Fuller Maitland, Barclay Squire, Edward Elgar, A. P. Graves, E. F. Jacques, and Spencer Curwen. The establishment of a society that would foster the collecting of folk songs was an important step in the cause of English national music. It would seriously introduce the topic of folk song into the debate, in fact thrusting it into center court to be batted back and forth by those on both sides of the national question.

¹“A Folk-Song Function,” MT 40 (1 March 1899): 168.
²Ibid.
Traditional English song had been researched, collected, and published in somewhat spotty fashion throughout the nineteenth century. The research lagged behind its Irish and Scottish counterparts to such a degree, however, that some questioned whether or not England had any folk songs at all. But as Lucy Broadwood would later point out: “It is not our folk-music that has been lacking. It has been the collector.”

The history of English song collecting began with the 1822 publication by Davies Gilbert of eight carols collected in the West of England. During the following decade Sandys' book of *Carols Ancient and Modern* appeared in 1833. Like Gilbert before him, Sandys also collected in the West of England, though not all of the carols represented in his volume were collected by him personally. In 1843 John Broadwood's *Sussex Songs*, sixteen in number, were published for private circulation, having been collected by Broadwood himself. Following the appearance of Broadwood's collection, little if anything happened in traditional song research for a period of nearly a half-century.

The decade of the 1880s saw a revival in the publication of regional collections, namely Bruce and Stokoe's *Northumbrian Minstrelsy* in 1882, *Songs and Ballads of Northern England* collected by Stokoe and taken chiefly from his prior publication, and the 1889 publication of *Songs and Ballads of the West* collected in Devon and Cornwall by the Reverends Baring-Gould and Fleetwood Shepherd. Also in 1889 Broadwood's *Sussex Songs* was reprinted with an additional ten songs collected by his niece, Lucy Broadwood.

The revival of folk-song interest during the 1880s was also reflected in the pages of the professional journals. *Magazine of Music* featured a series of articles on national music

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4 The volume was published for public consumption in 1848.

5 One volume that did appear, however, was *Nursery Rhymes and Country Songs*, published in 1877.
during the early months of 1885 which dealt with the song literature of England, Scotland and Ireland. The 19 September 1885 issue of the *Musical Standard* carried an account of F. E. Sawyer's paper on "Sussex Songs and Music" read before the British Archaeological Association that reported on some sixty songs from Sussex recently collected by the author. Sawyer observed that the songs collected dispelled the popular misconception that Sussex had little music and that what there was of it appeared exclusively in minor key. Further, Sawyer divided the songs into five categories: ballads, songs connected with old and popular customs, hunting songs, agricultural songs, and songs used for toasting purposes.

The early 1890s saw the appearance of work by those who would become key players in the activities of the Folk-song Society. Frank Kidson's *Traditional Tunes* collected in Yorkshire and the South of Scotland was published in 1891, followed two years later by *English County Songs* collected by Lucy Broadwood and J. A. Fuller Maitland. The critical response to the latter collection, especially, is significant and indicative of the manner in which much folk-song research was received. A brief editorial in the *Musical Herald* took issue with at least two factors of the Broadwood/Fuller Maitland collection. The writer, probably Spencer Curwen, quoted the preface which suggested that the principal reason for the dying out of the English folk song was the activities of the Tonic Sol-fa system of training young people "in the way of fatuous part-songs and non-alcoholic revelries." The result saw these young Sol-faists turning "up their noses at the long-winded ballads or the roystering ale-house songs beloved by their grandparents." The editorialist, not surprisingly, finds the reason for the old folk songs' loss of popularity

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not in the educational regime of the Tonic Sol-faists, but rather in the appeal of the latest tunes of the music-hall and of the comic opera. But his more telling point concerns the value of the old folk tunes. He writes:

In our enthusiasm for the quest of folk-songs we must remember that things are not good merely because they are old. Many of these songs deserve to be forgotten. The perfume of the years covers a good deal that is valueless. The principle of the survival of the fittest may be trusted to keep the best alive. “Roystering ale-house songs” do not represent the best side of English life, and revelry is all the better without alcohol. The “sweeter manners” for which Tennyson longed are more likely to be prompted by songs of the present generation than of those (taken as a whole) of days gone by.*

Another reviewer, writing for the Magazine of Music, showed a decidedly more favorable reception. Rejoicing that the field of national song was at last attracting the interest of “competent professional musicians” the writer remarked upon the significance of this research “for the cause of traditional song of which Chappell’s Popular Music of Olden Time could barely do justice.” The reviewer sounded the alarm: “There are still a large number of tunes remaining among the English peasantry which have never yet been set down in musical notation.” As each year passed the elderly conveyers of the tunes died off, and consequently the tunes died with them. Even when the collector would come upon an old singer there was no guarantee that the singer would perform in the presence of an eager smile, aggressive attitude and open notebook.

It was into this context and to meet the urgent need suggested by the above reviewer that the Folk-song Society was founded in 1898. Looking to Parry’s inaugural comments we find a call for the continued importance and legitimacy of folk-song collecting. In his

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*ibid.


10Review of English County Songs by Broadwood and Fuller Maitland, in MagMus 10 (November 1893): 254.
estimation the folk music of England constituted a national treasure in danger of extinction. As factors contributing to the gravity of the situation Parry cited the loss of the older generation to death, the oral transmission of the songs, and the rise of urbanization and cosmopolitanism. In particular, the folk songs were being displaced by the common popular songs of the day. He stated that “this enemy is one of the most repulsive and most insidious.”

Parry believed that folk music’s greatest claim to importance and preservation was to be found not so much in characteristic traits of melody and rhythm, but rather in its ethical qualities and revelatory nature. According to Parry, folk music was “among the purest products of the human mind” in which there is nothing false, unhealthy, common or unclean. The value of English folk songs is found in their ability to reflect the qualities and character of the race: “the quiet reticence of our country folk, courageous and content, ready to meet what chance shall bring with a cheery heart.”

Parry’s lecture was significant not only as an encouragement to the antiquarian aims of the Folk-song Society. He also linked the importance of that enterprise to the future of English music and it is for this reason that his lecture is important to the concern of this study. The present chapter does not claim to present a comprehensive survey of the English folk-song movement, nor does it seek to argue on behalf of the aesthetic and musical value of the tunes themselves. The focus of this chapter is specifically fastened upon the folk-song debate as it related to national music. In other words, to what extent if any could English folk song be used as a basis for the establishment of a national musical style in England.

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12 Ibid., 2.

13 Ibid., 3.
Believing that “style is ultimately national” Parry reminded his hearers that great composers had devoted considerable attention to the study of folk music. While he did not specifically relate the discovery of English folk song to the quest for a national style, he strongly implied the connection between the two.

True style comes not from the individual but from the crowds of fellow-workers, who sift, and try and try again, till they have found the thing that suits their native taste; and the purest product of such efforts is folk-song, which, when it is found, outlasts the greatest works of art, and becomes an heritage to generations. And in that heritage may lie the ultimate solution of the problem of characteristic national art.

By the time Parry presented this inaugural address the question of whether or not an English national style could be founded upon folk song had been in the air for about a decade. But it was the endeavors and accomplishments of the Folk-song Society that moved the question from the realm of the abstract and theoretical, and invested it with concrete and practical significance.

The research and publications of the Folk-song Society had profound repercussions. First, many were convinced that England indeed had a substantial heritage of folk music of which she could be proud. Secondly, there arose a movement of substantial proportion calling for the foundation of English national music upon her folk music, as had been accomplished in Russia and Bohemia. The folk-song/national-music movement met with formidable opposition, however.

As one surveys the books and articles that address the topic, a number of concerns come to the fore. In this chapter it is our purpose to present and clarify the principal issues in the debate: genuineness, integrity, amalgamation, relevance, value, definition, and authenticity. While these issues defy strict chronological classification—they are best seen

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14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.
as threads that weave and constantly resurface—the order in which they will be discussed will reflect their general order of appearance in the literature.

**Genuineness**

Genuineness deals with the question of whether or not folk music is a legitimate expression of a composer's nationality. In addition, is it the only such expression, and consequently the only authentic means of achieving a national style? Is the use of folk music in the hands of one composer different from its use by another sharing the same nationality? If folk music may be used to establish a national style—is a national idiom (via folk music) just as attainable by a composer of a different nationality who uses the same folk music? Where Dvorák has used his native folk music successfully, does it follow that he will achieve an American national style through the use of indigenous America tunes? What is the relationship between utilization of folk songs and composer intentionality? If a German composer writes using Russian folk song—does that German composer thereby write Russian music? Specifically, how does Musorgsky's use of Russian folk music produce a different result than Beethoven's use of the same tune?

An important early article addressing these concerns is W. W. Cobbett's contribution to the *Musical News* of 5 February 1892 in which he evaluated Alfred Schütz's essay, *Die Geheimnisse der Tonkünst*. While Cobbett remarked upon the significance of Schütz's work, he quickly seized the opportunity to state his own convictions on the topic. Although the topic of English folk-song nationality was not specifically addressed, Cobbett nevertheless stated his view that the songs of the people most accurately reveal the differences in the character and temperaments between the people.

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16 He mentions that this is the first important work on the topic since Chorley's volume, *National Music of the World* (1880).
nations. "Thus those composers who have gone to their own native folk songs for a
ground-work are the only really national musicians."\(^{17}\)

Thus, Cobbett provided a twofold claim to folk-song's distinctiveness. First, folk
music could alone provide the basis for a national musical style. Secondly, national
musical style could be produced only when a composer went to his own native folk songs.
He named Weber, Chopin, Grieg, and Auber as evidence of German, Polish, Norwegian,
and French national musical expression, respectively. Of interest also is Cobbett's
reference to Schütz's comments regarding the international in music. The Germans, most
notably Mozart and Handel, seem to have had the greatest ability in grafting the musical
styles of other nations into their own. But the history of music also reveals other examples
of style mixture, particularly in the field of operatic composition.\(^{18}\)

During the following year there appeared a lead article in the *Musical Standard*
that presented a number of concerns related to the use of folk song in art music. Because
this article is rather complete in its presentation of the arguments against the use of folk
song it will be cited throughout the chapter. The article refers to Dvorák's opinion that an
American music might well be founded upon the negro melodies of the plantation. The
writer does not dispute the aesthetic value of the songs themselves, but does wonder how
songs with their predominant characteristics of despondency and melancholy, having
proceeded from a long history of slavery, can be truly and naturally characteristic of
America. "We cannot see that a style of music natural to America can be evolved from the

\(^{17}\)W. W. Cobbett, Review of *Die Geheimnisse der Tonkünste*, by Alfred Schütz, in *MusN* 2 (5
February 1892): 131-33.

\(^{18}\)Gluck and Offenbach were cited for their respective contributions to French opera and opéra-
bouffe. The music of Meyerbeer, the "German Israelite," was noted as exhibiting a mixture of French,
Italian and German styles.
employment of the old negro folk-tunes, unless it be admitted . . . that the American
Republic curls the lash of the slave-master round the limbs of its cowering citizens."19

The writer did not see this problem as exclusive to the United States, but one of
general interest, irrespective of the specific nations involved. "For men who are not of the
race which gave birth to such folk-songs, who are not working and living under similar
conditions, and whose minds are a little cleared of the melancholy of incomprehension,
there is something affected in the employment of the expressions of a race less fortunate
and lower in the scale of human culture."20 According to the writer, whatever other
reasons there might be for questioning the legitimacy of using folk song in art music, a
principal problem is that of genuineness. The very suggestion of utilization of folk music
by a composer of a different race and culture betrays the artificiality of the method. When
the folk song employed is not the genuine expression of the composer's own national
experience the result is at best insincere, and at worst patronizing and affected.

Dvorák's comments on the possibility of American national music continued to
interest English writers, stimulating continued discussion as to the value of folk music in
aiding the achievement of a national style. In previous chapters reference has been made to
Sir Alexander Mackenzie's three lectures on "The National in Music" given before the
Royal Institution during the early months of 1895. Mackenzie's opinions are instructive on
the question of genuineness, as well. He was decidedly in favor of the value of folk music
in producing a national style, stating: "The beginning of a national school of composition
has to be founded in a complete knowledge (not a superficial appreciation) and a love of the
people's music."21 It was the problem of superficiality to which Mackenzie addressed his


20Ibid.

148.
remarks. Because of the significance of Dvorák's contribution to the national music of his native country, Mackenzie reasoned that his opinion ought to be a valuable one to English nationalists. Yet this was not the case, since Dvorák in the United States was "pointing deliberately to the externals." Mackenzie then cited the current Harper's Magazine in which Dvorák was quoted as saying: "The important thing [in considering folk song as a basis of national style] is that the inspiration for such music should come from the right source, and that that music itself should be a true expression of the people's real feelings. To read the right meaning the composer need not necessarily be of the same blood, though that of course makes it easier for him."

Mackenzie rightly saw problems with such a view of folk-song nationality. To argue that a national music may be created through utilization of folk music by a composer of different nationality is to foster a superficial attitude toward both the depth of folk song's revelatory character and to the true extent of the national in music as being little more than a feigned local color. "There must always be a false note that rings through it, and that proves the necessity for a genuine impulse."

The issue of genuineness was an important one in the folk-song discussions. Writers on both sides of the debate expressed concerns over the question. To neither side did it constitute an advancement in the cause of art music in general, or national music in particular, to create a feigned nationality through the insincere and affected use of folk songs. In many ways the concern for genuineness was more an issue for pro-nationalists

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22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., 149.
24 Ibid.
than the opposing side because they believed that the depth of national expression they were seeking could be easily trivialized through an uninformed use of folk song.

The issues surrounding the sincere use of folk song may be summarized as superficial vs. artificial vs. genuine concerns. A use of folk song merely transplanted into a symphony, rhapsody, or concerto would produce a national music of the most superficial quality. Both the folk song enthusiasts and their detractors shrank away from an artificial nationality which was satisfied that a national musical style based upon folk music was just as attainable by a composer of a different nationality as one for whom the folk music was a native expression. Genuine nationality is achieved not by the mere utilization of folk material, but through a “complete knowledge . . . and love of the people's music which produces a national music generated by the general impulse of the native artist.”

**Integrity**

The question of artistic integrity focuses upon the issue of whether or not the use of a borrowed tune (folk song or otherwise) is really artistic, honest, creative, or is rather a cloak for lack of melodic inventiveness. The *Musical Standard* lead article, previously cited, was written specifically to deal with this issue. The writer, it will be recalled, was responding to Dvorák's statement that an American music could be based upon negro melodies. The writer found no reason why the tunes suggested by Dvorák were not as usable as any other folk tunes, but questioned the artistic integrity of the entire enterprise. "Is the employment of folk-songs in general as themes of a symphony or other orchestral work really artistic?" The answer is given in the negative, chiefly for three reasons.

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26 "Folk Songs in Modern Music," 485.
First, folk song expresses feelings that are “local, or at best nationalistic, rather than universal.”
Hence, when a composer utilizes a folk idiom he is necessarily limiting himself to a narrow range of expressive possibilities. As the author argues: “great music has another message to give than to chronicle national characteristics. It is an almost universal language and the greater it is the more universal it is.”

Secondly, the use of folk music in symphonic works is in conflict with the aesthetic intention and orientation of these works, which should be non-descriptive in nature. In short, nothing is gained aesthetically through the use of folk song “unless it be the relief given to the costive invention of the composer by the employment of ready-made themes.” But even in such a case the result is not an aesthetically pleasing composition, but rather one “of a patchwork order; essentially uninspired and dull.”

A third aspect of the concern for artistic integrity centers on the clash between the songs of unlettered peasants and the culture of “civilized humanity.” What does the pessimistic and melancholy sentiment of the majority of folk songs have in common with the optimistic and ambitious trend of the evolution of the civilized world? Does not the use of folk song constitute a backward step both artistically and socially? Music is “capable of conveying emotions too deep for words, too sublime for common-sense to measure; and its wings should not be cut for the sake of reflecting the thoughts and emotions of peasants.”

\[27 \text{Ibid., 486.}\]
\[28 \text{Ibid.}\]
\[29 \text{Ibid.}\]
\[30 \text{Ibid.}\]
\[31 \text{Ibid.}\]
Two months later the same journal reprinted an article by Alexander McArthur that had appeared in the *Musical Courier* (New York). This article, quoted in the first chapter, carried the following endorsement from the editor of the *Musical Standard*: “With the writer’s opinions, stated with clearness and no uncertain tone, we entirely agree.” As was the case with the previous article, Dvorák’s comments regarding the use of negro melodies in achieving an American music also prompted McArthur’s remarks. The author writes:

A school of music based on any distinctive type of melody or melodies . . . must be something the like of which no sane person could contemplate seriously . . . The composer who cannot furnish his own melodies—it matters little how few in number they be—is not worthy of his calling; in fact is not a composer in the true sense of the word.32

It should not be assumed that McArthur provided no allowance for the use of folk song whatever. He cited Beethoven’s use of a Rhine melody in the rondo of the “Waldstein” Sonata, Op. 53 as an appropriate melodic borrowing. Should we suppose that it was employed because Beethoven lacked melodic imagination or because he could not aspire to write as pretty a tune as the one he used? Neither, McArthur contends, but rather “to pander to the pride of Count Waldstein to whom the sonata was dedicated.”33

Another factor which seemed to press the question of artistic integrity yet further was the criticism that good tunes were already hard to find in much of the modern music of Strauss, Debussy, and others. Much recent composition, it was argued, suffered from a lack of melodic invention. The folk-song enthusiasts, while perhaps correct in recognizing the need for a reintroduction of melodic importance into music, were nevertheless

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considered to be at fault in choosing to borrow these tunes rather than inventing new ones.³⁴

In the twentieth century, once the folk-song movement had taken hold to some degree, writers arose who suggested that folk song was not the threat to artistic integrity as was initially supposed, but on the contrary had always been present in the music of the great composers. Even more, it served as a significant regenerative force in art, and demonstrated an even greater artistic accomplishment. Lancelot (Gilbert Webb), as quoted in the Musical Herald, made the following observation: "Folk songs have exercised and still exercise, a far more important influence on music than is commonly supposed."³⁵ Lancelot reasoned that folk music is heart music, that because it is composed by the unsophisticated contains a "truth of expression" that appeals to a broad base of humanity. Consequently, it serves as a reliable foil to "artificiality and complexity."

Five years later the composer Rutland Boughton would echo Lancelot's sentiments and specifically apply them to the situation in England. In the Musical Times of 1 July 1910 Boughton, having stated that "music must be national before it can be universal," illustrated the Germanness of Bach, Schubert, Weber, and Wagner. The use of folk song far from diminishing the greatness and artistic integrity of a composer, he maintained, actually enhanced it. The pervasive influence of German folk song may be seen in Bach's chorales, Schubert's songs, Weber's and Wagner's melodic styles, and established them first of all as German composers, prior to their universal acceptance. The great line of symphonic composers stretching from Haydn, to Beethoven, to Brahms also sprang from


the national song. Applying the principle to England, Boughton cautioned that a school of English music would not be achieved through “playing at folk songs.” The key to English musical greatness will be found only in the serious study of her folk music.

A final article, prior to leaving the issue of artistic integrity, completely turns the issue around. In an article entitled “Programme Music, Folk-Tune, and Progress,” the critic M.-D. Calvocoressi argued that folk song, even apart from any nationalist desire, could provide a vital impulse toward musical creativity. Calvocoressi conceded the historical connection between folk-music and national-music movements, but chose not to make an issue out of music nationality. If one believes in musical nationality, Calvocoressi stated, then “it is quite natural to believe that composers will find in the folk-tunes of their country a wealth of eminently suitable material.” He warned, however, that while folk music provided but the “raw material,” everything depends “upon the spirit in which they are used” and contrasted the use of folk music by composers of differing nationality (e.g. Spanish themes by Wolf and Ravel) with their use by native composers (e.g. Albeniz, de Falla, Turina).

More germane to the present issue was Calvocoressi’s insistence that the use of folk music in no way violated artistic integrity. He admitted that some composers had employed folk music with little creativity, but asserted that the problem was due not to method, but rather to a lack of artistic invention. Calvocoressi believed that it could well be argued that the creative faculty of the composer is better displayed in the development of a theme than in its initial invention.

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38 He quotes himself from an article appearing previously in the same journal. “Creative faculty is displayed alike in inventing a theme and in working it out, possibly even more in the working out.” “The Appraisement of Programme-Music,” MT 54 (1 July 1913): 439.
Although his own purposes were to relate the use of folk song to program music, Calvocoressi’s conclusion is equally instructive to the issue of integrity in national music. “We are therefore entitled to aver that by selecting in or deriving from folk-tunes motives with a clear understanding of their intrinsic features and of their possibilities, an artist can display his creative gifts no less freely and fully than if he had invented his motives with or without the help of poetic suggestion.”

To sum up, the issue of artistic integrity focused upon whether the use of folk tunes was an attempt to mask a composer’s lack of invention. Yet, a significant aspect of the debate included the argument that the influence of folk music was not a recent phenomenon but had always been felt throughout music history. Equally important was the claim that a composer’s creative skill was just as evident, if not more so, in the manipulation of melodic material than in the initial melodic impulse.

Amalgamation

The question of amalgamation asks whether the respective idioms of folk and art music may be successfully blended or whether the resultant product is a distortion of both. Is not the employment of folk song in art music a violation of those attributes that make the folk song so appealing in the first place--its purity, lack of pretence, rustic charm? Does not the utilization of folk song within a symphony, concerto, or rhapsody detach it from its original context and simplicity?


40It is not always clear whether writers fully believed this to be the case, or resorted to the criticism to substantiate or bolster a predisposition against national music. See Gerald Cumberland, ”The Commonness of Genius,” MO 35 (July 1912): 713-15.
The writers previously quoted in this chapter also expressed concerns over the matter of amalgamation. The author of the lead article from the *Musical Standard* of 24 June 1893 clearly set forth the amalgamation concern.

We know, of course, that many composers have adopted the folk tunes of their native countries, and we are aware that such compositions are usually praised as being racy of the soil and as reflecting the genius of the nation. But it has never seemed to some of us that any advantage is obtained by developing and elaborating themes, which, as a rule, owe most of their piquancy and poetry to their original simplicity, and to the poetry inherent in the simple and pathetic lives of workers on the soil, whose minds know not the complicated trivialities of civilization but are full of awestruck wonder at the mighty and inexplicable forces of Nature and of a heartfelt sympathy with its mysterious melancholy; whose songs and poetry have always had as their basis a sense of the littleness of life, of the daily tragedy of existence, and of the hard inevitableness of the human lot.\(^1\)

An article by Alexander McArthur expressing similar criticisms of folk-song nationality has previously been noted. In respect to this issue he writes: "Both [folk song and folk dance] are the outcome of the lives of the people, and in them we find reflected social characteristics and peculiarities. They are spontaneous, the musical expression of a simply state of life, and we find their naïveté spoiled completely once they pass from the interpretation of the people."\(^2\) Thus the issue, according to McArthur, was not merely the grafting of folk song into an art-music idiom. The implication is undeniable: to extract a folk song from its immediate social context is to violate its purity, in fact to change its nature. The aesthetic appeal of folk song does not reside primarily in the melody itself, but in the total experience—its authenticity of expression, manner of performance, its legitimate interpretation by the people who developed it.

The opinion expressed by writers within the *Musical Standard* would remain the same even well into the period of folk-song research. In March 1908 Frederick Kitchener contributed an article to that journal that would provoke a debate lasting five months.

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\(^1\)"Folk Songs in Modern Music," 485-86. 

Kitchener, assuming the clergyman’s collar, preached against several corruptions that had recently entered England’s musical life, namely “music-hall inanities,” the regrettable extent of the influence of townspeople on country folk, the revivalist hymnody of Sankey and Moody, the gramophone, American ragtime, the player-piano, among others. What was the antidotal prescription to counter such influences? Kitchener, claiming that all great English art had sprung from the country, desired the reintroduction of English folk song into English musical life. “In music, as in other things, our motto will have to be ‘Back to the Land’”\(^{43}\) Of particular interest is the statement that followed Kitchener’s article in which the editor invited the readership to contribute to the debate and asked this question: “Our folk-songs may be very beautiful, but why not allow them to remain beautiful in their natural simplicity?”\(^{44}\)

A respondent was John F. Runciman, critic for the Saturday Review. While Runciman supported the enterprise of English folk-song collecting, he did register significant dispute with Kitchener’s recommendations—most particularly the problem of adapting folk song within modern musical vocabulary. Runciman asked: “What are we to do with these old songs of ours? Write fugues on them, or text-book symphonies or Strauss-cum-Delius symphonic poems?” Runciman’s aesthetic plea is for absolute sincerity in art, over against novel pretense. His concern was not so much with the use of folk song as with its mixture within modern musical structures.\(^{45}\) “Music is being killed by self-conscious, bombastic, grandiloquent phraseology. The melodic style, the harmony

\(^{43}\)Frederick Kitchener, “The Music of the People,” MS, ill.s., 29 (7 March 1908): 147.

\(^{44}\)Ibid., 148.

\(^{45}\)Runciman in the same article commended Haydn’s use of folk music.
and the orchestration are out of all proportion to the matter to be expressed. So long as this bad spirit prevails, so long shall we produce nothing but bad art."^{46}

Gerald Cumberland, four years later, also found it difficult to accept the incorporation of folk song into the modern musical idiom. In the *Musical Opinion* of April 1912 appeared the second article in his series of "Twelve Heresies" entitled "The Folly of Folk Song." Cumberland expressed wonder at the rapid rise and popular progress of the folk-song movement. He was mystified that folk songs were collected, lectured upon, published, and sold to the public. "People do everything with folk songs except sing them."^{47} One of the uses he found particularly lamentable was the utilization of the old tunes in a context that removed them from their original simplicity and, in turn, presented them in modern dress. He cited Percy Pitt's "unrhapsodic" *English Rhapsody*.

The simple little melodies of the past century—*naive* and charming tunes—are orchestrated with all the ingenuity and resourcefulness of a man who has digested not only Debussy and Strauss but Max Reger and Bantock as well. They are tossed about the orchestra, coloured with a score of different shades, harmonised out of all knowledge and played with the real 1912 *fortissimo*; in a word, every quality native to the tunes is divorced from them and everything that made them characteristic is obliterated in a positive riot of senseless orchestration. This particular composition is one of the regrettable results of the present folk song movement.^{48}

Calvocoressi, it will be remembered, in a series of articles in the *Musical Times* argued that the use of folk-song material in no way compromised artistic integrity—that the creative faculty was plainly evident in the working out of a theme. The November 1913 article would find him arguing as well for the legitimacy of folk-song use in modern music. The starting-point for Calvocoressi's argument was his contention that the introduction of folk music into art music was not a new phenomenon, but a deeply-rooted one. Then why

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^{48}*ibid.*
had the debate escalated to such a degree in recent times? Calvocoressi established initially that the principal difference between folk music and art music may be found in the "general formal, tonal and modulatory principles" rather than in melodic and rhythmic elements. The author proceeded to suggest two possibilities for folk-song influence in art music. The first was the utilization of folk song chiefly in an ornamental capacity that "lent a peculiar charm of picturesqueness to a given passage, or served for some particular temporary expressive purpose." Calvocoressi saw this use as superficial, not affecting the tonal and/or structural scheme of the composition. The second stage of folk-song employment occurred when the folk song began to affect the essence of the music's tonal and structural makeup. He observed that the problem with folk music appeared at this point when the "influence of folk-music helped to set up a reaction against the abstract methods of conventional formalism," namely the mid-nineteenth century. Thus, once composers began to allow folk music to generate its own structural principles and harmonic relationships "not in accordance with the stereotyped standards in major or in minor, the whole tonal scheme began to crumble."

While Calvocoressi chose not to reveal his sympathies in the national-music debate, his insight into the possibilities of folk song is a valuable one. Folk song, whether employed toward the accomplishment of nationality or otherwise, has proven beneficial in the progress of music through suggesting measures of relief from stereotypical, academic formalism. Seen in light of the national question, the use of folk song--while susceptible to superficiality--could provide a generative force potentially employed toward a profound national expression.

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49M. D. Calvocoressi, "Folk-Song in Modern Music," *MT* 54 (1 November 1913): 716.

The questions of genuineness, artistic integrity, and amalgamation when applied to the folk-song discussion did not relate only to England's quest for a national style, but were of general importance to all national-music discourse. The final four issues—relevance, value, definition, and authenticity—were more specific to England's search for a national style.

Relevance

The question of relevance asks whether folk song was still a viable basis for the establishment of a national idiom. Many critics who raised this question did concede that once upon a time folk music could have provided a foundation for English national style as it had done in Germany and Russia, but the progress of time and culture had now made folk music irrelevant. The world of late-Victorian and Edwardian England was far removed from the world that produced England's folk music. England was now modern, not primitive; now urbanized, no longer rural; now cosmopolitan, rather than provincial. In other words, to embrace folk song was to resist progress.

The question as to whether it was too late in the day appeared initially during the years just prior to the turn of the century. Arguing on behalf of folk music's continued relevance was W. H. Hadow, who in 1897 published his book on Haydn entitled *A Croatian Composer*. Hadow has previously appeared in this study as one with strong nationalist sympathies. His Haydn monograph proves no exception to this orientation. Although Hadow allowed ample space for personal differences in style among artists, he firmly held that art and literature "are pre-eminently the expression of the national voice."  

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Music, by its nature, is less prone to firm classification, yet the "composer bears the mark of his race not less surely than the poet or the painter."^52

While the major portion of Hadow's work obviously deals with the nationality of Haydn, the author did not neglect the opportunity to extend his discussion of musical nationality to England. Surveying the recent cause for optimism, Hadow stated: "A most hopeful sign is the revival of interest in our national melodies. To the artists who have collected them, to the artists who are making them familiar, our cordial gratitude is due. But it is not enough to have them, we must use them; and it is not enough to use them, we must learn how to catch their spirit."^53

Hadow's little volume provoked a response from Edward A. Baughan, editor of the Monthly Musical Record. In his article dated 1 February 1898 Baughan made "A Plea for Cosmopolitanism." While Baughan leveled a number of criticisms against Hadow's viewpoint, those most significant center upon the question of folk song's continued relevance. In reference to Hadow's recommendation for the study of folk music, Baughan asked: "Is not this self-conscious adaptation of Folk-music a fallacy of modern days?"^54 Baughan urged that music was subject to the same laws of evolution as speech. Folk music as the "first musical utterance of human beings... feeds the development of musical art."^55 Consequently, a leap backward to folk music in quest of inspiration violated the law of musical evolution and furthermore, did not satisfy Hadow's initial complaint of artificiality in English music.

^52Ibid., 13.

^53Ibid., 80-81.


^55Ibid.
The experience of the modern musician, Baughan contended, will reflect that which Wagner ultimately came to realize—that folk music is limited in its capabilities of expression. As Baughan wrote: "The art of music has developed enormously, and is still developing, so that a musical utterance which may have seemed adequate to those from whose lips it came is unnatural to a modern musician who no longer thinks in folk-music." According to Baughan, Haydn's eighteenth-century example does not translate to the experience of late nineteenth-century England. Haydn's use of folk music was natural because it was a legitimate and authentic part of his life. For the English composer, the use of folk song would suffer from artificiality since it no longer comprised a natural part of his world. English music, if it be truly English, may not shun but must reflect the cosmopolitan character of England. In Baughan's estimation, English music would not become more English simply by turning back the clock and returning to the countryside. English music had passed through an imitative period, to be sure, but Baughan saw it as an aesthetic counterpart to England's political life. "I am not at all sure that our imitative period is not as much part of the organic growth of British music as our genius for colonization is an organic part of our national character." Baughan's plea was for a thorough-going cosmopolitanism that looked confidently toward the future. "We are gradually finding the musical expression of ourselves, and nothing is to be gained by unlearning our lesson and going back to the early developments of our own music."

To many it may be somewhat surprising to find the name of Vaughan Williams among those who questioned the relevance of folk music to modern English musical life.

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56 Ibid., 26.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid. Baughan would further articulate his position on the issue in "Wanted, an English School of Composition," *MMR* 30 (April 1900): 78-80.
In his article, "A School of English Music" appearing in *The Vocalist* of 1902, Vaughan Williams was already calling for an expanded view of national music which saw the pre-occupation with folk music as being unnecessarily limiting. While he commended the antiquarian and aesthetic contributions of the folk-song collectors, Vaughan Williams hastened to express his own misgivings over a quick-fix attitude toward English national music, stating “new wine can not be put into old bottles.”

Vaughan Williams argued that the rural path is but one of many roads toward national music. Consequently, he urged that folk music was legitimate only for the composer for whom it is a natural means of expression, who could sincerely speak in that language. Addressing his comments to the English situation Vaughan Williams stated: “Now, English composers do not spring from the peasantry. Indeed, in England there are no true peasantry for them to spring from. Why, then, should an English composer attempt to found his style on the music of a class to which he does not belong and which no longer exists?”

It will be noted from the comments of Baughan and Vaughan Williams that criticism of the use of folk song in establishing a national style did not proceed from critics of the folk-song movement *per se*. The issue for them was not the antiquarian activities of the folk-song collectors, but rather what they considered to be highly-inflated and superficial claims for the value and continued importance of folk music.

Of all the criticism provoked by the exaggerated claims of the folk-song enthusiasts, the one that constantly resurfaced was that the collector was a person who refused to

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60 The author cites Dvorák as a Bohemian composer of the soil.

acknowledge the changing face of the modern world. Gerald Cumberland somewhat eloquently depicts the changing conditions within England.

Folk song came into existence without any organised effort and quite unconsciously; in precisely the same way, folk song is beginning to die. While the soil was suitable, it flourished; now that the soil is unsuitable, it is dying. But what has made the soil unsuitable? The changing social conditions, the invention of machinery, the expansion of cities, the development of Canada and the cultivation there of wheat, the increased cost of living, the growth of the cotton industry and a thousand other phenomena.62

In short, the impact of the industrial revolution had changed the face of England.

Perhaps the entire question of relevance is best encapsulated in a statement from the pen of Rosa Newmarch, herself no stranger to folk-music nationality. “A public that will gladly go to hear a Beethoven or a Wagner programme has reached a stage of musical development whence it is never likely to step backward and occupy itself seriously with the folk music it has comfortably dispensed with for nearly two centuries.”63

Value

The question of value asks whether the corpus of English folk song is of sufficient quality to serve as a basis for a national style. Even if it could be argued that folk song, in general, might provide a basis for a national music does English folk song, in particular, possess sufficient strength of character and distinctive identity to achieve that end? If English folk song is second-rate, why use it to build a second-rate national music?

Unlike the other issues presented thus far, this one was of equal concern to writers on both sides of the debate. For instance, Sir Alexander Mackenzie in his lectures from 1895 when the folk-song movement was still in comparative infancy, wondered whether “English folk-song had sufficient of that strong individuality which marked the folk-music


of other nations." While endorsing the desire of some to find a national school upon English folk song, Mackenzie was tentative in recommending its utilization. English folk song "might possibly go towards supplying an impulse for the suggested national school in England. At present the material seemed small, but, scanty as it might be, it was not unworthy of consideration."^65

The question was also of interest to the critics of folk-song nationalism. E. A. Baughan, in an article previously cited, distinguished English folk song from its Irish and Scotch cousins. While the latter may be employed in art music with good effect, the English folk songs he felt "absolutely present no characteristics which the modern composer can seize hold of."^66 In fact, Baughan's central thesis was that if England had a sufficient repository of folk song from which to draw, she would then be capable of boasting a compositional school with "very marked national characteristics from a purely musical point of view."^67 Added to this of course was Baughan's contention, already noted, that an English music must be reflective of her cosmopolitan society.

A great triumph of the folk-song collectors, felt by many writers, was that it settled the question of value. Certainly not even the most ardent advocate of English folk song would claim that all of the songs collected were of high aesthetic merit, but the researches of the Folk-song Society did show that England had a wealth of respectable folk music. Yet to many nationalist detractors, the aesthetic value of English folk song was still open to

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64Mackenzie, "English Country Songs," 179.
65Ibid., 180.
66Baughan, "Wanted, an English School, 79.
67Ibid., 80.
68Parry, "Inaugural Lecture," 1-3.
debate. Their position became further entrenched by their perception that the folk-song collectors were making exaggerated claims on behalf of England’s folk music.69

One of the more remarkable features of the influence of the folk-song movement was that it generated a significant shift as to what constituted value on the part of some of the nationalist sympathizers during the first decade of the twentieth century. This shift in perception, most eloquently expressed by Cecil Sharp and Ralph Vaughan Williams, held that the value of the English folk song was to be seen in the folk songs’ revelatory character, rather than in the aesthetic merit of the songs themselves. Prior to about 1903 the apparent motivating forces for folk-song collecting were either antiquarian and/or aesthetic interests. While these two incentives were not lacking in the researches of both Sharp and Vaughan Williams, their belief in the English folk song's revelatory capacity also appeared, and ultimately eclipsed the others in many folk-song/national-music discussions.

What, according to Sharp and Vaughan Williams, did English folk song reveal? The first and most obvious answer to the question, as previously noted in chapter two, was that English folk song revealed that the English were indeed a musical people. As Sharp wrote:

For centuries we have rested under the stigma of being an unmusical race, and, so far from resenting the imputation, we have modestly acquiesced. So long as it was believed that we alone of all the nations of Europe possessed no folk-music of our own, it was, perhaps, a little difficult to do aught else. It was not enough to point to our “Old English Songs” in refutation of the charge, because, beautiful as many of them are, they are obviously lacking in those especial qualities, which characterize the folk-songs of other countries. Now, however, that recent research has shown that in

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69 As Douglas Donaldson would write: “In music nowadays we are asked to regard the sanctity, to acknowledge the 'all-in-all-ness,' of folk-songs. They contain the vital germ, we are told, of all that is of worth in music; they are vastly expressive and, by their very brevity, supremely adequate vehicles of thought and feeling. The symphony is but a lumbering homily beside the scintillating epigram of the folk-song; music touched its zenith in, say, 'Greensleeves' or the 'Blue Bells of Scotland' and has attained to mere putrid decadence in such pismire compositions as the C minor Symphony and the Quintet in G minor.” “The Folk-Song Craze,” M3, ill.s., 345 (15 April 1911): 229.
this respect we are at least as richly endowed as any other European nation, the case is materially altered.\textsuperscript{70}

Yet, Sharp laments the deeply-engrained prejudice that forced many still to resist the folk song's witness to England's innate musicality.

Secondly, folk song provided a disclosure of the fundamental musical expression of a people. Sharp, in an interview reported in the \textit{Musical Herald}, stated: "Folk-songs are a national product; they are the musical expression of the nation."\textsuperscript{71} Vaughan Williams, in a lecture delivered before the Oxford Folk-Music Society a few years later, also advocated the study of folk songs because they "represent national characteristics in their very simplest form."\textsuperscript{72} He continued: "The unconscious utterances of unlettered people must of necessity be the outcome of their own characters unaffected by extraneous influences, and this is true of the folk-songs of any nation, whether they are bad, good, or indifferent."\textsuperscript{73}

This is a vital point in understanding Sharp's and Vaughan Williams's assessment of the value of folk song, English or otherwise. While both certainly believed a large number of English folk songs to be quite beautiful, it was not their aesthetic worth that gave them their primary value, rather it was what they disclosed about the musical nature and proclivities of the English people. Simply put, English folk music was championed primarily not because it was beautiful, but because it revealed something about English musicality that could be found nowhere else.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{70}Cecil Sharp, \textit{English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions} (London: Novello, 1907), 127.

\textsuperscript{71}Quoted in "Mr. Cecil Sharp," \textit{MH}, no. 693 (1 December 1905): 357. Sharp would make the same claim in his book published two years later. "The natural musical idiom of a nation will . . . be found in its purest and most unadulterated form in its folk-music." Sharp, \textit{English Folk-Song}, 130.

\textsuperscript{72}Ralph Vaughan Williams, "English Folk-Song," lecture quoted in \textit{MT} 52 (1 February 1911): 101.

\textsuperscript{73}\textit{Ibid.}, 101-102.

\textsuperscript{74}see chapter two.
For Sharp and Vaughan Williams, it necessarily followed that an English music must be rooted in the study of English folk song. Here lies the third aspect of folk song's revelation. Just as the seed of an apple contains future apples of similar kind, so in English folk song was the key to England's musical future. Sharp asked:

Is there any justification for the . . . prediction that the recent recoveries of English folk-song—of music, that is, which is distinctively national and English, and, therefore, inherently different from that of every other nation in the world—will eventually lead to the foundation of an English National School of Composition, comparable with any one of the great Continental Schools of Music?\(^5\)

To neglect English folk song was to neglect English music in its most basic and primitive form. Consequently, English national music must be built upon English folk song not because English folk song is beautiful (which it might be) but because it is English.

Not all nationalist sympathizers readily agreed with folk song's revelatory character as held by Sharp and Vaughan Williams. One's view of the value of folk song was largely determined by one's definition of what constituted a folk song, and as there were varying definitions so also were there varying views respecting its utilization as a force in national music. Indeed, it was Sharp's and Vaughan Williams's careful definition of folk song, and zeal to defend that definition that led to their assessment of its value.

**Definition**

The controversy over what constituted a folk song raged most intensely in nationalist circles. In fact, the question of definition only became an issue once folk-song research had begun and interest was growing toward developing a national idiom. As one reviews the English writings the term “folk song” itself is absent until the late 1880s.

\(^{75}\)Sharp, *English Folk-Song*, 129.
In Carl Engel's important work *The Literature of National Music*, published in 1879, "folk song" does not appear. Engel's use of the phrase "National Music" was in two senses. In its widest regard "national music" referred to any music that appeals to and is fostered by a given nation. In a stricter sense Engel applied "national music" to that music found "in the popular songs and dance-tunes traditionally preserved by the country-people and the lower classes of society." It was in this music, rather than in the music of distinguished composers, Engel explained, that one encountered the "peculiar characteristics of the music of the nation." Engel further specified that this form of national music, strictly defined, was traditionally conveyed by oral transmission, and included tunes more than a century old. Sharp would quote Engel in the first chapter of his *English Folk Song: Some Conclusions* in reference to the confusion over folk-song definition. "The difference between a national song (German, *Volkslied*) and a merely popular song (German, *Volkstümliche Lied*) is not always distinctly observed by the English musicians, and the two terms are often used indiscriminately."

Henry F. Chorley's volume, *National Music of the World* provides a ready example of the characteristically indiscriminate use of terms by the English writers.

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77 "In this sense, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven may be regarded as representatives of German National Music; Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti of Italian National Music; Auber, Boieldieu, and Hérold of French National Music." Engel, *Literature*, 3.


80 The oral transmission and undatability of folk songs would be two key factors in establishing their definition according to Sharp and Vaughan Williams.

81 Sharp, *English Folk-Song*, 3.

82 Chorley, *The National Music of the World*. Originally published in 1880, it was a series of essays based upon lectures given at the Royal Institution in 1862, and later in Manchester and Birmingham.
Chorley's definition of national music was not so strict as was Engel's. For instance, in the section of the book that deals with the national music of England, Chorley included a variety of songs in his discussion—tunes from Chappell's *Popular Music of Olden Times*, tunes revealing the "influences of Nature or of manners, or of peculiar instruments, originated by rude people" the genres of madrigal, glee, and catch, and also theater music.

Throughout the decade of the 1880s the English propensity to classify all song literature (folk, national, popular, etc.) under the broad heading of national music continued, yet the same decade was marked—as we have seen—by a revival of interest in collecting tunes from the mouths of singers. Previously mentioned in this chapter was the 1885 article containing extracts from a paper delivered by Frederick E. Sawyer, in which he classified songs that he had collected in Sussex according to type and function. Of greater significance was his comment: "Twelve months' work has resulted in the collection of about sixty songs, and the music of many has also been obtained, every effort being directed to getting songs which have never yet been printed, or which were not derived from printed sources." Although the term "folk song" does not appear in Sawyer's paper, the significance of his distinction between oral and printed sources should not be lost.

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83 Of which Chorley states "there is small trace of anything of the kind in English music." (215).
85 See articles in *MagMus* 1 between January and April 1885.
It is difficult to be specific as to when English writers began to use the term "folk song." It was certainly in use by the late 1880s. What is evident in the earliest usages of the term was its nebulous quality. While its use would certainly allow the specific definition later applied by Sharp, there was no prohibition over extending it to include any national song.

It appears that the designation "folk song" at this point in time was more closely tied to reception and popularity than to compositional and transmissional methods. But with the new century came a new desire for clarification in the definition of folk song, particularly on the part of its most devout enthusiasts, namely Frank Kidson, Lucy Broadwood, Cecil Sharp, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. Simply put, this distinction would involve songs composed "for the people" as opposed to songs composed "by the people."

Frank Kidson clearly articulated the distinction between folk song and all other national song in a paper read at the Northern Convention of Choirmasters in September 1902. An account of the lecture, appearing in the *Musical Herald*, reported Kidson's identification of folk songs as being those songs that were evolved, anonymously conceived having been born "on the lips of an untutored singer or ... first sounded on a rustic pipe or fiddle," characterized by sincerity, containing nothing artificial, migratory, and orally-transmitted from a remote period in time. In Kidson's lecture there was not the slightest hint that there existed any controversy surrounding this definition, but as the decade progressed so intensified the debate.

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87 Sharp, even as close to the period as 1907, stated the impossibility of firmly fixing a date for the introduction of the term in England, but believed, on the evidence of its absence in Engel's book, that it could not have been much more than twenty years prior to his [Sharp's] writing, c. 1887.


In 1905 Lucy Broadwood addressed the Royal Musical Association on the topic "On the Collecting of English Folk-Song," specifically to acquaint that body with the work of the Folk-song Society. It will be recalled that she was the niece of John Broadwood whose *Sussex Songs* (1843) was a pioneering work in English folk-song collecting.

The first task of the lecturer was to define folk song properly, stating the "word ‘Folk-Song’ has been used so loosely and inaccurately that it is well to define at the outset what is that song which we collectors are struggling to preserve before it is lost for ever." She proceeded to state that the efforts of the Folk-song Society were directed toward saving "a class of Traditional Ballads that practically defy all research when we come to trace their origin." It was this mysterious origin flavored by the oral transmission throughout the centuries of these purely diatonic and often purely modal tunes, "so single, so straightforward, yet often of such startling beauty," that had made them and continued to make them "an art distinct from that of consciously-composed music." It was the perception of this distinction that drove the folk-song collectors to insist that folk-song music was different in nature from other types.

Cecil Sharp, who had begun collecting songs in 1903 and joined the Committee of the Folk-song Society the following year, soon became the most outspoken advocate and zealous defender of an exclusive view of folk song. In fact, the *Musical Herald* of 1 December 1905 quoted him as stating that his initial impulse toward folk-song collecting

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90 Broadwood, "On the Collecting of English Folk-Song," 89.


93 During the previous year (1902) he had published his *Book of British Song*, compiled of national and folk songs taken from printed sources.
was derived from his "discovery of the great difference between the printed song . . . and the genuine song of oral tradition."^94

When asked about the origin of the folk tunes themselves Sharp speculated:

They must of course have had a beginning, just as a chicken was once an egg, but the beginning has no resemblance to that which survives, any more than a man of the present day resembles a monkey . . . The tunes as we now get them are the products of countless minute alterations made, unconsciously, by the singers of past generations. A song is never stayed in its evolution until it is printed and fixed in one definite form. The collector does not get a song in one crystallised state; he gets interesting variants of it; and it is sometimes possible to trace these variants to one root theme. You can never say that you have recovered the original form of any tune.^95

The following year saw a lively debate in the Morning Post concerning the value and nature of English folk song. It was prompted by A. E. Keeton's denunciation of English folk song and the entire movement committed to its preservation and propagation. She blatantly asserted that England had no folk song, and "if proof of this is needed it is supplied by a study of Mr. Cecil Sharp's collections."®5 Calling the founding of the English Folk-song Society "merely a work of supererogation" she commented that the "results of its members' researches . . . are scarcely likely to inculcate a profound belief in a marvellous modern efflorescence of English melody with anyone who has happened to sojourn in a fertile land of folk-song, Wales or Russia, for example."®7

While many topics relating to the folk-song question surfaced in the debate (e.g. the quality of English folk song, whether or not Purcell used a folk element, the legitimacy or desirability of building a national school upon folk song) a key issue was the appeal for a broader definition of folk song than Sharp and others were willing to allow. Arthur

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^94In "Mr. Cecil Sharp," 355.
^95Ibid., 357.
®5"Folk Songs again," MH, no. 703 (October 1906): 297.
®7"A Folk-Song Discussion," MT 47 (1 December 1906): 806.
Somervell contributed a lengthy letter in which he called for an end of an exclusive attitude in respect to the term.

I think it is time . . . to revert in principle, if not in the use of the word, to the wide catholicity of Germany, whence we have borrowed the term folk-song. Germans recognize the fact that any song, by whomsoever made, which obtains wide national acceptance and survives the test of time is in its essence a song of the German people, expressing the emotions of Germans in a congenial manner; that it is therefore entitled to a place in their Volkslieder collections; is worthy to be printed, to be lovingly preserved; to be handed down from generation to generation, enjoyed and played with by babies and musicians alike, and may be enshrined as one of the world's great treasures through the latter process.\(^8\)

Somervell thereby called for the term folk song to include all national songs, both older peasant songs and those by known composers.

Sharp responded stating that more was at risk than mere terminological convenience and reaffirmed the difference between those "songs . . . unconsciously evolved by the peasantry" with those that had been "deliberately composed by cultivated musicians." The issue was not one of quality, but rather of kind, since the two types are root and branch considerably different from one another.\(^9\)

The definition debate continued in another arena this time, interestingly enough, at the annual meeting of the Folk-song Society on 6 December 1906. At issue was the year-end report in which the Society gave "unqualified approval of the list of songs suggested by the Board of Education for the consideration of teachers." Because the Board did not distinguish between folk song and national song in its list Vaughan Williams and Sharp wished to amend the report, maintaining that "the Society, standing as a watch-dog for the public, should keep folk-song pure and unsullied."\(^10\)

\(^{8}\)Ibid., 807.

\(^{9}\)Ibid., 808.

The critical point was the society's division over the definition. Those who would profess great nationalist sympathies would find themselves divided over the folk-song question. It is here that the question of folk song's value becomes a decisive one. This division over the definition of folk song by the Society constituted a watershed affecting future discussions of folk music's value in achieving a national idiom. It led to significant differences of opinion among the nationalists themselves, with Sharp and Vaughan Williams taking one side and Hadow and Stanford holding the other.\textsuperscript{101}

The following year would mark the appearance of Sharp's book, \textit{English Folk Song: Some Conclusions}. In the introduction Sharp set forth his concern and purpose.

The main thesis of this book is the evolutionary origin of the folk-song. Now, this is not a question of merely an academic interest, but one upon which many practical considerations depend. The claims, for example, made by those who advocate the re-introduction of folk-songs into our national life, all hinge upon this question of origin.\textsuperscript{102} They rest upon the assumption that folk-music is generically distinct from ordinary music; that the former is not the composition of the individual and, as such, limited in outlook and appeal, but a communal and racial product, the expression, in musical idiom, of aims and ideals that are primarily national in character. Once establish the fact that the folk-song has not been made by the one but evolved by the many, and its national character and its fitness to serve a national purpose follow as a natural consequence. Musicians would then no longer place "Tom Bowling" and "The Seed of Love" in the same category, but perceive that they typify, respectively, two distinct species of music, that differ not in degree but in kind. The educationalist, too would be alert to the danger of confounding folk-song with art song, and realize that, although both may serve his purpose, he must, nevertheless, be careful to assign to each a separate niche in the ideal educational scheme.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{101}See Stanford's "Thoughts Concerning Folk Song and Nationality in MQ 1 (April 1915): 232-45. In particular, see 241-242 for his inclusive definition of folk music.

\textsuperscript{102}Sharp would modify his position when, under Newman's attack five years later (1912), he wrote: "The question of the origin of the folk-song is, in the main, an academic one, and of minor importance. The major questions in dispute are (1) the intrinsic value of our English traditional music; and (2) the effect that the discovery of our folk-song may or should have upon the art-music of this country." Cecil Sharp, "The Folk Song Fallacy: A Reply," 549.

\textsuperscript{103}Sharp, \textit{English Folk-Song}, x. The educational significance of folk song was a point to which Sharp constantly returned. He believed that the establishment of national musical idiom could not be achieved with a single blow, but rested upon future generations as they became familiarized with folk song. "When every English child is, as a matter of course, made acquainted with the folk-songs of his own country, then, from whatever class the musician of the future may spring, he will speak in the national musical idiom." \textit{Ibid.}, 133.
W. H. Hadow saw things differently. While he reaffirmed his commitment to the cause of national music, and commended Sharp for his work in the folk-song movement, Hadow distanced himself from positions presented in Sharp's book. Hadow asserted that an exact definition of folk song was “probably impossible and certainly unwise.” The criteria of anonymous authorship and oral transmission were accidental, he believed, rather than essential. In other words, a distinction in genre must not be claimed simply as a consequence of our ignorance of the song's creator, and the process of oral transmission might just as easily lead to corruption of the original. In essence, there was “no logical criterion” for assigning the title of folk song to some tunes while denying it to others. Arguing clearly from an aesthetic basis, Hadow remarked: “It will be well if our corpus contain the best tunes in which our national character is most clearly and simply reflected without our endeavouring to maintain an untenable distinction.”

In response, Sharp would ask: How may we determine our national character if this distinction is lost? Is Hadow suggesting that national character is known a priori without the revelation provided by folk song, and thus could be used as a rule to determine what should be kept and what discarded?

Here is the point to which we have been moving, namely the conflict over the value of folk song. Hadow criticized Sharp for not clearly distinguishing between good folk songs and those that are not. Thus, Hadow's appraisal of the value of folk music is essentially artistic and aesthetic. Good tunes are to be kept, bad tunes are to be discarded. English national music must be built upon only the very best folk songs. “What we need for the foundation of our English art is not an indiscriminate employment of every folk-song that can be discovered, but a careful selection of the very best.”


105 Ibid.
Sharp, on the other hand, found the value of folk song to reside chiefly in its revelation of the national character. His "warts and all" approach valued the complete corpus of English folk song, because it was that totality that gave honesty and integrity to the revelation. Thus, the distinction between folk music and all other types must be kept intact—of far greater importance than the distinction between good and bad. Because the folk song is a communal product it reveals a communal artistic soul, as an individually-composed work cannot, thus Sharp's insistence upon the importance of origin and conveyance.

In the chapter of his book that deals with origin, Sharp cited two opinions held by the experts. The first maintained that folk songs were composed by individuals, and had been passed down to us, "more or less incorrectly, by oral tradition." The second opinion affirmed that folk song was the product of the community rather than of the individual. In this latter view, the process of oral tradition not only preserved the folk song (for better or worse) but also creatively modified it through that means of transmission. Sharp argued for truth in both opinions. He held that the folk song must have had a beginning in the mind of an individual, but as others took it over it became in a very real sense, a communal song.

The solution of the mystery of the origin of the folk-song is to be found not by seeking for an original—that is a vain quest—but by examining the method by which it has been preserved and handed down from one generation to another. In other words, the method of oral transmission is not merely one by which the folk-song lives; it is a process by which it grows and by which it is created. Thus, the authorship, originally individual, has become communal. The individual has vanished, and the community has slipped into his shoes.106

Consequently, the folk song throughout its life (or until it is written down) "will always be approaching a form which will accurately express the taste and feeling of the

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community; what is purely personal will be gradually but surely eliminated.”^107 It was this understanding of folk music—as the product of a race, reflective of communal feelings and tastes, unfixed and ever-evolving—that made it indispensable in the formation of a national style.

In summary, any analysis of the thought of English writers in assessing the worth of folk song in achieving a national idiom must take into account the differences in the appraisal of its value.\(^108\) The value of the English folk song, according to Sharp and Vaughan Williams, was in the spirit, rather than in the letter. Both found little merit in the mere employment of the songs themselves, but argued that the study of folk song enabled the national composer to cut away the dross of foreign influence and reawaken the slumbering essence of English music. In fact it may be boldly asserted that differences in artistic quality were of little significance in achieving this end.^109 In contrast, others pinned the attribute of value solely upon the artistic worth of individual tunes arguing for the rejection of those tunes not making the grade.

Both views were vulnerable, however, to the question of authenticity. What if those songs reputed to be English—thought to exhibit the national character—were shown by subsequent research not to be English. What then of the national idiom?

\(^107\)Ibid., 11-12.

\(^108\)It should not be assumed that the conflict was quickly resolved. We have necessarily been limited to the presentation of the essential issues, yet the battle continued to be fought during the succeeding years. See Frank Kidson, review of *English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions*, by Cecil Sharp, in *MT 49* (1 January 1908): 23-24; "Folk Song," *MH*, no. 732 (1 March 1909): 71; "What is a Folk Song?" *MH*, no. 752 (1 November 1910): 335; Frank Kidson, "What is a Folk Song?,” *MH* (1 January 1911): 20; as well as the Newman/Sharp exchange in the *English Review* previously cited.

\(^109\)One wonders to what extent opposing writers understood or were willing to recognize this point.
Authenticity

Of the issues treated in this chapter, the question of authenticity was the last to surface. Writers who raised this issue generally voiced a two-pronged concern. The first related to reliability—that of the singers' abilities to accurately convey the song, and of the collectors' notational skill to reliably record the melody. The second aspect, given in question form, asked simply whether the folk songs collected and reputed to be English indeed were English. If a tune's origin was unknown, who is to say whether it was English or not? If a folk song used in a nationalist composition—because it was believed to be English—was shown by subsequent research not to be English, would that change the orientation of the composition itself? Is folk-music research which gave rise to national-music possibilities ultimately going to threaten the cause of national music?

Lucy Broadwood, in her previously-quoted article, after anticipating the skeptic's question asserted that her experience had shown country singers to possess an excellent intervallic sense in hearing and singing. Furthermore, they demonstrated remarkable speed in picking up a new tune when sung to them. She lamented the English predisposition to credit any peoples but the English with many of the tunes collected, and affirmed that they are English in origin.

While subsequent critics of the folk-song cult continued to raise problems, no single critic was as comprehensive in his denunciations of the movement as was Ernest Newman. In fact, his two English Review articles of 1912 provide the most thorough statement of arguments against the folk-song/national-music movement. In the article, "The Folk Song Fallacy," Newman stoutly denounced nationality in music in general, and folk-song nationality in English music in particular. He criticized the following notions: (1)

110 According to Broadwood, the Folk-song Society had recently sent Richard Strauss at his own request a set of their journals, which prompted her remark: "Will a 'Sinfonia Rustica' be the result? If so, the English public will be the first to proclaim that our peasants' tunes are really made in Germany." Broadwood, "On the Collecting of English Folk-Song," 97.
the concept of a national musical idiom; (2) the idea of national characteristics shared by all
the inhabitants of a nation over time; (3) the significance of communal transmission of folk
song; (4) the belief that folk music is more genuine than art music; (5) the argument that
English folk song can express the English national musical mind; (6) that the modern
English composer can derive any benefit from the study of English folk song. Another
concern of Newman's was the question of authenticity. He asked: “how can we be sure
that any folk-song that is supposed to express the spirit of a given ‘community’ is really the
product of that community.”¹¹¹ Newman continued: “We know that patient research
proves the foreign provenance of many a melody that has always been accepted as
unquestionably ‘national.’”¹¹² That the same folk song may be found in a host of different
countries and geographical regions, as Newman argued, suggests not the distinctive
national quality of the folk song, but rather the reverse.¹¹³ Newman, with characteristic
precision, summed up the authenticity problem. “To admit that a foreigner may write our
folk-songs for us is to cut the ground from under the fact of the theory that only from a
supposedly ‘English’ treasury of folk-song can the material be drawn for the foundation of
an ‘English school of music.’”¹¹⁴

In his “reply” to Newman's article, Sharp eloquently restated his assessment of
English folk song's central importance to the cause of national music. Maintaining his
belief that folk music's primary value was its testimony to the innate musicality of the


¹¹²Ibid., 264. Newman cited the varying origins of a number of German chorales, pieces "that
would have been accepted as a typical product of the German mind until historical research proved their true
origin." Ibid., 264-65.

¹¹³Rosa Newmarch had stated: “The purest type of folk song is often the one most difficult to
docket with its national label, for its vital element lies in its direct, intimate appeal to the emotions; in its

English people, Sharp reaffirmed that it revealed the national idiom in its purest and unadulterated form.

An obvious and serious lacuna in his response was Sharp's failure to address the issue of folk-song provenance. There are three possible explanations for this omission. First, Sharp could not answer Newman's charge. Secondly, Sharp did not consider it a problem because it did not, in fact, exist. While German chorales may have claimed tunes from a variety of sources, this in reality had no bearing on the folk-song movement in England. English folk song manifested such identifiable and strong characteristics that its identity as English was not open to question. Even if it could be established that a particular tune was of French origin, the influence of the English community in the tune's evolution would invest it with English characteristics and seal it with an English stamp.

A third and most likely explanation proceeds from this last point. In Sharp's view conveyance rather than origin is the most crucial factor in folk-song nationality. As the community makes a tune its own over time, the "accidents" of its initial composition (individual, nationality, time period) are minimized. The influence of the English community in the song's transmission would eventually invest the song with an English quality. In other words, as the initial form of the tune--written by an individual--is transformed as the song is passed over the generations throughout the community, so also would the distinctive characteristics of, for instance, a French tune be gradually transformed as it was absorbed into the English community.

It may be argued that the view of folk song held by Sharp and Vaughan Williams spares them from anxiety over the authenticity question. Folk-song nationalists, as we have seen in this chapter, were divided over the definition and primary value of folk song. Those who held that folk songs included all national song, irrespective of circumstances of origin and transmission, and believed that the only folk songs worthy of retention were
those of aesthetic quality, placed themselves in a more vulnerable position in the authenticity issue.\textsuperscript{115} Sharp's and Vaughan Williams's dogmatic insistence on both the differentiation of folk music from all other composed music, and the revelatory value of the entire corpus of collected song spared them from its threat for two reasons.\textsuperscript{116} First, their belief in communal composition allowed for change and evolution—so what might have originated as a Norwegian tune has become English over time through the activity of the English community. Secondly, because they claimed loyalty to the entire body of collected music, they created a broad base for comparison and evaluation in assessing the English musical nature. Thus, they had not invested their confidence in a given tune or tunes, but in the witness provided by the total body.

\textit{Conclusion}

The Newman/Sharp exchange presented in the \textit{English Review} provides much that can be said both for and against the possibilities for founding an English national school of music on her folk song. In their respective viewpoints, Newman and Sharp defined and epitomized the debate at its extremities. Yet this chapter has demonstrated that the sides of the question were not clearly demarcated, that there was a considerable range of opinion within the debate.

While most, if not all, appreciated the industry and commitment of the folk-song collectors in preserving a body music from extinction, considerably fewer were willing to endorse the "excessive" claims made by those same collectors. Chief among these claims

\textsuperscript{115}Newman, though obviously not a folk song nationalist, saw the value of folk song in this light as well. "A good folk-song's only claim to respect is not that it is a folk-song, but that it is good." Newman, "Fallacy," 263.

\textsuperscript{116}I do not intend to suggest that Sharp was indifferent to the beauty of English folk song. One frequently finds him jealously protective of their artistic merit—see "Folk Song Fallacy: A Reply," 549-50—but usually when provoked to defend the folk song against statements made to the contrary.
was that English folk song provided the key to England's musical future, which hinged upon the founding of a national school. Opponents detracted from this opinion for a variety of reasons. Newman considered this view to be nonsensical from many angles, and summarily dismissed its possibility. Others, such as Hervey\textsuperscript{117} and Keeton, considered folk-song nationality to be not worth cultivating, arguing that it was an artificial and affected approach to musical national identity. Still others, such as Newmarch and Baughan, conceded the connection between folk song and nationality, but believed the time had passed for England to accomplish it.

Of greater significance was the variety of opinion held within the folk-song/national-music camp. While some advocated early-on the wholesale employment of the folk tunes themselves, Vaughan Williams argued against this practice, claiming more was needed than merely grafting a folk song into an otherwise Germanic musical fabric. While he and Sharp would later allow this as being a worthwhile exercise, both felt that it was the spirit of English folk song, rather its letter, that would generate the English school.\textsuperscript{118}

Although Sharp would restrict the possibilities for an English school to the use of folk music, Vaughan Williams advocated a wider scope, claiming that the rural element was but one of many possibilities for a composer wishing to achieve a national style.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{117}Arthur Hervey had been music critic of the \textit{Morning Post} at the time of the folk song debate (1906), and thus was a participant in that discussion. As a writer his contributions were chiefly in the area of French music.

\textsuperscript{118}`We cannot, if we wished, create a 'national' style artificially. To work rhapsodies on national themes is a delightful exercise for the composer . . . but merely to take a handful of English folk-songs and dilute them to taste with some patent Strauss mixture or a little Brahms-and-water will not make a national style . . . I would advise all musicians and lovers of music to study their own folk-songs; it will probably fill up a blank in their musical horizon, and help to suggest to them their own limitations and qualities, and their general tendencies as a musical race." Vaughan Williams, "English Folk-Song," 104.

\textsuperscript{119}Vaughan Williams distinguished between songs of the people [folk song] and songs by the people [national and popular songs] and found them both to be representative of the English people. Within the latter class he listed music-hall tunes, popular revivalist hymns, barrel organ music, street pedlar
Vaughan Williams was adamant, however, in his definition of folk song and his recognition of its primary significance. Other nationalists, such as Hadow and Stanford, disdained the distinction in definition between folk song and national song, believing that both were equally important (as Volkslieder) in achieving a national idiom.

To almost all, the promise of a national style was not limited to folk song, irrespective of its definition. In her efforts to found a national school England, many felt, must not leave any stone unturned, but must broaden her scope looking to the great composers and music from her glorious past.
CHAPTER VI
ENGLAND'S MUSICAL PAST AS A PRECEDENT FOR NATIONAL STYLE

Introduction

The incorporation of England's musical past into the discussion of the cultivation of national music had two significant effects. First, it brought into the discussion many new participants, different not only in name, but in kind. Although the role of the interested amateur had figured greatly in all aspects of English music, this was especially the case of those active in folk-music collecting. Clergymen, schoolteachers, and antiquarians, among other interested laypersons, made up this enthusiastic group. In contrast, the interest in historical precedent brought musical professionals--professors, scholars, composers, critics--into the arena. Consequently, the debate (we might even say discussion) over cultivation of national music assumed a different complexion.

Secondly, the introduction of English composers and genres from the past expanded the possibilities as to what constituted an English musical idiom. In essence, the notion of historical precedent suggested that the search for a national style need not be limited to the countryside, but might include urban England as well. Furthermore, for many the foundation provided by the past was more secure, because contemporary musical composition, by definition, had more in common with the art music of the past than it did with folk music. Composers were still writing music for the chamber, church, concert hall and opera house, and thus might profitably learn from the models of Byrd, Tallis, Jenkins, and Purcell.
Yet one should not draw the erroneous conclusion that there was full accord among writers and composers regarding this issue. To some, aspects of England's musical past presented a reasonable cause for pride but nothing more. As Elgar remarked in the inaugural address of his Birmingham lectures of 1905: "It is easy to go back to the days of Purcell and revel in the glories of those days and earlier, when England led the world in the matter of composers; but such thoughts have no practical value on the music of the present day."\(^1\) Although there was difference of opinion over the value of the retrieval of the past for England's musical future, the spirited controversy that animated the folk-song issue was largely absent. There is, however, an important connection between the two movements.

As folk-music research uncovered the potential for national music there, so also did musicological endeavors during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries advance similar possibilities inherent in English musical history. While a complete summary of these endeavors would be beyond the scope of this study, some acquaintance with them is necessary in order to establish the significance of the research to the growth of the national-music movement.\(^2\)

By the year 1880 England had already a tradition of musical scholarship lasting about a century. The well-known histories of Burney and Hawkins, the cathedral music collections of Boyce and Arnold, John Stafford Smith's publication of *Ancient Songs*, and the establishment of such societies as The London Madrigal Society, The Catch Club, and the Concert of Ancient Music had all been accomplished during the eighteenth century.

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Those interests and impulses continued throughout the nineteenth century. Historical studies appeared in the form of published lectures of William Crotch (1831) and R. J. S. Stevens (1835), and written histories by Busby (1819), Hogarth (1835), and Hullah (1862, 1865). The period was further marked by the founding of institutions committed to musical scholarship and the preservation of music from former times, most notably the Sacred Harmonic Society (1832-89), Musical Antiquarian Society (1840-47), and the Musical Association (1874-). The Purcell Society was founded 21 February 1876 “for the purpose of doing justice to the memory of Henry Purcell, firstly by the publication of his works, most of which exist only in MS, and secondly by meeting for the study and performance of his various compositions.” ³ The early music revival stemmed from this century also, and featured the important publications of John Stafford Smith’s *Musica Antiqua* (1812), *The Triumphs of Oriana* (1816), Purcell’s *Sacred Music* published in five volumes by Novello (1832), Chappell’s *Collection of National English Airs* (1838) and *The Ballad Literature and Popular Music of the Olden Time* (1855-59).

The period between 1880 and 1920 saw an escalation of these musicological endeavors. Notable general histories of music by English writers include Rowbotham’s *History of Music* (3 vols., 1885-87), Rockstro’s *General History of Music* (1886), Parry’s *Summary of the History and Development of Medieval and Modern European Music* (1893; 1904), and *Evolution of the Art of Music* (1893), and the Forsyth/Stanford *History of Music* (1916). A major accomplishment in English historical writing was marked by the appearance of the *Oxford History of Music* (1901-05). This six-volume set was edited by Percy Buck, and included among its authors Wooldridge, Parry, Fuller Maitland, Hadow, and Colles.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature that marked the musical research of this period was the intensification of interest in English music and its history. No less than five histories of English music appeared, beginning with Henry Davey's *History of English Music* (1895) and followed by those of Crowest (1896), Walker (1907), Ford (1912), and Harris (1919). Studies of English composers appeared both as monographs, e.g. Cummings's *Purcell* (1881) and *Dr. Arne* (1910), Runciman's *Purcell* (1909), and in collections, e.g. Barrett's *English Church Composers* (1882), Baptie's *Studies of English Glee Composers* (1896), Bridge's *Twelve Good Musicians* (1920). Monograph studies of specifically English genres also were produced, among them Barrett's *English Glees and Part-Songs* (1886), Duncan's studies of English minstrelsy (1905, 1907) and *The English Carol* (1911), Bumpus's *History of English Cathedral Music 1549-1889* (2 vols., 1908), and Benson's *The English Hymn* (1915).

Several important dictionaries appeared, among them the first two editions of *Grove's Dictionary* (1878/79; 1904-10), and *Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* by Brown (1886) and Cummings (1898). English musical history was further highlighted through the appearance of dictionaries devoted specifically to English subjects, most notably Crowest's *Dictionary of British Musicians* (1895) and Brown and Stratton's *British Musical Biography* (1897).

While all of these products are certainly testimony to the vitality of the musical thought and research of the period, it was the publication of the music itself that provided the real possibility for historical precedent. Multi-volume publications of early English music include *Purcell's Complete Works* (32 vols., 1878-1962), Arkwright's *Old English

The connection between interest in England's past and hope for her future was not merely a coincidental one. While many were involved in these musicological endeavors chiefly for antiquarian reasons, others believed the key to England's musical future lay in the recovery of her musical past. In fact, as many would contend, it was the neglect and ignorance of her past that had caused the dark days to come upon English composition during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As Filson Young wrote in 1902: "When an art is to flourish there must be traditions, and our musical traditions have been lost to us." According to Young, because the English literary tradition had been kept alive it suffered no interruption in the progress of that art. Young continued:

Now, in music we have had our traditions: Henry Purcell once sang in angelic strains and spun his sweet harmony of viols; Orlando Gibbons made jubilee with his glee; old Doctor Blow praised God in the sound of the trumpet, and upon the strings and pipe. These were men upon whose shoulders foundations of tradition might worthily rest; but what have we done with the inheritance they left us? . . . Whatever faults we may have as a nation, it is not like us to disregard our worthy traditions . . . Great men, it is true, are not produced very often; but taking every caprice of Nature into account, the interval that has elapsed since the birth of the last great English composer is too long to be accounted for by chance.

As Young suggested, had the English musical world not forgotten her luminaries, the national call of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would have been rendered unnecessary. In this view, a truly English music would resume only after the English composer reconnects with the past. In the words of Geoffrey Shaw: "I consider

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7 Ibid., pp. 99-100.
that the inability to understand the spirit of the past is one of the chief sources of the failure of our composers to produce English music. We have of our own accord snapped the links in the chain connecting the past with the present; it is our work now to re-forge and weld together these links once more.”

The cause of national music therefore mandated England's reacquaintance with the great names and great music from the past. Thus, in the precedent of the past was the promise of the future. As Barrett wrote: “What English musicians may do can be inferred from the history of what they have done.”

The pride that characterized many writers' assessment of England's musical past has already been addressed in a previous chapter. Yet the depth of this pride must be re-emphasized as we consider the place of musical history as precedent for national style. Henry Davey began his History of English Music with the claim: “The art of musical composition is an English invention.” While Davey's reference applied specifically to the contributions of John Dunstable and Hugh Aston, English writers expanded their focus to include several other people and periods to underscore the significance and vitality of English musical history.

Early Music

Davey, in effect, dismissed all music history prior to the advent of Dunstable (1400) as pre-compositional. Other writers were not quite so categorical, seeing two aspects of particular significance stemming from the medieval period of English music—the theoretical and descriptive writings and the Reading rota. The late medieval writings of

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10Henry Davey, History of English Music (London: Curwen & Sons, 1895), 1
John Cotton, Gerald of Wales, Aelred of Rievaulx, John of Salisbury (12th century); Anonymous IV, John of Garland (13th century); and Walter Odington, Simon Tunstede (14th century) were heralded for their distinctive contributions both to descriptions of musical practices as well as for their speculative and theoretical value. In particular, interest was generated by the descriptions of part-singing by Gerald of Wales and Simon Tunstede as writers sought to isolate specifically English practices. Gerald's account of part-singing in Wales and northern England are well-known.\(^{11}\)

Specifically, of England Gerald had written: "In the northern district Britain, beyond the Humber, and on the borders of Yorkshire, the inhabitants make use of the same kind of symphonious harmony, but with less variety; singing only in two parts."\(^{12}\) It is worthwhile to note that Gerald does conjecture that the practice in northern England had been of Scandinavian origin. Two centuries later Simon Tunstede implied that the practice of singing parallel sixths against plainsong melodies was distinctly English, since it was not done in France or Rome.\(^{13}\)

No single composition held the pride of place in the English musician's heart as did the Reading rota, "Sumer is icumen in."\(^{14}\) Of this work Davey wrote: "so far as we know,

\(^{11}\)Gerald had written that the Welsh "do not sing in unison like the inhabitants of other countries, but in many different parts; so that in a company of singers which one very frequently meets with in Wales, you will hear as many different parts and voices as there are performers," quoted in Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1940), 387.

\(^{12}\)Ibid.

\(^{13}\)See Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages*, 388. Of course, the attribution of Tunstede's authorship of this treatise is doubted in contemporary scholarship, see Gilbert Reaney, "The Question of Authorship in Medieval Treatises on Music," *MD* 18 (1964): 10-11.

\(^{14}\)C. A. Harris wrote: "In the British Museum there is a scrap of vellum about double the size of a small post-card--seven inches by five. In bulk it is probably the smallest, and in interest is certainly the greatest, of all musical manuscripts; and its eighty-eight notes have puzzled the Sons of Jubal in many countries more than all the 984,043 of Wagner's Ring--the world's longest score. For these notes form a four-part canon on a two-part ground-bass, 'infinitely more ingenious,' a great German historian points out, 'than the common canon.' And microscopic examination reveals the two dates, 1226 and 1236, proving the 'canon,' 'round,' or 'rota,' as it has been called, to have been written centuries before it was imagined that such a work could have been composed. Moreover, this enigmatical piece of music combines technical
not a piece endurable by modern ears existed before 1400, or ever did exist, save and except only 'Sumer is icumen in.'\textsuperscript{15} In his lecture on "England as a Musical Nation" W. H. Cummings argued that the work, in fact, reveals the attainment of a high musical development long before the Norman Conquest, since it was based upon an ancient English folk song.\textsuperscript{16}

\textit{John Dunstable}

When Henry Davey in 1895 made the pronouncement: "The art of musical composition is an English invention" he was referring to the work of John Dunstable. While Dunstable was a heralded figure in the histories of the period, his exact place and significance was controversial. Some writers considered him to be "the most important figure in the whole range of musical history."\textsuperscript{17} Others sought a more moderate view regarding Dunstable as an important link in the development of the art, but without the exorbitant claims.

Davey, it will be recalled, established 1400 as the date for the invention of composition. This date, marking Dunstable's achievement of independence within the voice-parts, saw the elevation of music "to the rank of a structural art."\textsuperscript{18} According to science with melodious spontaneity in a way rare in any age." Clement Antrobus Harris, "When Britain was the Most Musical Nation," \textit{Contemporary Review} 112 (July 1917): 86. For a recent contextual discussion of this canon, see John Caldwell, \textit{The Oxford History of English Music: Vol. 1, From the Beginnings to c. 1715} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 53ff.

\textsuperscript{15}Davey, \textit{History}, 52.

\textsuperscript{16}W. H. Cummings, "England as a Musical Nation," \textit{MT} 33 (1 June 1892): 348. The claim for the folk song origin of the Reading rota made by Rockstro in Grove 1 while commonly held, was not unchallenged, see H. E. Wooldridge, \textit{The Polyphonic Period}, Vol. I, 326-38.

\textsuperscript{17}Davey, \textit{History}, 52.

\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ibid.}, 1. Davey divided the history of music into three periods of 161 years each, according to national dominance: English period (1400-1561), Italian period (1561-1722), German period (1722-1883).
Davey, it was the school of English musicians (chief among them John Dunstable) that "led musicians out of the arid desert where for centuries they had wandered since escaping from the bondage of Greek theories." But in spite of this boast Davey does concede that it is difficult to specify what improvements were actually made. He does, however, list three areas of innovation: the independence and individuality of each voice-part; the systematic use of suspensions, passing notes, and short imitations; and the lack of consecutive fifths and octaves.

The enthusiastic claims made for this period of English music history by Davey and others were considered laughable by many of his contemporaries. Prior to the publication of his history the Musical Times had carried a note referring to a lecture Davey had given to the Sussex section of the Incorporated Society of Musicians on the topic, "The recent discoveries in Early English Music." In his comments the Musical Times writer focused upon Davey's statement that "polyphony was invented by the Englishman, John Dunstable," and expressed astonishment that the hearers "accepted so preposterous a statement without rising in a body and asking Mr. Davey whether he knew what he was talking about." Anyone with the slightest knowledge of music history, the writer continued, would know that polyphony in two, three, and four parts antedates Dunstable by four centuries.

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19Ibid., 50.

20Ibid., 51.

21Harris wrote: "Little as we know about him, Dunstable was not only the greatest composer in the world in his own day, but, it has truly been said, in some respects the most remarkable figure in the whole history of music. England in Dunstable's day was, undoubtedly, the most musical country in the world." Harris, "When Britain was the Most Musical Nation," 88.

22MT 36 (1 April 1895): 230.
During the months following the appearance of Davey's *History*, his claims for Dunstable were the subject of lectures, journal articles, and many letters to the press. Davey in his own defense reminded his detractors that his assessment of Dunstable was not original with him, but had been made throughout history, even by continental writers (most recently by Haberl in the course of his Dufay research).  

Willibald Nagel, in the second volume of his *Geschichte der Musik in England* that appeared two years later, repeated the claim. Calling John Dunstable the “venerable patriarch of the art,” Nagel described him as the man “with whose name we must connect the beginnings of systematic regular composition.”

Although the views of these writers as to Dunstable's historic significance provide interesting and entertaining reading, of greater importance to the present study is their assessment of the English quality of Dunstable's style. More than any other writer of the period, Ernest Walker, in his *History of Music in England*, addressed this issue.

In his analysis of music and treatises prior to Dunstable Walker had tended to view with suspicion bold stylistic assertions founded upon their scant testimony. Yet he did

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23In point of fact, claims for Dunstable's significance extend back to the fifteenth century. Martin le Franc's *Le Champion des Dames* is well known, as are the writings of Tinctoris, Gafori, Cretin, and Hothby which also mention Dunstable. Tinctoris wrote in 1475: "The source and origin of this new art, if I may so speak, is to be found among the English, of whom the chief musician was Dunstable." quoted in Harris, "When Britain was the Most Musical Nation," 88. Haberl in 1885 had called for English scholarly involvement: "Dunstable's unquestionable authorship of polyphony may perhaps in England incite a more lively interest in this period." "Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft," 397-530, quoted in Frederick Niecks, "Notes on English Musical History, with Incidental Remarks on the Present State of English Music," *MMR* 17 (1 April 1887): 73-75.

24Quoted in "A German History of English Music," *MH*, no. 596 (1 November 1897): 334. It is interesting to note that it is mentioned there that Nagel "does not quite admit that the Flemings learnt their art from his."

25Of Gerald's description of part-singing practices in Wales and northern England, Walker wrote: "We know absolutely nothing of the real nature of this popular part-singing, what intervals were used or anything else; and in default of all evidence we have no right to devise (as has not infrequently been done) fantastic accounts of the invention of modern harmony by the British laity." Walker, *A History of Music in England*, 4.
find some evidence for some distinctions in style—negatively derived from the condemnations of Aelred of Rievaulx and John of Salisbury. From these writings it could be deduced that English music was characterized by “complicated singing,” “powerful accompaniments” (by instruments other than the organ), “independence of voice-parts, with interspersing of rests (the so-called Hocquet),” and clearly-indicated time-divisions. John of Salisbury showed a clear distaste for the Phrygian mode, possibly indicating more frequent usage in England than elsewhere. The distinctly English taste for the interval of the third had been described in the Bury St. Edmunds anonymous treatise. Yet Walker claimed that the use of the imperfect consonances of thirds and sixths was no more present in England than elsewhere. He writes: “We have no ground whatever for assuming that, before the middle of the fourteenth century, strings of thirds and sixths were not as unfamiliar in England as elsewhere.”

Writing of the century prior to Dunstable, Walker found the English tendency toward “smoothness of movement” to be present in a number of works. Citing “Petrum Cephas ecclesie,” a motet (c. 1375) included in Stainer's *Early Bodleian Music* Walker wrote that it:

shows very remarkable euphony of part-writing, even if, as was always the case till the next century, the harmonic outlines are structurally vague; the less elaborate two-part work shows, however, naturally greater approximation towards that discovery of satisfactory final cadences which is one of the main features of the music of the beginning of the next century, as with the addition of extra parts this particular problem was greatly complicated.

A remarkable achievement of the fifteenth century, Walker observed, was that one may discern there for the first time “something in the nature of a national school of music.”

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26 Walker, *History*, 16.


word virtually unknown before, were musical composers, with their own personal individualities and their own racially distinguishable characteristics, and using material which, in essentials, is the same as ours to-day." 29 While these aspects were not unprecedented, as has previously been noted, they were negligible when compared to the innovations of such composers as Lionel Power, John Alain, and most importantly John Dunstable.

Walker's assessment was based upon contemporary evidence of writers such as Guilielmus Monachus, who wrote of the "specially English methods of descant" current at the beginning of the fifteenth century. 30 In his treatise De Preceptis Artis Musicae (c.1480) Guilielmus Monachus, having described fauxbourdon and gymel practices and their rules, continued: "among us the method of this faulx bourdon could be taken in other ways." 31 Afterward, Walker provided the following synopsis of Guilielmus's description stating that he:

then explains the specifically English methods of breaking up the rigid note-against-note method by ornate counterpoint of different kinds (thus satisfying the desire for variety of effect while avoiding, at any rate in great measure, the risks of cacophony, which extempore descant on the old system, when in more than two parts, inevitably entailed), and also of, under certain circumstances, supplying a "contratenor bassus", completing the harmony in a manner which clearly foreshadows the system on which all modern music is built. 32

In his treatment of John Dunstable, Walker recognized the symbolic significance in invoking the name of one "about whom has gathered a curious mass of legend and

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid. Walker, on the basis of more recent scholarship, disputed Coussemaker's assertion that Guilielmus was Italian by birth, and argued that he was born an Englishman, yet resided in northern Italy.

31 Quoted from Walker, History, 15.

32 Ibid. In the note that accompanies the above passage Walker pointed out that under the old system the extemporaneously added parts might each agree with the written plainsong but there was no guarantee against cacophony, i.e. that they would agree with each other.
untrustworthy rhapsody." Yet of Dunstable and his contemporaries Walker wrote that England may "confidently claim the distinction of having been the first nation to produce a real school of euphonious composition." According to Walker, Dunstable stands out as "the earliest composer of any nationality who can really be said, archaic though his method inevitably is, to have something like an artistic style; his feeling for melodiousness of individual parts is often very remarkable, and occasionally he rises to sheer beauty." Walker quickly added that Dunstable, at times, did fall short of artistic heights, yet asserted that the composer's contrapuntal skill was "remarkable, and is sometimes combined with real insight into structure on a somewhat extensive basis."

As writers, such as Davey and Walker, wrote proudly of the contribution of Dunstable so also did they lament bitterly the eclipse of his radiance. As Harris wrote: "The prophet's mantle did not fall on his own countrymen." Yet just over a half-century later would arise the "first of our great men," the Tudor school that would flourish for "some seventy or eighty years of a continued splendour, the like of which has not often been known in the history of any art."

33Ibid., 16.
34Ibid.
35Ibid., 24-25. He cites "Quam pulchra es," "Beata mater," the opening of the motet "Crux fidelis." Of the latter Walker wrote "that the promise this opening . . . is by no means fulfilled in the rest of the work."
36Ibid., 25. Walker cited "Veni sancte Spiritus" as an example.
37Harris, "When Britain was the Most Musical Nation," 88.
38Walker, History, 20. Tye, Whyte, and Tallis are mentioned specifically.
The Tudor Period

As was noted in an earlier chapter, the Tudor period was considered to be the highest achievement within English musical art. Davey, in his characteristically enthusiastic tone, called the Elizabethan age "the climax of English music as a whole, the madrigals, the ayres, the keyboard music, the contrapuntal Anglican sacred music. The entire result is a magnificent monument of the nation's genius." Foreign writers also concurred with this opinion. In fact, Nagel in his *Geschichte der Musik in England* went beyond Davey in his enthusiasm for the music of Bull and Dowland. This appreciation was felt no less at the end of our period, as witnessed by Hadow's remarks before the British Music Society, where he stated: "right through the Tudor and the Elizabethan periods, there cannot be the smallest doubt that we stood in the forefront of European composition. It is not a matter of putting up the cock's feather; it is a matter of telling the plain simple historical truth."

Ralph Vaughan Williams effectively grasped the significance of the Tudor period, not only within English musical history, but also for the times in which he lived. Several key points may be extracted from the article that appeared in the *Music Student* of October 1914. The Tudor period was unique in that it was the only time in English music history in which England had a school of composers. In contrast to the usual tendency within England, which was characterized by the appearance of great men "who appeared and disappeared like meteors and left no trace behind," the Tudor school boasted many names--

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39 We use "Tudor" in the same sense as the writers themselves, not in a rigid dynastic sense. The Tudor period in general musical parlance ended with the death of Orlando Gibbons in 1625, and thus extended well into the period of the Stuart monarchy.

40 Davey, *History*, 244.


among them Tallis, Byrd, Weelkes, Wilbye, Morley, Dowland—with no single name claiming priority. Vaughan Williams placed great emphasis upon the significance of this observation. All of the names, as it were, form “one great personality, a sign that music was part of the national life.” When a nation is “saturated through and through with music” all music flourishes—choral and instrumental; in the church and in the home.43

Of particular value is Vaughan Williams’s speculation as to the causes that sparked the “sudden flowering of music in England in the 16th century.” He cited three: the reformation which gave rise to a new religious spirit; the lingering of the Renaissance; and the gradual assimilation of the music of the people into the art music of the day. The product of these factors was a burst of creative energy which issued forth in Tudor church music, the Elizabethan madrigal, and the virginal school of composers, respectively.44

Many of the assessments of the greatness of Tudor church composers were accompanied by the criticism of the comparative neglect of their work. While music historians such as Arkwright, Bumpus, and Fellowes were performing valuable research into the period, virtually no one was actually performing the music itself. Davey wrote: “I cannot refrain from expressing my regret that our cathedrals, colleges, and principal other churches do so little in the way of performing the magnificent polyphonic anthems of the Elizabethan composers. Besides the special masterpieces which no choir can blamelessly

43Vaughan Williams, “British Music of the Tudor Period,” 25. This observation certainly was not unique to RVW but had been made by many writers, see Fuller Maitland, MS, ill.s., 7 (29 May 1897): 344; Davey, History, 245; Hadow, BMB 2 (June 1920): 127. Writing of music’s permeation throughout Elizabethan England, Chappell in 1858 wrote: “Tinkers sang catches; milkmaids sang ballads; carters whistled; each trade, and even the beggars, had their special songs; the base-viol [sic] hung in the drawing room for the amusement of waiting visitors; and the lute, citern, and virginals, for the amusement of waiting customers, were the necessary furniture of the barber’s shop. They had music at dinner; music at supper; music at weddings; music at funerals; music at night; music at dawn; music at work; and music at play.” Chappell, The Ballad Literature and Popular Music of the Olden Time, 98.

neglect, each choir could cherish a reverent remembrance of its own past musicians."

Two decades later Vaughan Williams would testify that the opportunities for first-hand acquaintance with the music were still few. "We treat our great church composers just as we treat our great poets or dramatists, as a just cause for patriotic pride, otherwise to be laid on the shelf and left to foreigners to keep alive. We talk glibly of Byrd, Tallis, Farrant and Gibbons, but what do we know of their work?"

The great achievement of the English madrigal school, according to Vaughan Williams, was the establishment of a secular stylistic identity in their music. In particular, he located this feature in the tuneful nature of the music; even in such contrapuntal pieces as Gibbons's "The Silver Swan" one finds "a distinct melodic outline which admirably suits the intimacy of the madrigal, but would be quite out of place in the aloof grandeur of ecclesiastical music."

While the English madrigal was considered to be "the supreme flower of English art," England's innovations in the solo song were also championed. In this respect the names of John Dowland, Philip Rosseter, Thomas Campion, and Robert Jones occur most frequently. Throughout the literature of the period, writers contend for England's preeminence in the field. Walker pointed out that Caccini's solo songs, published in 1602, were in fact predated by publications of "ayres" by Jones and Campion/Rosseter, both from 1601. The prefaces to these works are significant. Jones claimed that his publication

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45 Davey, History, 493.


47 For the most thorough treatment of the madrigal composers to be written during this period, see Walker, History, 53-116.


49 Walker's phrase, History, 116.
was the first of its kind, and Rosseter asserted that Campion’s songs had been “privately
emparted to his friends.”

It would be difficult to exaggerate the significance of the school of virginal
composers in the accounts of English musical history that proceed from this period. To
some, virginal music was the “locus classicus” for specifically English musical traits. To
others, it reveals a vibrant instrumental tradition during a period usually thought to be most
distinguished by its vocal music. But to Henry Davey, it proved that instrumental musical
composition, in addition to vocal music, had been an English invention, specifically
attributed to Hugh Aston.

Citing Aston’s “Hornpipe” and other pieces, Davey writes: “Aston’s insight into the
necessary difference between the styles of vocal and for instrumental music was
wonderfully correct; and all the effects known to the older school of players may be traced
in these pieces, excepting double-runs.”

Davey added that while Aston’s achievement
was slightly less than that of Dunstable, it was better followed up in England and later in
Germany, having been carried forth by such figures as Byrd, Bull, Scheidt, and even
Bach. As a matter of fact “his work remains yet, and his influence is felt all over the world
to this moment. When a child practises a scale, when a great pianist plays a Beethoven
concerto, they are repeating passages which were first used by Hugh Aston.”

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50 Walker, having reminded his readers that Caccini’s had been circulated in manuscript prior to
their publication, cited these statements showing that England need not “relinquish [her] claim to priority.”
*History*, 61. Recent research has shown that these works were antedated by Barley’s *A new Book of
Tabliture* (1596) and even earlier by the third part of le Roy’s *A Briefe and plaine instruction* (1574). See

51 Davey, *History*, 113.

While others, quite understandably, would be more temperate in their remarks, there is no doubt that the English virginal school was treated with great pride. Edwin Evans wrote a series of three articles for the *Musical Standard* in 1910 on *Parthenia*. While his treatment of the significance of *Parthenia* will be discussed later in greater detail, some preliminary observations may be made at this time.

In Evans's view it was Byrd, rather than Aston, who occupies a place in history roughly analogous to Dunstable. As Dunstable may be considered the father of modern counterpoint, so Byrd stands as the father of clavier literature. Also, Evans emphasized the value of the Tudor composers as representatives of a school of English composition. *Parthenia* was written at a time “when our people had nothing to learn from outside; and when there would have been nobody to teach them, even had they had such a desire. It was the foreigner, rather, who might then have been more feasibly expected to copy from us, at least in clavier music.”

While Evans specifically dealt with the virginal music of Bull, Byrd, and Gibbons as represented in the *Parthenia* collection, Margaret Glyn took up the broader topic of “The National School of Virginal Music in Elizabethan Times” in a lecture before the Royal Musical Association in 1917. Glyn, as had Evans before her, lamented the widespread neglect of interest in this subject. “Let us renounce once for all that attitude of indifference whereby the greatest and most glorious page of our musical history has been left for most

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53 Charles van der Borren's *The Sources of Keyboard Music in England*, published at this time, illustrates the continental attention.

54 *Parthenia,* the first collection of virginal music issued in England, appeared about 1611. It was reprinted by Musical Antiquarian Society in 1847. Margaret Glyn's edition which seems to have prompted this article appeared in 1908.

of us unopened with the dust of three centuries thick upon it." Furthermore, like Evans, she named Byrd as the founder of the English National Virginal School, but showed considerably less enthusiasm in her appraisal of Parthenia, since it did not include Famaby-"that special genius of virginal music," the more rhythmic dances, and those works based upon folk song.57

The greater significance of both articles was the identification of specifically English traits of these virginal composers and the accompanying recommendations by both writers to consider these works as precedent for the establishment of a modern English school. To this point, when writers sought English musical traits they looked primarily to vocal music. While Crowest had written in 1881 that "our old Madrigal writers were not thoroughly English in their style, which flavoured rather of the half French, half German,"58 most writers believed that Tudor vocal music was, by and large, distinguished by English characteristics. Chorley, without specification, had stated that the Elizabethan madrigals contain "many national touches."59

The importance Ernest Walker attached to the Tudor composers has already been noted. While he is characteristically cautious in his statements, Walker does take up the issue of national style. For instance, in his discussion of early Tudor church music the writer warns against using language considerations (English or Latin) to "draw universally


57It will be recalled that Vaughan Williams had noted the interest of the virginal school in the "music of the people," utilizing folk music as the basis for variations. Glyn's attribution of 'national school' is in fact reserved for that group of pieces based upon folk song.


applicable deductions from supposed differences in style," since we can not always be sure of a work's original language.  

In this light it is interesting to consider Walker's evaluation of Gibbons as a truly English composer. "He was an English artist, and nothing more; and as such he is one of our glories." According to Walker, Gibbons stands apart from Byrd in that he "owes nothing directly to Roman influences." All of Gibbons's church music was set to English text and paralleled the Anglican attitude of *via media*, in his attention to the relation of words and music.

Two stylistic features recurring frequently in Walker's history of the Tudor period are the use of the unprepared augmented triad and the employment of false relations. In his discussion of the *Cantiones Sacrae* from 1612 of Peter Philips, Walker wrote of this expatriot: "He is not without English traits; he uses entirely unprepared augmented triads in a manner which, fairly common in England, was exceedingly rare abroad." In Wilbye's madrigal, "Of joys and pleasing pains," Walker also noted an effective use of an unprepared augmented on the word "sobs." One of the more famous uses of this chord is in Gibbons's "The Silver Swan," a composer who "deals freely in augmented chords."

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60 Walker, *History*, 39. Walker observed that throughout the sixteenth century, due to circumstances in England's religious history, many pieces that had been originally written to a Latin text would be adapted to an English version and vice versa. Walker's caution in rigid stylistic assessment proceeds from the possibility of the absence of the original.

61 Walker, *History*, 75.

62 Ibid., 79.

63 Ibid., 84.

64 Walker's footnote is of interest. "Entirely unprepared augmented chords are indeed occasionally found in the works of Whyte as well as those of Byrd and most Elizabethans. It is true that in the case of Gibbons we do not always hear them as he wrote them; certain bars in the familiar 'The Silver Swan' are probably sung wrongly nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand." (91) The fault, he states, was due to the editor's "correction" of the dissonance.
The English propensity for using false relations had long been recognized. Walker's history contains a substantial discussion of this trait in the chapter on "General Characteristics." Finding the widest use of this device in the Elizabethan period, Walker cited examples from sacred, secular and instrumental music of Tallis, Byrd and Gibbons. The "specially English feature is the very frequent simultaneous employment . . . so that the major and minor thirds of the same root are sounded together."66

Coming now to the aforementioned series of articles by Edwin Evans we find the focus shift to the instrumental music of the virginal school. According to Evans the significance of Parthenia is its testimony that:

We were highly trained in music before one style became universal—or, at least, practically so. Our national voice had, therefore, a chance of expression before the invention of rules, the influence of which was to the levelling of native traits; before communications were so facile as to unify the music of Europe; and while Englishmen still refused to entertain the question of having any superiors in musical art.67

Where Walker had found in the area of church music the most thoroughly English expression to be that of Gibbons, Evans considered Byrd's virginal music to be most "redolent of the English soil."68 According to Evans, there was much in Byrd's music that would offend the "straight-laced eighteenth-century theorists," who would show no tolerance for "successives," "false relations," "tonal progressions," etc. But he emphasized his belief that "this music is English—really English. The atmosphere is English; and, although no folk-song is introduced, the whole is in the same vein as the variations on the 'Carman's Whistle'."69

66 Ibid., 341.
68 Evans, "Parthenia," MS, ill.s., 33 (15 January 1910): 38
69 Evans, "Parthenia," MS, ill.s., 33 (8 January 1910): 23
In the second article Evans elaborated upon this issue.

Every nation keeps to its character in music in proportion as it adheres to the spirit of its traditional folk-song. . . . the composer who would truly represent his country in musical art must have so assimilated the spirit of its national song as unconsciously to deliver his utterances in that idiom, while leaving his inspiration perfectly free. This is the trait presented by Byrde and his companions; and it is one which can require no further demonstration to those who play and appreciate their music.70

The problem of textbook formulations in neutralizing the distinctiveness of English style, advanced by Evans, was taken up more aggressively by Geoffrey Shaw in 1916. In the April issue of the Music Student Shaw complained that a number of “faults” that students were taught to avoid in German-influenced textbooks were, in reality, essential characteristics of English music.71 In particular, he discussed three such instances, the first two relating to harmonic progressions, the last pertaining to false relations. Of particular interest is his use of Tudor composers predominantly to serve as examples.

The first rule stated that the mediant chord should never be used in root position when preceded by a chord containing the sub-dominant of the key. Shaw suggested that the chord progressions [IV - iii and ii6 - iii], that break the above rule, was and had always been a characteristic feature of English harmony, being modal in flavor, and was precisely what an English composer should be writing. Its appearances in the music of Byrd, Tallis, Morley, Purcell, and others validated Shaw’s claim that it was idiomatically English.

The second rule that Shaw finds un-English stated that the supertonic chord should not be followed by the tonic chord unless they are both in first inversion or the tonic is in second inversion. The strength of the following progressions [I6 - ii - I and I6 - ii6 - I] lies in the tendency away from the leading note. Once again, this tendency was English, having been used frequently by Tallis, Dowland, Gibbons, and others.


The final English harmonic trait involved the use of false relations, a long-recognized feature of the English musical idiom. Stating that its “roughness is glorious,” Shaw defended the use of the false relation against harmony textbooks, which commented on its ugliness and lack of polish. “There is a penetrating shrewdness about the false relation that is characteristically English.”

Margaret Glyn, in her lecture to the Royal Musical Association, emphasized the value of the virginal school in establishing an idiomatic style. She stated: “the foundation of an instrumental style was laid in England before any traces of the kind are found on the Continent. The really fine period of virginal music came as an outburst of national vitality in the reign of Elizabeth and the Elizabethan tradition extending over two generations.”

Glyn’s lecture, as has been noted, was devoted largely to defending the historic significance and value of virginal music, and to suggesting its worth for music of her time. Woven like a thread, linking these two purposes, was her affirmation of the Englishness which marked the virginal composers—an Englishness to be found not merely in the music, but in the nature of challenge itself. “Some find it merely vague and monotonous: others deem it crude; only by study and familiarity will our virginal music open its doors to us. It is in this respect as English as ourselves; it does not wear its heart upon its sleeve.” Glyn argued that it was the distinctly English quality of the music that led to its decline, once public opinion embraced continental musical practices. In words deliberately designed, no doubt, to arouse the sleeping auditor Glyn declared:

It seems then perfectly clear that . . . it was the very originality of our English style that consigned it to oblivion. Had it been a reflection of Continental music it would have been understood and appreciated by foreign musicians of the 17th century, as was

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73 ibid., 35.
Purcell, who was a pigmy compared with the Elizabethan giants, and is yet considered the greatest English composer.⁷⁴

Glyn's analysis of the national element in this music is arguably the most sophisticated and carefully reasoned to proceed from this period. She defined the virginal music as:

a strange medley, wherein ancient *canti fermo* with a weaving of mediæval counterpoint, popular tunes, an advanced keyboard technique not unlike that of the present day, all strive for the mastery. Out of the old contrapuntal tangle, simple rhythmic lines appear, shape themselves into a base for development, absorb out of the mediaeval system all it had to give, add thereto a technique of their own, and with an irresistible impulse, surge forward to a goal hitherto undreamed of.⁷⁵

Using the term "National School" carefully, she excluded those virginal pieces which were contrapunctal in conception, favoring instead "the genuine dance-music, the little fancy pieces, but above all the sets of Variations based upon English folk-melodies."⁷⁶ Pivotal to her argument was the concept of "rhythmic style." It is this quality, she held, that drives the music of the virginalists. The rhythmic style, in contrast to the contrapunctal style, is "intelligibly articulated, whether by melodic phrase, harmonic cadence, pause, accent, or reiterated figure."⁷⁷ Yet, as Glyn argued, the truth is found in the paradox that the "charm of English virginal music of the national type lies equally in its melody and its counterpoint."⁷⁸ She continued: "Byrd and his successors divined the exact conditions under which these opposing forces could be harmonized ... Counterpoint ceased to be master; it took on rather the character of the old confidential family servant, who knows his place, but yet contrives to make ample opportunity to say his own say."⁷⁹

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid., 29-30.

⁷⁶Ibid., 31.

⁷⁷Ibid., 35.

⁷⁸Ibid., 36.
Glyn developed her argument by placing the rise of virginal counterpoint historically during the time between the decline of the church modes and the arrival of tonality. In seeking a secure tonal center Byrd turned to English folk music, writing variations upon a number of major-mode dance tunes. Seen within the context of the late sixteenth century, Glyn affirmed, “no greater contrast to the accepted orthodox style of the period could possibly be imagined. But before the end of the 16th century, all composers were writing variations upon folk-songs.” While stating that the major scale with its clear harmonic basis “make it the essential foundation of a rhythmic style,” Glyn reminded her hearers that major-mode folk music is in the minority. She took issue with the appropriateness of the term “modal” in describing folk melody, preferring “inflectional.”

As this was a crucial factor within her argument, we shall quote at length:

Some of the melodies coincide with a church mode, as they could hardly avoid doing, once the basis of major is left, but their character as a whole is due to an entirely different principle. To understand it we must suppose a scale, major in its rising, minor in its fall. It has three normally inflected tones, the third, sixth, and seventh. This very custom, as we all know, survived in the minor scale almost to the present day. Change the third of this old minor scale to major in rising, and you have the scale principle which underlies the whole of Elizabethan music, popular and educated.”

Having stated that she found it first in virginal music and traced it back to folk song, Glyn then added: “It is obvious that the so-called modal character of our modern folk-song, which so astonished the early collectors, is really a survival from Elizabethan times, being in fact inflectional. These songs are survivals of what was once a general national habit.”

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79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid., 37.
82 Ibid.
The inflectional character of English folk melody generated qualities that many have considered to be distinctly English. As contrapuntal lines would rise and fall, differences in the quality of the third, sixth, and seventh intervals would of necessity produce false relations.\textsuperscript{83}

In her assessment of the harmonic aspects of Elizabethan music, Glyn noted a curious correlation. "Certain notes belong to the harmony and are treated as a chord, others to the inflectional counterpoint. . . . The strangeness of the Elizabethan style consists mainly in the fact that it has a strong backbone of consonant triads combined more or less with a dissonant counterpoint."\textsuperscript{84} As did Walker before her, Glyn observed the Elizabethan taste for the augmented fifth, prepared or unprepared, as well as the major seventh, and the thirteenths "so-called."\textsuperscript{85}

One last element in Glyn's thesis warrants discussion: the relation of melody to variation. In particular, she cited the English custom of presenting a melody with two strains in which the composer would vary the first strain before proceeding to the second, which would be varied accordingly. This practice, unique to the English virginal school, led to a more elaborate practice, also English—that of varying a variation.\textsuperscript{86}

As has been noted, in many of the articles cited, regret was expressed by the writers that English musical history was not better known by both the music-loving public and also professional musicians. This was not merely an antiquarian concern, but was closely tied

\textsuperscript{83}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{84}Ibid., 38.

\textsuperscript{85}Ibid., 39.

\textsuperscript{86}"Thus if a melody of two eight-bar strains were used, between and after which a varied repeat had been inserted, making thirty-two bars, then followed one or more variations upon those first thirty-two bars, so that the variations themselves were varied." Glyn cited Farnaby's "Why ask ye?" as an example of this practice.
to the future of English music. Of central importance in the discussion were the contributions of the Tudor composers and their value in the formation of a modern school of English composers.

Edwin Evans in the *Parthenia* articles of 1910 made one of the earliest and clearest connections between England's musical past and present. "If ever a genuine British school is founded, it can only be by revival of the traits here exhibited in a state of original purity; and by their becoming further ennobled and glorified as the result of the technique in composition which we have acquired, and of the employment of the many modern resources to which we have attained."^87 Evans specifically recommended the study of the melodic inflections of the virginal school, which had their origin in English folk song. Yet, as suggested in the above quotation, Evans was not an advocate of total insularity or rigid antiquarianism, and in fact recommended "the free employment of all resources opened up by the modern German school."^88 Nevertheless he maintained that "the true English composer of the future will be the one who knows how to build upon the foundation bequeathed to us by the old English school."^89

It will be remembered that Evans distinguished the English characteristics of Byrd that did not accord with eighteenth-century compositional rules. Previously discussed was also Geoffrey Shaw's recommendation for composers to write using harmonic progressions that were idiomatically English.

Vaughan Williams drew a parallel between the Tudor period and his own day in its attention to folk music, yet he was forced to point out an obvious contrast when he considered the place occupied by music within national life of that time. The Tudor period


^89Ibid.
was an era when music was intimately and genuinely bound with all aspects of life.

Furthermore it was connected with an aspect of English life that proceeded from the
English soil. The change that occurred in later centuries detached music from life, resulting
in an attitude that saw music as merely entertainment and imported luxury. The Tudor
period, in exemplifying a time when music was "a national possession," by inference
served as the model for present-day England.\textsuperscript{90}

While Margaret Glyn ably set forth the musical basis for the national value of the
virginal school, as we have seen, in the conclusion of her lecture she exalted the
Elizabethan spirit of individual freedom and self-confidence. She affirmed:

In our Elizabethan music lies the foundation, which gives the answer to that oft-
repeated question--What is English music? It is a strong foundation, as was the work
of all those Elizabethans. It reflects the spirit of personal freedom which caused the
English composer to write as he wished, rather than as others wished, and thus give
expression to his own individuality. At the same time it reflects the national spirit of a
great period. It is a fine historical tradition which must, sooner or later, make its appeal
to all of us, for the simple reason that it is our own inheritance.\textsuperscript{91}

\textit{Henry Purcell}

The place of Henry Purcell in the history of English music was unrivalled. While
the Tudor era certainly was preeminent as a period, no single composer could claim the
importance of Purcell. In essence, he personified the greatness of England's musical past.
Yet virtually all studies of the life and music of Purcell appearing in the years 1880-1920
accuse the English musical public of neglect in their treatment of this great composer.
Davey, in his \textit{History of English Music}, succinctly set forth the concern. "Has England
done its duty towards Purcell, whom it has always recognised as its greatest musician? It
has not. He has been remembered and extolled, nor have his works ever been forgotten,

\textsuperscript{90}Vaughan Williams, "British Music of the Tudor Period," 26-27.

\textsuperscript{91}Glyn, "National School," 44.
but they have not all been published even yet." Other, more positive, observations frequently encountered in these writings include: Purcell's completeness as a composer (excelling in all types of musical composition), the respect in which he was held abroad, the excellence with which he set the English language to music, and speculation as to the course of English music had he not died at such an early age.

William A. Barrett, in his 1886 study of *English Glees and Part-Songs*, provided an enthusiastic and rather lengthy assessment of Purcell. While Barrett boldly affirmed that Purcell “excelled in everything he undertook,” in particular he found the composer's genius to be resident in his powers of expression.

The vigour of his conception, the depth of his feeling, exhibited not only the warmth of his heart but the ample resources of his great mind. . . . His harmonies, new and strange, together with his extraordinary and beautiful melodies, imparted new life and fire into musical composition, which produced a grandeur and force of effect till then unknown in England. Furthermore, the comprehensive nature of his genius held much promise for the immediate future of English music. Thus, we find Barrett rehearsing the familiar tune as to what might have been: “His was the mind out of which a school of music might have been formed, which, if its precepts had been followed, would have secured the admission of English musicians into the highest ranks of art.”

Although the topic of a national opera will be treated in the next chapter, mention should be made of the importance of Purcell to that question. Cummings, for instance, boasted that in the field of opera “Purcell was a century ahead of his contemporaries.”


94 Ibid.

Interest in Purcell's music had grown steadily throughout the nineteenth century, peaking in 1895, the bicentennial of his death. Davey, in his *History* published that same year, called for continued efforts in the advancement of knowledge about Purcell.

Let those who really know his works and their importance still continue unremittingly to push them forward, to publish and perform them, to keep England and the world in remembrance that there was one composer during the late 17th century who possessed genius, and who (unlike the English, French, and German contemporaries, or even the Italians he so much admired) produced music unaffected by the lapse of time and the changes of fashion, being entirely original, entirely beautiful, immortal.

A carefully considered assessment of Purcell, proceeding also from the year of the bicentennial, was that of Hubert Parry in the November issue of the *National Review*. Parry considered Purcell to be a victim of his times, suffering both from "the immaturity of his Art" and from the "state of society" in which he lived. In this characteristically philosophical analysis Parry mused:

To the fortunes of Music in England, the fates have been consistently unkind; but their perversity has never been so conspicuous as in bringing into the world a man of the highest gifts, perhaps the highest ever bestowed upon an English musician, at a time when everything combined as untowardly as possible to prevent his using those gifts to the most fruitful purpose.

Another treatment of Purcell's place in history, not quite so dolorous, was that of John F. Runciman, the *Saturday Review* critic. Runciman's article "Our Last Great Musician (Henry Purcell, 1658-95)" appeared in *Old Scores and New Readings* in 1899. From the outset Runciman attacked the commonly-held notion that Purcell was the founder

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96 Virtually all of London was ablaze with commemorations during November 1895. Some of these events included a performance of *Dido and Aeneas* at the Lyceum, services at Westminster Abbey, a performance of Parry's *Invocation to Music* at Albert Hall, and a performance of Purcell's orchestral music by the Philharmonic Society. In addition, there were portrait and autograph exhibits at the British Museum. See "The Purcell Bi-Centenary Commemoration," *MT* 36 (1 December 1895): 811-13.

97 Davey, *History*, 362. Even with such impassioned appeals and attention of 1895, Barclay Squire would write five years later in the *Londoner* that Purcell's reputation at that time "hardly rests upon a very wide or deep knowledge of his many-sided genius." W. Barclay Squire, "Purcell as a Song Writer," *Londoner*, quoted in *MS*, ill.s., 14 (1 September 1900): 140-41.

of the English school of music, and contended that he "was not the founder but the splendid close of a school, and that school one of the very greatest the world has seen."\(^9\)

After recounting the state of music in England from the sixteenth century, Runciman, in effect, demonstrated how all streams virtually join in the music and career of Purcell. Runciman wrote: "Purcell's list is not long, but it is superb. Yet he opened out no new paths, he made no leap aside from the paths of his predecessors . . . He was one of their school; he went on in the direction they had led; but the distance he travelled was enormous."\(^{10}\) Yet fifteen years after his death,

when, with Handel, the German flood deluged England, all remembrance of Purcell and his predecessors was swiftly swept away. His play-music was washed out of the theatres, his odes were carried away from the concert-room; in a word, all his and the earlier music was so completely forgotten that when Handel used anew his old devices connoisseurs wondered why the Italians and Germans should be able to bring forth such things while the English remained impotent.\(^{11}\)

Writers on music in the early twentieth century continued to repair the breach of the centuries and build upon the foundation occasioned by the Purcell bicentennial. Having recounted the worthiness of the efforts in recent years toward the rediscovery of Purcell's music, Vaughan Williams concluded that these gestures would go far in demonstrating that Purcell "is not only our greatest English composer, but one of the greatest composers the world has ever seen."\(^{12}\)

In contrast to Runciman and others, Vaughan Williams saw Purcell as neither founding nor completing a school of composers, but rather saw him as the most talented within a small group of composers that included Lawes, Humfrey, Wise, and Blow.


\(^{10}\)Ibid., 32.

\(^{11}\)Ibid., 47.

\(^{12}\)Vaughan Williams, "The Age of Purcell," 47.
Throughout this article Vaughan Williams, without apology, pointed to the national quality of Purcell's music, calling him "our most distinctly national composer." Vaughan Williams and many others believed the most convincing testimony of Purcell's Englishness was found in his handling of the English language. In fact, Vaughan Williams used the occasion to state a general principle. "Nationality in music, it need hardly be said, shows itself most strongly in the musical setting of words. Verbal and musical forms must run exactly parallel if the musical setting is to have any value." Turning to England he makes specific application. "It is one of the evil results of the foreign domination of English music that our composers have got into the habit of trying to screw English words on to foreign music-forms instead of letting the words suggest their own inevitable music."

In their evaluation of Purcell's music, writers had long considered his handling of the English language to be a particular strength of the composer. Playford in 1687 had written of Purcell: "He had a peculiar genius to express the energy of English words." Joseph Addison, the generation after Purcell, also considered the composer to be unusually gifted in his treatment of the English language. The late nineteenth-century treatments

\footnote{Ibid., 48.}

\footnote{Ibid., 47.}

\footnote{Ibid., 48.}


\footnote{Addison in the Spectator had written of the language/music question particularly in regard to nationality. "The tone, or (as the French call it) the accent of every nation in their ordinary speech, is altogether different from that of every other people . . . By the tone or accent, I do not mean the sound of each particular word, but the sound of the whole sentence. . . . For this reason, the recitative music in every language should be as different as the tone or accent of each language, for otherwise what may properly express a passion in one language will not do it in another . . . Thus the notes of interrogation or admiration in the Italian music (if one may so call them), which resemble their accents in discourse on such occasions are not unlike the ordinary tones of an English voice when we are angry. . . . For this reason the Italian artists cannot agree with our English musicians in admiring Purcell's compositions, and thinking his...
invested this quality with national significance, seeing in Purcell's music an able model which antedated the foreign domination alluded to in the above quotation of Vaughan Williams. E. D. Rendall in the *Musical Times* wrote: "Englishmen have been so long under the domination of Italian and German masters that they have almost forgotten the possibilities of their own language." This article marks a significant (and relatively early) effort to establish textual considerations as a basis for national style, specifically addressing the English quality of Parry's recent music. Through comparison of parallel settings of recitative texts by Purcell and Handel, the writer distinguished Purcell's emotive English style from "the commonplace of Italian tradition." Although Rendall deprecated the late seventeenth-century stylistic mannerisms that permeated Purcell's music, he nevertheless affirmed that "in understanding the capabilities of expression contained in our mother tongue, he has never been equalled."

Parry, whose negative assessment of the period has already been noted, found in Purcell's music an interesting blend of cosmopolitan and national tendencies. Recounting the dominant French influence (through Pelham Humphrey) in the court of Charles II and Purcell's own self-confessed admiration for the Italian school, Parry proposed *Dido and Aeneas* as exhibiting an admirable blend of cosmopolitan elements.

tunes so wonderfully adapted to his words; because both nations do not always express the same passions by the same sounds. I am, therefore, humbly of opinion that an English composer should not follow the Italian recitative too servilely, but make use of many gentle deviations from it in compliance with his own native language, and remember that he ought to accommodate himself to an English audience; and by humouring the tone of our voices in ordinary conversation have the same regard to the accent of his own language as those persons had to theirs whom he professes to imitate." quoted in E. D. R[endall]. "English Music," *MT* 35 (1 September 1894): 592-93.

108 E. D. R[endall], "English Music," *MT* 35 (1 September 1894): 592. For an excellent discussion of this topic, focusing upon the song literature of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Colles's address, "English Songs of One Hundred Years Ago," *MT* 53 (1 April 1912): 241-44.

109 This aspect of the discussion will be more fully treated in chapter nine.

Parry found the English element in both the declamation of language and the tuneful quality of the opera. "They have a ring as though he had saturated himself early with the best popular tunes of his English home, and they are wedded so closely to the words that the rhythm and the melodic formulas seem to spring from the natural accent with which the phrases should be declaimed."\textsuperscript{112}

Like Parry, other writers—both English and continental—recognized Purcell's indebtedness to the continental schools, and noted the specifically English trait of combining tunefulness with attention to declamation. As was reported by the \textit{Musical Herald} in its review of Nagel's \textit{Geschichte}:

The great merit of Purcell is, in Dr. Nagel's opinion (p. 262), that he had the specially English taste for beautiful melody, and it was evidently this which caused him to relinquish the pompous but empty declamation of Lully, and turn to the cultivation of genuine tune. "And this is the reason," says Dr. Nagel, "why we can with perfect right call him a national English composer."\textsuperscript{113}

In his employment of this characteristically English blend of tune and text, Purcell revealed not only his nationality, but also his preeminence among all English composers of his century. While many writers acknowledged Purcell's indebtedness to earlier composers in this regard (Henry Lawes, for example) these individuals suffered by comparison. For instance, writing of Lawes, Barclay Squire commented that he "may be said to have attempted something of the same kind, but that overpraised composer was a poor harmonist, and his much-vaunted regard to the character of the words he set, though it

\textsuperscript{111}Following the held opinion of the day, Parry placed the composition of "Dido and Aeneas" in 1680. The date was revised to 1689 following Cummings' research. The genius of this opera led to many fanciful and exaggerated claims on behalf of its composer. For instance, Joseph Bennett, the well-known critic for the \textit{Musical Times}, wrote: "It may or may not be true that he wrote anthems while still a boy, but it is a fact that at seventeen he composed the music to 'Dido and Aeneas,' and at one stroke achieved a reputation." "Henry Purcell: An Appreciation," \textit{MT} 36 (1 November 1895): 726-27. This "fact" thereby places the opera's composition thirteen years before the actual date.

\textsuperscript{112}Parry, "Purcell," 347.

\textsuperscript{113}"A German History of English Music," 334-35.
naturally appealed to a poet like his friend Milton, was not supported by any great power of inventing tunes or of writing fine declamatory passages.\textsuperscript{114}

If proper declamation of the English language was one aspect of a truly English music, the other was that of tunefulness. Writers throughout the four decades of this study commented frequently upon the English relish for a good tune. As has been previously noted, Parry found a popular tune element in Purcell's music. Davey also, in remarking that Purcell's melodic gift outdistanced those of Campion and Lawes, commented: "This side of Purcell's genius is the most specifically English; and he seems to have crowned in it the ancient English pattern of melody."\textsuperscript{115} Barclay Squire, in his analysis of "Purcell as a Song-Writer," echoed this sentiment, stating that:

The character of his melody is essentially that of the anonymous tunes to be found in the "Dancing Master" and the traditional airs collected by Mr. Chappell. It is his power of preserving this English spirit, and at the same time converting the simple folk-tune style into real works of art, which makes him, to my mind, so singular a figure among the musicians of his day.\textsuperscript{116}

A lively exchange bearing upon the nature of Purcell's Englishness took place during the closing months of 1906 in the \textit{Morning Post}. The debate was primarily over the worth of the folk-song movement, and in consideration of the value of folk music to the formation of a national style the focus moved to a discussion of folk song's influence on Purcell. A. E. Keeton, the instigator of the debate, brought Purcell into the arena, through her repudiation of the folk-song movement. Keeton claimed that Purcell "made no use of a

\textsuperscript{114} Barclay Squire, "Purcell as a Song Writer," 140-41. See also Parry's lecture "How Modern Song Grew Up," quoted in \textit{MT} 52 (1 January 1911): 11-15 in which he stated that Lawes "certainly was not a great composer at all, and had very little invention or technique. But he had a feeling for poetry of a fine kind, and a sense of the right way to declaim it."

\textsuperscript{115} Davey, \textit{History}, 362-63. Davey finds the particular aspects of triple meter and prevalence of half-notes and quarter-notes to be distinctive, suggesting this to be a stylistic argument in favor of ascribing "God save the King" to Purcell.

\textsuperscript{116} Barclay Squire, "Purcell as a song-writer," 140-41.
folk element leads to the conviction that even in his day it was already, practically non-existent among the English people.\textsuperscript{117} Furthermore, she expressed the unpopular opinion that there was nothing particularly English about Purcell's music.

Cecil Sharp, leaping to Purcell's and his own defense, countered that Purcell was indeed English in style and that this Englishness was rooted in folk song.

I cannot, for instance, accept the dictum, with regard to Purcell, that "there is no suggestion whatever of any intrinsically national inspiration in his style." I find much that is peculiarly English in his music, although no doubt there are traces of foreign influence as well. Still, Purcell has been dubbed and not, I think, without good reason, "the originator of English melody," and extolled as the man "who excelled all others in his accurate, vigorous, and energetic setting of English words.\textsuperscript{118}

Sharp added that while he believed that Purcell did utilize folk song elements in his music, even if he did not there was no logical support for the deduction made by Keeton.\textsuperscript{119}

Lucy Broadwood entered into the discussion at this point and, with raised fists, questioned whether Miss Keeton had studied the "many ponderous volumes issued by the Purcell Society." She continued: "If so she unaccountably overlooked the fact that Purcell both used English folk-tunes and imitated them closely." She cited examples, from memory since she was away from England at the time, which included "Cold and raw," "Shackerley Hay," and "Lillibullero."\textsuperscript{120} Purcell's music for plays, in particular, contained several tunes "unmistakably English and rustic in character." Finally, she concluded: "Internal evidence points strongly to Purcell having adapted his song from that of the country folk; but supposing the contrary to be the case, it would merely prove that Purcell must have

\textsuperscript{117} A Folk-Song Discussion," \textit{MT 47} (1 December 1906): 806.

\textsuperscript{118}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{119}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{120} See Chappell, \textit{The Ballad Literature and Popular Music of the Olden Time}, 307, 309, 367, 570. 572.
been steeped in English peasant song to have been able to reproduce its whole spirit so faithfully.”

Miss Keeton remained unconvinced of both the indigenous character of English folk song and Purcell's English element.

That Purcell was the culmination of English music is a well-worn, antiquated tradition, which should have been thrown overboard long ago; and have we still, as Mr. Sharp, too, contends, to wait for our English Glinka? I venture to find in Elgar, at any rate in his earlier work, something far more intrinsically national than can be found in Purcell.

Many examples could be cited to show that Keeton's "overboard" assessment was destined to frustration. The high esteem of Purcell would suffer no slight. The warm appreciation expressed by Parry in 1895 would not suffer alteration during the decades that followed.

Purcell speaks for English people, and his style is so far the most consistent and genuine type of English music in its widest application . . . he infused the whole of his music with characteristics which have always marked the best kind of English work. He shows the freshness and directness, the naturalness and openness—the temper that breathes of the open air of the country and loves action better than brooding. He is more inclined to be strong and characteristic than to be tender, to be merry rather than melancholy. His inexhaustible gift of characteristic, fresh, and genial melody, with harmonies that are strong, and sometimes even crabbed and hard, is all genuinely national; and if his striking effects of pure harmony seem less so, that may possibly be because English composers since his time have sometimes missed their vocation.

It was the desire to rediscover "their vocation" that drove nationally-minded composers, as well as critics, to study the music of Henry Purcell in their quest for an English style. Yet others not overtly national in intention sought to restore him to proper place of respect as they would any great composer from the past who had been unjustly neglected. Barrett in *English Glees and Part-Songs* wrote:

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121 "A Folk-Song Discussion," 809.

122 Ibid., 807.

The study of the works of Henry Purcell would be found to be among the most profitable preparations for a complete and lasting foundation that a young musician could enter upon. It is hoped that the day is not far distant when this fact will be recognised, and that the living and life-giving force of his music will be resorted to as a means whereby a complete and valuable item of education may be attained.\textsuperscript{124}

Others, while certainly not in denial of the above, would see his works of paramount importance for the "English" composer. In the preceding discussion considerable mention has been made of the most commonly perceived English elements in his music--sensitivity to the declamation and expressive powers of the English text, enlivened by a tuneful quality that pervades his work. At the risk of stating the obvious, Purcell's first claim to the loyalty of the national composers was as an example of how "to express the energy of English words."\textsuperscript{125} But his influence and example ran far deeper.

A curious twist in the perception of Purcell as model is offered in the lead article of the \textit{Monthly Musical Record} of 1 Dec 1895. The writer drew a rather interesting parallel between the times of Purcell and late nineteenth-century England, stating that the present-day composer worked in very much the same environment as did Purcell. This, according to the writer, was more instructive than lamentable. Purcell "worked strenuously to do the best music that ever Englishman had done, and he succeeded. And he succeeded because he did work strenuously with such means as he had, wasting no energy or time on grumbling."\textsuperscript{126} The key to success for the late nineteenth-century composer was not in complaining about the lack of opportunities, but in emulating the attitude of Purcell in giving attention to the possibilities at hand.

Let our young composers cease to work at symphonies, overtures, and suites; let them write theatre-music, church-music--cantatas and anthems--popular songs--broad and swinging melodies, but not vulgar--endeavouring to beautify whatever they touch, and

\textsuperscript{124}Barrett, \textit{English Glee}s, 162.

\textsuperscript{125}This was a popular observation, frequently made without the use of examples, see Parry, "How Modern Song Grew Up," 11-15 and Colles, "English Songs," 241-44.

\textsuperscript{126}"Purcell," \textit{MMR} 25 (1 December 1895): 266.
suddenly we shall become aware that we are building up a great national music. This is the moral we draw from Purcell.\footnote{Ibid.}

Another facet of Purcell's influence—perhaps equally surprising to a militant parochial national mentality—was the recommendation of his cosmopolitan quality for the future of English music. The indebtedness of Purcell to French and later Italian models was candidly admitted by Barrett, Davey, Parry, Squire and others. But it is remarkable to find the rise a school of opinion that not only conceded this fact, but recommended this model in the interest of a national school. Fuller Maitland, in a rather convoluted manner, underscores this aspect of Purcell's value.

That the typical English musician of the past, the man in whom we have best right to glory, should not have scorned to profit by the best Continental music of his time, such as it was, may surely serve as a lesson to those who, not content with resenting the intrusion of foreign performers, affect to despise Continental centres of musical education, and use all their energies in the attempt to copy the sterilizing Chauvinism of Parisian or Berlinese musicians.\footnote{J. A. Fuller Maitland, "Foreign Influence on Henry Purcell," \textit{MT} 37 (1 January 1896): 10.}

In other words, as Purcell embraced the best music of his time, all the while retaining his English qualities, so the contemporary composer should do likewise.

Vaughan Williams, at the onset of World War I, stated it more clearly. Purcell, by example, taught that:

Nationalism must be positive, not negative. We shall not make our music individual by refusing to learn what the great musicians of any age or country have to teach us. . . . Music to be individual must be so from its first impulse. That granted, the composer can take as many hints as he likes from the outside without impairing his originality. We must be the masters of our art, not its slaves.\footnote{Vaughan Williams, "The Age of Purcell," 48.}

For Vaughan Williams, Purcell presented an example not only against a narrow-minded parochialism, but also as one who effectively combined “serious” and “popular” elements within his musical style. In an earlier article Vaughan Williams, writing of his
own time, lamented the distinction between "classical" music (that music considered to be an imported luxury) and "popular" music (the music of the people), and called for the abolition of this differentiation. Thus, in his ready acceptance of folk and popular tunes and incorporation of their spirit into his musical language, Purcell further provided a model for the would-be "English" composer. "There was no musical snobbery about Purcell."^{131}

After Purcell

The course of English music following Purcell's death has already been discussed. Yet while the period of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries could not boast great native composers, it was a time marked by the rise and progress of distinctly English genres—the glee, the English oratorio, and the song. Space will not permit a detailed treatment of these genres, yet their place in the discussions of historical precedents is an important one.

The glee inspired two studies during the period, those of Barrett (1886) and Baptie (1896). In his discussion of the English quality of the glee Barrett saw the evolution of this genre as but a continuation of the English love for part-singing that was described by Gerald of Wales seven centuries earlier. Furthermore, according to Barrett, the glee properly performed must exhibit the "truly English principle of 'give and take.'" In his assessment of the glee, Barrett did not so much call for its further development, but rather for its preservation and study as a witness to the vitality of England's musical past and an

130Vaughan Williams, "British Music: Foundations," 7. "We must break down the distinction between 'classical' and 'popular'—all music should be classical and all music should be popular. If we can give up that nervous apprehension about what other people are thinking of us and can be content to make our own music for our own people, then we shall earn for our music the respect of others and regain the proud position we held in the days of John Dunstable."


132He wrote: "The English glee, with its cleverly interwoven melodies fitting one into the other with the utmost ingenuity, each bearing some individual reference to the general effect, is a perfectly unique production peculiar to England." Barrett, English Glee, 64.
aid to her musical future. “If it becomes possible for us to form a distinct and recognised school of music at some future period--and the day may be nearer to us than we think--we may be glad to remember the steps by which we have ascended to the proud eminence we may occupy.”¹³³

Ten years later, David Baptie still called for the revival of this “essentially English” genre.

Now... that the people of this country are awaking to the merits of our native composers, whose works are obtaining a hearing both here and on the continent, and the cry of “non- musical” Britain is fading away, our musicians and music lovers may be induced to glance back to the period when our great glee writers Callcott, Webbe, Stevens, Danby, Cooke and others gave their compositions to the world, and revive this beautiful form of vocal harmony!¹³⁴

The place occupied by the oratorio in the minds of writers during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a unique one. The Englishness of the genre in combination with its origin at the hands of a transplanted German challenged the prejudices of many. In his inaugural address at the Royal Academy of Music, given for the 1883-84 academic year, George Macfarren claimed that it was the accession of the Hanoverian kings with their foreign-dominated court that “induced a tangent” in historical development of English music. In a clear call for the establishment of a national school of music, Macfarren stated his hope “that this eccentricity of orbit has now taken a direct turn, and that music is regaining its ancient eminence in public esteem and in general study.”¹³⁵

Later that same decade Sir John Stainer, in another inaugural lecture, claimed that it was not Handel himself, but “the excessive worship of Handel [that] has had a most

¹³³Ibid., 344-45.

¹³⁴David Baptie, Sketches of the English Glee Composers, Historical, Biographical, and Critical (from about 1735-1866), (London: W. Reeves, 1896), 2.

injurious effect on English music." Stainer's remark prompted greater discussion of the question. The *Musical Herald* printed the views of Hallé, Prout and others that had been provided in response to the editor's invitation. Of the responses, most of them against Stainer, that of Fuller Maitland is of particular interest.

Fuller Maitland did not oppose philosophically the notion of full-fledged adulation of a genius of incomparable skill. He did, however, oppose the idea that Handel was worthy of that acclaim. Furthermore, he was mystified that the worship of Handel was not founded upon, neither did it include, a large portion of his output, but was confined to a single work, namely *Messiah*. The net result of this single-minded mania, according to Fuller Maitland, had created a twofold problem. He contended:

> It has placed untold difficulties in the way of all musical advance, and has forced into oblivion all the noble productions of the earlier English composers, both sacred and secular; at the same time it has encouraged a cold and slavish imitation of Handel's mannerisms, which has seemed, to many composers since his day, to constitute the only road to success in England.\(^\text{137}\)

As a remedy for the situation, the writer proposed the encouragement of a "widely-spread appreciation of all the masterpieces of music," regardless of their nationality. This would lead inevitably to "the development of original genius among us, which after all, is the greatest object that musicians can have in view."\(^\text{138}\)

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\(^{138}\)Ibid. As a counterweight to the above view we offer the following from Dr. Spark of Leeds printed in the same issue. "The influence of Handel's music on the minds and artistic aspirations of the English nation cannot be too much overrated; and it may be safely said that in the North of England--Lancashire and Yorkshire especially--Handel's music has from the people's love thereof proved of infinite educational service in checking any desire for the frivolous on the one hand, and aestheticism and mad-Wagnerism on the other. God bless Handel! I say, and may his divine music never cease to have its rightful influence in this or in any other of the English speaking countries." Ibid., 352.
Other writers, such as Parry in his *Style in Musical Art*, made considerably more of the influence of English music upon Handel rather than vice versa. Parry saw a distinctly English quality in the oratorio choruses in particular, finding there a continuation of the choral tradition that had begun with Tallis and Byrd. Parry, as had others before him, suggested the strong influence of Purcell on Handel's style.139

As was Handel, so also the topic of oratorio was a controversial one. Some, in their desire to break with the Handelian influence, wanted to break with the oratorio tradition that began with him. These writers sought to influence composers to abandon “festival fare” in favor of developing an instrumental idiom. Others argued that chorus-singing was something that the English did better than any other nation, and consequently any national idiom must be built upon that tradition. Furthermore, they would argue, England did not have a history in instrumental music substantial enough to provide a national idiom. A third opinion, lying somewhere between the others, reasoned that the English oratorio was a genre worth cultivating, but not along the lines of Handel and Mendelssohn.

In evaluating “The Influence of Oratorio upon English Music,” Frederick Corder somewhat unenthusiastically took this middle course. While the oratorio, in Corder's estimation, was part of the English musical fabric, its history and influence there had negative repercussions. He wrote:

> In England the great influence of the oratorio writers led three generations of our composers upon the blind track of vain imitation. Only it was worse in their case, because the models were foreigners, and just when they ought to have been searching into the hearts of their countrymen with “native woodnotes wild” our composers were wasting themselves . . . over foreign ways of thought which were already in need of being weeded out from English music.140

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According to Corder, the only English composers during the past century to have accomplished anything of significance in the genre were those who had departed from this “blind track of vain imitation,” specifically Parry, Mackenzie, and Elgar.141

Of all the genres in which English composers worked, the solo song could boast the strongest continuity throughout English musical history. To many writers the song literature and its composers were the only objects worthy of praise in their assessment of the eighteenth century.142 If the English composer of that period was capable of little else, he could still write a decent tune.

Chorley, in his few pages devoted to English song, gives special mention to the songs of Arne and Bishop, considering them replete with English qualities. In Arne's settings of Shakespeare, Chorley found “English words set to English music, with as much freshness and originality as beauty.”143 No less praise was bestowed upon Bishop's settings of the same author. Chorley wrote of the “very great and English beauty of Bishop's music--always the best when his words were the best.”144

In most treatments of this period of English song, one finds the ever-present criticism of more modern ballads as illustrated in the following circular from the early 1890s announcing “The Britton Concerts” of Rev. E. W. Christie.

Poor English Music, forsaken of Gods and despised of men, is fallen on days so evil, is gotten into a melancholy so green and yellow, that any representation of her, as she looked in her days of sprightliness and lusty health, can hardly fail to please... Such representation is about to be made in a series of concerts for men, under the name of the Britton Concerts.


142This might also hold true for church music as well, but to many the church music of Greene and Croft could not bear comparison with that of Tallis, Byrd, Gibbons, and Purcell--as could the songs of Arne, Dibdin, and Bishop.

143Chorley, National Music, 218.

144Ibid., 219.
Of future programmes, the glees of the English school will form a chief part. We have no music so national as these. . . . The songs, too, will be English, the virile music of such men as Purcell, Arne, Shield, Storace, and Bishop, to the exclusion, generally, of the ballads of the day; ballads whose ready sale encourages the sexless beings who write them, to prolong lives useless to mankind, and mischievous to art.¹⁴⁵

Later, Ernest Newman in the Londoner would find the situation not improved. "The number of first-class English songs produced during the last twenty years would not put a strain on anyone's faculty of calculation; the name of the other abortions is legion."¹⁴⁶ In essence, Newman's article provided a call to rediscover and reclaim the spirit of the English song as manifested in the song literature from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Within the songs of Braham, Bishop, Dibdin, Balfe, and Wallace, Newman found an honest English strain, sometimes expressed eloquently, at other times stated with less sophistication. Yet from the heights of expression in those composers the song degenerated to the point when "the unspeakable drawing-room ballad was supreme in the land."¹⁴⁷

Another backward look toward English song was provided by H. C. Colles in an address to the Concert-Goers' Club, later printed in the Musical Times of 1 April 1912. In the wake of the current revival of interest in Elizabethan and late seventeenth-century music, Colles stated his modest purpose as follows: "I hope to show you that, at any rate in the matter of songs, we had at the beginning of the last century a certain tradition which was at least not contemptible."¹⁴⁸ In fact, Colles did considerably more than that. He


¹⁴⁷Ibid. The editor's questions why Newman singles out English song for his criticism since in his opinion all artistic productions have degenerated. Yet many felt that the song in particular had fallen upon hard times. Francis Toye in the English Review would attack specifically the drawing-room ballads which, "with their pretentious sentimentality, are probably the worst music to be found in this or any other universe." Francis Toye, "The Prospects of English Music," English Review 7 (December 1910): 214-15.
skillfully demonstrated how the distinctly English attention to word-setting and tunefulness (e.g. Purcell) was continued throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, his is one of the more careful expositions of the contributions and stylistic features of the song composers from this period. Of particular value is his analysis of English text/music considerations as compared with continental practice.

It would not be inaccurate to state that the appreciation for the song writers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries grew as their role in continuing the tradition of Campion, Dowland, Lawes, and Purcell met with growing recognition on behalf of the writers and composers between 1880 and 1920. The English song offered the nationally-minded composer a ready opportunity to forge his link in the chain of English musical tradition.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at England's musical past through the eyes of many writers, critics, and composers. Particular emphasis has been placed upon a twofold perspective: their identification of distinctly English musical attributes as noted in that history, and their presentation of those attributes as an example for the composer of the late-Victorian and Edwardian age. As was stated in the chapter's introduction, the idea of historical precedent, while not provoking the lively debate of the folk-song question, still had its detractors. The points at issue will be briefly considered.

The first was the question of Englishness. It was argued that those periods of greatness in English music were those periods in which the music was the most cosmopolitan. Consequently, the effort to use those periods as foundational to a national school claiming them as English was a naive and misdirected exercise. In response to

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Geoffrey Shaw's zealous articles on behalf of "English music" in the *Music Student*, the writer "X" wrote:

If he [Shaw] thinks that he will gain anything by basing his so-called English music on English precedent only, he is mistaken. Even the English music of three hundred years ago owed much to foreign influence. . . . Mr. Shaw will find that his style, his "plain English" message, will never find acceptance, except by a small coterie who are always on the look out for something "new and strange." There are other people of a similar type, such as . . . artists who, taking ancient, ignorant work as their model, proclaim such style as an artistic gospel and glory in its crudeness, ignoring all the experience of several past centuries. We have enough of these faddists and we do not want or need any more.149

A related view made a similar charge against claims of Englishness for past music, yet looked to the future with nationally-minded optimism suggesting a different method.

"A true English style, we think, is yet to come, and the best--perhaps the only--way of ensuring it and of forming a line of English composers, instrumentalists, and vocalists, is to establish a thorough system of musical education in England."150

The second concern was that the idea of historical precedent reeked of mere antiquarianism. Imitation of the past was no more a solution to England's musical woes than was imitation of continental composers or the folk music of other countries. The writer of a lead article in the *Musical Standard*, quite possibly E. A. Baughan, leveled this criticism toward those who strove for the composition of musical antiques.

Then there is another kind of imitative music that is very popular just now, and that is "The Old English Style." It is only natural that in an age that imitates the dress of its ancestors, and adopts the furniture of a hundred years ago, or more, should also like its music to be of the same pattern; and in that it is consistent. But our young composers should be above the cheap trick of antique imitation, especially as music is the one art that has really developed in strength and beauty of expression. To listen to old songs is interesting, not merely from a musical point of view but because they reflect the somewhat exaggerated simplicity of the age that gave them birth, but now-a-days it is the height of affectation studiously to imitate the very limitations of the music of the past, and songs of this spurious antique sort, although, in a manner they may smack of

149 Letter from "X" in "Quo Vadis? Two Replies to Mr. Geoffrey Shaw's Final Article on 'British Music of To-Day,'" *MuStud* 8 (June 1916): 296.

Wardour Street elegance, are not art at all. . . . we shall never have a real school of British composition until we have grown out of the imitative period; and this fact should be borne in mind by our young composers, that British music to be vital must not be an imitation of old-English songs, nor of foreign dance tunes, nor must it imitate the harmonies and style of old-fashioned Church music.\textsuperscript{151}

The third problem as writers looked to the past as precedent for national style was that of narrowness. In our survey of composers and styles from previous centuries, strong emphasis has been placed on vocal music. Our lack of attention toward English instrumental music—with the exception of the Elizabethan virginal school—has not been an oversight, but is supported by the historical assessments themselves. The place and value of instrumental music in England's past presented a problem to many writers. Perhaps a case could be made for a historical precedent based upon the models of the madrigal, glee, song, anthem, but in their instrumental writing to whom could the composers look other than to continental composers?

Many writers insisted that England had no native instrumental tradition. Consequently, any attempt to forge a national style based on historical precedent would have to be limited to vocal music, and conversely, to forsake those vocal genres would necessarily involve the adoption of German influence. E. D. Rendall, in the article previously cited, responded to a writer for the \textit{World} who had recommended that Parry abandon the composition of oratorios and turn to instrumental music. Rendall stated that the \textit{World} writer's request was tantamount to suggesting that Parry forget that he was an English composer.

It is the fashion to point the critical finger of scorn at our Cantatas and Oratorios; to call them "Festival Manufacture" . . . and, in general, to attempt to discourage the only national school of music we possess. . . . Our provincial Festivals, which multiply yearly, are the direct cause of a great deal of music being written, and, on the whole, adequately performed. It must, therefore, be in this direction that any greatness that is to fall to our lot will come upon us. We have no instrumental traditions, and but little adequate performance of instrumental music. The best of it is under foreign direction, and comes from foreign sources. Who, then, in their senses, could advise Dr. Parry,

or any other English composer, to turn away from all the national traditions and devote himself to those which we have derived from Germany.\textsuperscript{152}

H. C. Colles two decades later recognized the same issue, but called for greater tolerance and broader understanding. Colles, agreeing that instrumental music had played but a minor role in English musical tradition, asserted that "the composers of the generation represented by Mackenzie, Parry and Stanford had no direct point of contact with their countrymen's taste and feeling when they turned to instrumental music, nothing to which they could appeal as a common starting point." This being the case, it would be ludicrous to expect that a national style of instrumental music could be achieved "in one single stroke." Consequently, it should be quite forgivable that these composers, in the process of finding a national style, drew inspiration from non-English sources. Colles reminded readers that the vocal tradition at the time of his writing had a history of three centuries, a tradition that had begun with the \textit{Musica Transalpina}, and then drew the inevitable analogy.

Without the music from across the Alps we should not have got the English madrigal; without that from across the North Sea we should not have procured anything so near to a national symphony as Elgar's in Eb or Vaughan Williams's \textit{London Symphony}. That our composers should have copied largely from foreign models is not at all such a dire reproach as impatient enthusiasts are apt to proclaim it to be. All artists are bound to copy in the process of acquiring a pliable technique.\textsuperscript{153}

Whether there was an adequate precedent for the establishment of a national instrumental style or not, one thing remains clear. When writers, critics, and composers looked for strong national precedent in English musical history, they looked to vocal music. This fact might be attributed to any one or combination of the following factors. Simply, the vocal music of England clearly dominated the instrumental idiom in both quality and output. A survey of the great English composers would reveal that they

\textsuperscript{152}Rendall, "English Music," 592.

achieved their greatness in their anthems, songs, glee s, rather than in their overtures, symphonies, and sonatas. Secondly, vocal music was the beneficiary of more aggressive research and therefore was better known to these writers. Related to this was the regularity of performance enjoyed by vocal music in comparison with instrumental music. Thirdly, the quality of Englishness could more immediately and overtly be perceived in vocal music due to the presence of the language. Fourthly, instrumental music presented several historic hurdles to overcome—much of it remaining in manuscript and written for older instruments.

Nevertheless, to many, the battle for an English national style was to be fought not exclusively in vocal nor instrumental categories, but in the strength of their combination, namely in opera. Added to this was the power of the English dramatic muse. While England had an impressive history in vocal music, even the finest of that field was eclipsed by the dominance of her dramatic and poetic genres. Thus, the cause of national music desired—in fact, mandated—the establishment of an English national opera.
CHAPTER VII
THE NATIONAL OPERA PROBLEM

Introduction

The place of an English national opera within the larger context of the discussions concerning a national music is one of continuous centrality and relevance. As pro-national writers sought inspiration from national movements in other countries the importance attached to the establishment of a national operatic idiom was undeniable. Simply put, national-music movements invariably produced national opera. If England was to boast a national school of composition—this school would surely compose English national opera. Moreover, as some would argue, the presence of a national opera was crucial to England’s claim to musicality. As one writer commented: “No nation without a representative National Opera can be called musical.”

The starting point for a discussion of the question of a national opera is the recognition that the plight of English national opera is essentially a microcosm of the plight of English music in general. As English music had fallen upon hard times throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, so too had her native opera. In general, English opera was held in no respect at home or abroad. Operas were composed, but more often than not were left unperformed; or, if premiered, they enjoyed but one or two token performances.

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1In particular the Russian national opera was of interest. See Newmarch PRMA lectures, and articles by A. E. Keeton, E. A. Baughan, and M. Montagu-Nathan.


3“The National Opera Question Again,” MasW 64 (28 August 1886): 553.
before being assigned to obscurity. It was claimed that the future for English opera died with Henry Purcell, whose *Dido and Aeneas* served as a reminder of lost potential. Handel's arrival and subsequent influence over the English public sealed the fate of English opera. This blow was two-fisted. It established the popularity of Italian opera in London, and it established the English oratorio as the accepted vehicle for the musical/dramatic expressions of native-born composers during the succeeding centuries. Thus, opera came to be regarded an exotic import. Given these circumstances it would be predictable to assume that the national-music movement of the four decades of this study would consider the cultivation of a national opera to be of supreme importance. Thus, English opera, like English music in general, was in dire need of revitalization. The irony in the English operatic world was the achievement of Sir Arthur Sullivan.

The pivotal place that Sullivan occupied in the national-music discussion must be held for a later chapter, but a few observations must be made at this point. The role of Sullivan and his comic operas within the English musical renaissance was discussed in a previous chapter. Writers, such as Fuller Maitland, Hadow, and Keeton, saw the Savoy operas of Gilbert and Sullivan as an important step toward the renaissance of English music. Sullivan burst upon the scene in 1862 with his music for “The Tempest,” yet it was his collaboration with W. S. Gilbert that guaranteed his importance to English music. Many contemporary writers saw in Sullivan the promise for the future of English opera. There was the overwhelming sense that Sullivan's accomplishment was a significant one for the cause of national music, upon which later composers ought to build, as we shall see. But one may ask why Sullivan was such a breath of fresh air in the world of English opera. What was the state of opera in England that he inherited?

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As writers during the closing decades of the nineteenth century surveyed the course of English opera, few found sufficient cause for celebration. Yet the breadth of opinion is noteworthy. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were marked by repeated attempts to establish English opera, yet while their persistence may have been admirable, the failure of these schemes is undeniable. Francis Hueffer located the failure of the English operatic genre in “two events and a name.” The first event Hueffer cited was the death in 1695 of Henry Purcell, whose work demonstrated that he would have established a “pre-eminently dramatic” national school of music. The failure of Handel’s opera *Xerxes* in 1738 constituted the second event. Hueffer saw Handel as the potential English Gluck in his ability to absorb the musical influences of his adopted country. On the basis of the dramatic strength of Handel’s English oratorios Hueffer argued that Handel, had he continued in operatic composition, might have fostered an English opera. The third problem—the name—is rooted in what was then designated as “English Opera.” Hueffer wrote: “English opera has, in the course of time, become identified with a kind of mongrel type of entertainment, consisting of detached pieces of music, interspersed with spoken dialogue, which, in its turn, seems introduced only to explain the reason for another song. To call this class of work English *par excellence* is as absurd as it is unhistoric.” In Hueffer’s view the presence of spoken dialogue, while characteristic also of the dramatic music of other nations, constituted an “inferior type,” and should never be confused with national opera proper.

A considerably different view was presented by Frank Sawyer, who singled out English opera of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as particularly worthy of national

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6Ibid., 253.

7See Ibid., 253-55.
pride. "Since the glee period no music worthy of special note has been written except for English operas . . . from the 'Beggar's Opera' to the 'Sapphire Necklace' of Sullivan--a list of English operas might be given to fill pages. At present their star is in the shade; but mark my prophecy--the days of Italian opera are happily numbered."®

A third exposition, distinctive in its balanced perspective, is the chapter devoted to English opera in R. A. Streatfeild's The Opera.® Streatfeild, after acknowledging the impact of Purcell's death and Handel's Italian opera upon English music, reviewed a series of attempts to establish English opera before a London public intensely loyal to Italian opera. The first such attempt cited was The Beggar's Opera of 1728 which marked a two-fold triumph. Not only was its production a significant success, but it also established the English ballad opera as a distinctly English genre that would enjoy continued popularity into the early nineteenth century.

After The Beggar's Opera the next effort on behalf of English opera was that of Thomas Augustine Arne, who attempted "to adapt the mannerisms of the Italian stage to English opera." Clearly, the most crucial aspect of these mannerisms, and that which distinguished this opera from the earlier ballad opera, was the elimination of spoken dialogue. Arne's Artaxerxes of 1762, based upon a translation of Metastasio's libretto, consists entirely of airs and recitatives. Streatfeild pointed out that while Arne's work did

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®Frank Sawyer, "The Rise and Progress of our National Music," lecture reported by Brighton Gazette and quoted in MS, n.s., 19 (27 November 1880): 343. It is interesting that Sawyer singled out The Sapphire Necklace, a work composed in 1863-64, left unfinished and unproduced, and neglected H. M. S. Pinafore and The Pirates of Penzance from 1878 and 1879, respectively. Was he suggesting that the Savoy operas are the star in the shade?

®This book, originally published in 1896, continued to be updated and revised in a number of later editions, specifically in 1907, 1924, and 1931.

meet with some success (albeit short-lived) the future operas of Storace, Dibdin, Shield and Hook were of the ballad opera type in their employment of tunes in a popular style and spoken dialogue. Yet instead of relying upon traditional melodies and popular tunes—as in the case of The Beggar's Opera—the music of these operas was entirely original. The composer who elevated the ballad opera above being merely a collection of attractive tunes, investing the ballad opera with concerted pieces and choruses was Sir Henry Bishop (1786-1855). Streatfeild saw great promise in the skill of Bishop and remarked: “Had Bishop possessed the necessary energy and enterprise, he might have founded a school of English opera which would have compared favourably even with its continental contemporaries.”

John Barnett's The Mountain Sylph of 1834 stands as the first true English opera to be composed after Arne's Artaxerxes. In addition to The Mountain Sylph, lone representatives from the pens of three other mid-Victorian composers were known to London audiences at the time of Streatfeild's writing. They were Balfe's The Bohemian Girl, Wallace's Maritana, and Benedict's The Lily of Killarney. Of the three named works Streatfeild suggested that only the latter was worthy of its continued popularity.

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11 Another tendency in London musical theater beginning during the latter eighteenth century was the pasticcio opera—a product of the collaboration of a number of composers in the composition of a particular work. The first such work seems to have been Love in a Village of 1762, which inaugurated a period of about a half-century during which the pasticcio was a highly popular musical/theatrical entertainment.

12 Ibid., 325.

13 First performed at London's Drury Lane Theatre, 27 November 1843. This opera was later produced in Italian at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1858 under the title La Zingara.

14 First performed at London's Drury Lane Theatre, 15 November 1845.

15 First performed at London's Covent Garden, 8 February 1862.
The year of Barnett's *Mountain Sylph* also marked the arrival of two other composers of stature. Edward J. Loder's *Nourjahad* premiered on 21 July 1834 at the rebuilt English Opera House, followed later that year by George A. Macfarren's *Genevieve, The Maid of Switzerland*. Of all the above-listed composers the credit for anticipating the need and direction of English national opera should go to Macfarren, as has recently been argued. Important works include *The Devil's Opera, Don Quixote, Charles II*, and *Robin Hood*. Of the above-named, only *Robin Hood* was still performed occasionally during the latter-nineteenth century.

The plight and future of English opera as the nineteenth century progressed rested not only in the hands of a few composers but was also dictated by other circumstances. The theater situation, entrepreneurial concerns, language preference, and the challenge of popular entertainments all affected the path of English national opera.

The principal musical theaters in London during the nineteenth century were Drury Lane, Covent Garden, Her Majesty's Theatre, and St. James's Theatre. Of these

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16 Formerly the Lyceum Theatre.

17 See Nicholas Temperley, "Musical Nationalism in English Romantic Opera," in *The Lost Chord*, ed. Nicholas Temperley (Indiana University Press, 1989), 143-57. Despite the corrective measures of the above article, it is evident to me that Macfarren's activities and contributions on behalf of English national music remain a largely neglected area. While the renaissance in general dates from 1880 the case could be made that Macfarren anticipated every breakthrough that was achieved during the period covered in this study. Perhaps the environment had not been sufficiently nurtured.

18 Produced 13 August 1838 (English Opera House), 3 February 1846 (Drury Lane), 27 October 1849 (Princess's Theatre), 11 October 1860 (Her Majesty's Theatre).

19 Actually the fourth theater to be built on the site. It opened on 10 October 1812.

20 The theater at Covent Garden, which opened on 7 December 1732 was known officially as the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden from 1847 until 1892. In the latter year it was renamed the Royal Opera.

21 Prior to Victoria's succession in 1837, it was the King's Theatre, Haymarket. It burned down on 6 December 1867, at which time "Her Majesty's Opera" transferred to Drury Lane where it remained until 1877.
theaters, only the theater at Drury Lane presented a possible prospect for the performance of an English opera in the English language.

The rise and fall of entrepreneurial companies was another key element in the cause of English opera. Many of the works of Balfe and Macfarren were written for the Pyne and Harrison Company, which began in 1856. The seven-year lifespan of this troupe was marked “by irregular seasons of English opera at different theatres with varying success.” Following the collapse of the Pyne and Harrison Company, the next such enterprise appeared in 1869 with the Gye and Mapleson Company. While this partnership achieved a significant milestone in staging the first Wagnerian opera to be produced in England, it dissolved in 1871, having done little (if anything) on behalf of English opera. The rise of the Carl Rosa company rekindled optimism toward English opera. Rosa staged his first London season in autumn of 1875 at the Princess’s Theatre. His work on behalf of English opera was well-recognized by contemporaries, and is a topic to which we will later return.

The London public’s craze for Italian opera and the accompanying difficulties it raised for the prospects of English opera have been frequently discussed and are well known. But, in truth, the major obstacle with which English opera had to contend was the Italian language more than Italian opera. Many writers stood mystified as they tried to make sense of London public’s infatuation with the Italian language as the desired tongue for any opera—be it originally Italian, French or German. As E. F. Jacques commented:

22The St. James’s Theatre opened by John Braham in 1836. The Lyceum had opened in 1809 as an English Opera house, as also had Drury Lane, but frequently these theaters gave way to productions of Italian operas in English.


24The Flying Dutchman at Drury Lane in 1870.
"The translation of French and German works into Italian for performance in England is decidedly one of those things the logic of which 'no fellah can understand.' The final, and to many writers the most formidable, hurdle for English national opera was the popular competition. More than one writer complained of the growing acceptance of "wretched vulgarities of the music hall."

In the rhetoric on behalf of an English national opera each of the above challenges would be met head-on. Pro-national writers knew that the issues of theater, entrepreneurship, Italian language, and popular rivals would have to be addressed before the English composer of national operas could even stand a chance of a premiere, not to mention a successful run. The course of English national opera between 1880 and 1920 was a series of ups and downs, openings and closings, revivals and failures.

The Promise of the 1880s

The decade of the 1880s was characterized by great promise, particularly in reference to the establishment of a national opera. The optimism generated by Parry's *Prometheus Unbound* in 1880 extended to all English music, and no less to opera. This oratorio, slightly predated by and together with the recent triumphs of Gilbert and Sullivan, signaled not only tremendous hope for English music in general but also English opera in particular. Yet, the controversy that was the constant companion in all national-music

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25E. F. Jacques, "Our Operatic Muddle," *MMR* 16 (1 April 1886): 73. Another writer would lament that in London there were "no opportunities for hearing the master works of the various schools of operatic art excepting in their Italian versions." "Italian and English Opera," *MMR* 16 (1 August 1886): 174.

26In the organization of this chapter it seemed most sensible to opt for a chronological rather than topical arrangement. Although the issues did not limit themselves to a single decade--but resurfaced time and time again--there was an intensification that marked the discussion during a particular time. Consequently, the presentation of these issues will correspond to the period in which they most dominated the discussion.
discussions in fact antedated that decade. Francis Hueffer, early in his tenure as *Times* critic, was unimpressed by the recent successes of Sullivan toward the founding of a national opera. Hueffer queried:

> And what about England? Where are her national singers and composers, and where the enthusiastic audiences who watch over the development of native talent with care and jealous zeal? The question is, or at least was till quite lately, difficult to reply to, unless we accept "The Pinafore" as the ultimate acme of English art, and the Opera Comique in the Strand as its temple.\(^{27}\)

Yet others, while not claiming quite the exaggerated place for the Sullivan operas as Hueffer had sarcastically remarked, nevertheless saw in them "most encouraging signs as regarding the possible future of English opera, especially when coupled with the fact of their obvious success."\(^{28}\) Whatever their particular inclination, English opera composers found themselves in a "no-win" artistic situation. They could write in a late nineteenth-century manner, i.e. continental style, and thereby risk the accusation that they were doing nothing to promote native English opera. The alternative was to build upon the lost operatic heritage of Purcell and Arne, and be considered hopelessly antiquarian.

E. H. Turpin, for one, was rather reserved in his statements regarding the possibilities for the establishment of a legitimate English national opera on two counts. First, although English opera could boast a good beginning and resurgence with Purcell and Arne, it had little of the continuity that is required in the formation of a true national idiom. In his words, "the links of the chain were never firmly welded together, and the chain was broken and lost."\(^{29}\) Had English music been marked by a steady advance, Turpin believed, a national school most assuredly would have been produced. This leads

\(^{27}\)Hueffer, "Chances of English Opera," 250-51.


\(^{29}\)Ibid.
Turpin wondered whether the English artistic mind was sufficiently dramatic to take its place beside the Italian and German operatic traditions. He wrote: "The English art-temperament is reflective rather than demonstrative; and it may fairly be doubted whether, taking all things into account, aspirations after a native lyrical drama are not perhaps more wisely discouraged than nursed." In spite of his misgivings amidst an enthusiastic national impulse, Turpin nevertheless supported the fostering of English opera and the performance of operas in English.

Frank Austin the following year would argue that the problem with English opera was not in the English temperament, but rather in the English tendency to ignore music's ability to convey "human passions and human thought." According to Austin, the country that produced Shakespeare would not neglect forever the opportunities for the advancement of the dramatic impulse that music affords. In his proposal as to the manner of arousing this impulse, Austin suggested a program that would have astounded the ardent nationalist. Rejecting the idea that a permanent national school of opera could be founded upon the model of English comic opera, Austin looked toward the continental schools. He dismissed the Italian model of "murders done to pretty tunes." While he admitted the value of the French opera, it was upon the strength of Gluck's and Wagner's innovations that prompted Austin to state: "I think we must turn to the Germans for our model, in forming..."
the Lyric Drama of the future. . . . Declamatory Music, then, must form the chief material of our Opera."

An important article that appeared early in the discussion was a *Monthly Musical Record* leader from September 1883, written during W. A. Barrett's editorship. The writer articulated very well the supra-musical issues that confronted the cause of national opera. The leader was occasioned by a recent announcement appearing in the *Times* reporting that the unfinished building on the Thames embankment, begun in 1875, was at last to be completed. The £70,000 needed was in hand and there was virtually nothing to interfere with the completion of the project and institution of that for which it was built, namely the establishment of a National Opera. Not only would English operas be performed there, but Italian, German and French operas as well. The project was expected to be completed in time for the opening of the 1884 season.

The writer, while hopeful, was also cautious in his enthusiasm toward the success of the enterprise. Attempts to establish a national opera, he maintained, had arisen throughout the century with no success. As evidence he cited John Braham's establishment of the St. James's Theatre (1836), Michael Balfe's collaborative venture at the Lyceum in 1841 with the talents of Barnett, Benedict, and Macfarren, and the rise of the National English Opera, Covent Garden in the early 1860s. All bore witness to the difficulties and failures of an English national opera enterprise.

Continuing, the writer stated that it did not speak well of a nation as a music-loving people when it could not support a National Opera. The opera theaters in many continental towns with much smaller populations were thriving institutions, because they received the support of the state. In England, however, everything was left to private speculation and

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"the State only interferes spasmodically in obedience to outside pressure arising from
popular events." While the leader writer resisted the temptation to explore that issue
fully, we shall see that it would eventually become central to the discussion.

A last concern developed by the writer related to the production of operas at the
proposed house. He first made an appeal for an extension of the period of one month that
had been provisionally allotted to English opera during the season. Secondly, he called for
German, Italian, and French operas to be performed in the original language, rather than in
Italian (or even English) translation. Finally, he desired that English operas be produced
with the same care and consideration given to foreign operas, and at affordable prices.

There are numbers of fine English operas with whose merits the present generation is
totally unacquainted. These should be produced not in the customary slip-shod fashion
of placing homemade works upon the stage, but with all the advantages of a good cast,
well painted scenery, historically accurate costumes, and effective appointments, such
as are considered indispensable when a piece by a foreign writer is offered for public
approval. Above all, the prices for admission must be low. The intrinsic value of the
music of many English works now is only discoverable by the mind of the expert who
can read a score with the interest and pleasure that is undiluted with prejudice. The
production of such works would be the best and worthiest task the director of a
National Opera could undertake. A proceeding like this would serve greatly to
encourage young composers to continue the course laid down by their predecessors,
and would go far toward securing firm prompt, and patriotic support of the National
Opera both as a commercial speculation and as a means for the proper employment of
artistically trained musicians.36

Joseph Verey, however, warned against a too aggressive and exclusive stance in
regard to native opera, fearing that it would result in provincialism. Endorsing the obvious
need for a permanent home for English opera, Verey pled for an open repertoire that would
further the interests of native art and, at the same time, foster the production of meritorious
works by German, French, and Italian composers.37 Yet Verey's interest was not in

35Ibid., 198.

36Ibid. As a postscript to the above we might add that the Thames Embankment enterprise failed.
In 1886 the "remains" of the uncompleted Opera House were moved to make way for a new Central Police

“national” opera, but rather in English opera, i.e. the performance of operas in the English language. According to Verey, it was the two-step process of finding a permanent home and the presentation of operas in English that would reclaim the place of opera in the hearts of the English people.

Whenever English opera, fairly represented, has been given audiences could be found to support it. The love of music is stronger in this country than it ever was before; and there is a noble opportunity just now to lead the public to a higher standard of musical art, and to check the rage for opéra bouffe and music-hall vulgarity.39

A few years after the above-quoted article, Verey was considerably more receptive to the national-music idea. In the methods and accomplishments of Weber and Wagner, Verey located the potential for the establishment of a national opera. A true national opera must be genuinely rooted in collective experience of a people. In fact, it was this breakthrough that constituted the great accomplishment of German romantic opera. “Opera of the Romantic School was not so much a new creation as it was the embodiment of ideas which had taken deep root in the mind of the people.”40 Had nationally-minded composers of other countries followed the German model their attempts in national opera would have been considerably more convincing.

The problem with national opera in England, Verey held, was that English composers were too prone to imitate the surface features of Wagner's music, rather than the national spirit that was its undergirding.

Our composers too readily become the slaves of the idols they worship for the time. Of late they have been influenced by Wagner, and a few years ago they only copied Bellini and Donizetti, while many were content with the mere ballad opera. We shall never get

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38 Earlier in the article Verey stated: “The question of nationality is absurd in opera, because music has universal dominion.” After citing the examples of Meyerbeer, Cherubini, Mozart, Rubinstein, among others, Verey writes: “These few examples are given to show how little national feeling has to do with operatic composition as a rule.”

39 Ibid., 149.

a higher school of opera until something more dramatic, individual, and national is produced.\textsuperscript{41}

A few months later Verey would again write on the subject of national opera, in which he presented and addressed a number of current issues. Verey repeated his previous denunciation of a narrow-minded insularity that argued for an exclusively English repertory. The English National Opera, according to Verey, ought to present opportunities for the cultivation of native opera, but not to the exclusion of all others. Yet, from this point Verey moved to consider the compositional obstacles encountered by national opera. One of the greatest problems Verey cited was one that we have already encountered—the lack of historical continuity in English opera, which meant that “we have literally to begin afresh every time we attempt to revive English opera.”\textsuperscript{42} A second criticism Verey countered was that which held that England had no suitable themes for an operatic subject. Verey remarked:

If Tennyson, in his “Idylls of the King,” has been able to enshrine the adventures of the “Knights of the Round Table” in exquisite poetry, surely an ingenious librettist might construct an effective opera on such a subject and others of a similar kind, while the early history of England affords an almost unlimited choice of theme for operatic illustration. . . . As for a dearth of subjects, how is it that Mendelssohn, Gounod, Rossini, Nicolai, Ambroise Thomas, and a host of others, have found inspiration in English literature, and in the romantic lore of the past?\textsuperscript{43}

A final criticism for the prospects of national opera concerned the English language. Many held that the English language was unfavorable for opera, and that the only language ideally suited to opera was Italian. Verey conceded that Italian had provided a lingua franca for singers of many nationalities, but it was “preposterous to say that the language of Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, and others, cannot be readily adapted to the operatic stage.”\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}


\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Ibid.}, 173.

\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Ibid.}
Joseph Verey, like many others, saw the future for English opera to ride essentially upon this issue. Throughout the time period of this study many a nationalist insisted upon the distinction between English opera and opera in English. Yet most held that the battle for the latter had to be fought and won before there could be much hope in establishing English national opera. Thus, the significance of Carl Rosa to the national movement.

Carl Rosa virtually personified the hopes for English opera in the 1880s. Early in the decade his success as an entrepreneur had prompted the outburst: "The history of opera in English finds its brightest period in the venture of Mr. Carl Rosa." His successes generated enthusiasm for the establishment of a permanent home for opera in English, demonstrated that English-born and English-trained singers were competent to perform the international repertory, and showed that the cause of English opera need not necessitate financial disaster.

As was noted earlier, in 1875 the Carl Rosa Opera Company began presenting opera in English in London. After his initial season at Princess's Theatre, Rosa staged productions at the Adelphi, Lyceum, and Her Majesty's Theatres, prior to his fruitful association with Augustus Harris at the Drury Lane theater from 1883 to 1887. During his career London heard, among other operas, *Flying Dutchman, Rienzi, Lohengrin, Carmen, Aida,* and *Mignon* produced in English for the first time. His role was an important one not only in the staging of foreign operas, but also in his work on behalf of English

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48In actuality the company had been founded two years earlier in Manchester.
composers, which included the revival of English operas written earlier in the century and the performance of new works by native composers.

All of the important English operas of the decade were premiered by the Rosa Company, and included works by Mackenzie, Goring Thomas, Cowen, Stanford, and Corder. That only one of these operas, namely Nordisa, contained spoken dialogue was itself a watershed in the history of English opera.

The first such English work produced by Rosa at Drury Lane was Goring Thomas's Esmeralda, based upon Hugo's "Notre Dame de Paris." Performed also that same year in Liverpool, this opera prompted the following reaction from the critic of the Liverpool Mercury.

Within the brief confines of a single year, Esmeralda has obtained among operas a place as high as, if not higher, than any similar work in the voluminous order to which it belongs. There is something peculiarly pleasing in the fact that while it enjoys the faithful admiration of the countrymen of its composer, it is not less prominent in the esteem of the people of another nation. . . . The merits of the opera have raised it to a position loftier than probably its author ever thought of claiming for it. . . . The performance of Esmeralda at the Royal Court Theatre awoke a crowded audience to a keener sense of the beauties of a fine composition which we hope may be looked upon as the forerunner of others of equal power.

Important revivals include Balfe's The Siege of Rochelle, The Bohemian Girl, Wallace's Maritana, and Benedict's The Lily of Killarney. We might add that those chosen provoked some criticism by some who considered them to be sub-standard works. As one writer commented: "That The Bohemian Girl and Maritana should alone be placed so conspicuously before the public as to appear to be our best native operas, is a striking injustice to other and better—but seldom heard—native operas, and to the dramatic composers of this country as a body." In addition, the above writer suggested that works by Barnett and Macfarren be heard, and stated: "It may surprise many to learn that we possess a comparatively unknown mine of wealth in English opera. That it should lie idle and unrewarded, alike musically and pecuniarily, would seem to be, from an artistic point of view, a national misfortune, if not a national disgrace." Charles K. Salaman, "English Opera," 55.

Produced 26 March 1883.

While the critic did note the influence of Wagner (as others would discern a French influence in the composer's work) there was no denying that the work had kindled an important spark in English opera.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie burst upon the scene as an opera composer with *Colomba*, a work produced during the same season.\(^5^2\) The quality and significance of this composition was recognized by virtually every critic. It was called an "epoch-making" opera and was considered, at least by a few, to be more closely tied to the national awakening than was *Esmeralda*. As the *Figaro* reported:

"Colomba" is, we believe and hope, the turning-point in the history of opera composing in this country. . . . We may, we trust, not expect again to hear bald imitations of the flimsy modern French or old Italian schools, nor a set of drawing-room ballads strung together in such a way as to be easily detached for sale in the music shops. The British public has set its heel upon such meretricious rubbish, and by hailing Mr. Mackenzie as a "Coming Man" has paved the way to a nobler, purer, and more exalted school of British composition in the operatic, which has been held, under proper conditions, to be the highest phase of the musical art.\(^5^3\)

Yet others saw nothing particularly national in either *Colomba* or *Esmeralda*. A writer in the *Lute*, after citing the comic operas of Sullivan and neglected works of Loder, Barnett, and Macfarren as comprising truly English opera, wrote: "It cannot be said that either Mr. A. C. Mackenzie or Mr. Arthur Goring Thomas have done much to resuscitate the prestige of the English school, Mr. Mackenzie beholding music through the medium of distinct German influence, and Mr. Thomas's style being as decidedly Gallic as his brother artist's is Teutonic."\(^5^4\) Yet to this and other writers, Rosa's production of these works marked a turning point in the history of English opera.

\(^{5^2}\)Produced 9 April 1883.

\(^{5^3}\)"Mr. A. C. Mackenzie," from *Figaro*, reprinted in *MO* 9 (1 October 1883): 15.

During the following year the Rosa Company staged the first English production of an opera by Charles Stanford. The Canterbury Pilgrims, first performed 23 April at the Drury Lane, scored another success for English opera. In this work Stanford came closer to realizing a truly national opera, when compared with those works of Mackenzie and Goring Thomas. Stanford incorporated traditional tunes, and even a madrigal “Love he is a wanton boy” sung to the tune of “Sumer is acumin in,” which opens and closes the opera. The subject matter, story line and location were thoroughly English. Although the opera contained attractive comic ingredients, it nevertheless constituted a true opera since it was sung throughout. One reviewer observed:

Full of clever writing for solos, chorus, and orchestra, with a story whose interest never flags from beginning to end, “The Canterbury Pilgrims” must be pronounced one of the happiest specimens that could be devised of that genuine comic opera which every lover of music must hope will, before long, displace vulgarly noisy opera bouffe from the stage, where it has too long been allowed to keep a place.

Goring Thomas's Nadeshda made its initial appearance one year later, and received considerable attention in the press. As one writer enthusiastically remarked: “Nadeshda furnishes another pillar, and a mighty one, for the temple of our Operatic Renaissance. It is a worthy successor to the work with which, two short years ago, Mr. Carl Rosa laid the foundation-stone of that promising edifice.” Although more than one reviewer noted a

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55 Two operas of Stanford had been produced in Germany. The Veiled Prophet received its premiere in Hanover on 6 February 1881, and was not performed in London until 26 July 1893 when it was given in Italian at Covent Garden. Savonarola was first performed in Hamburg on 18 April 1884, thus predating The Canterbury Pilgrims by five days.

56 White's Register lists the first performance as occurring on 23 April, while the MagMus review of June 1884 gives a date of 28 April.


58 Produced at Drury Lane, 16 April 1885.

59 H. K. [Herman Klein], "Nadeshda," The Sunday Times, reprinted in MusW 63 (2 May 1885): 274.
considerable French influence in *Nadeshda*—as had also been the case with *Esmeralda*—to many it signaled something more substantial. In essence, it confirmed that the English operas of Goring Thomas, Mackenzie, and Stanford heard during the previous years were not isolated accidents, but were evidence of a growing English operatic school that eventually could not fail to produce truly national opera.⁶⁰

This tide of enthusiasm continued into the following year with Rosa's production of Mackenzie's second opera, *The Troubadour*.⁶¹

It is not saying too much to state that the future of English opera lies to a very large extent in Mr. Mackenzie's hand, for he alone has had the courage to attempt to restore that form of entertainment to the position it once enjoyed, while keeping pace with the times and giving us the later development of dramatic lyrical work in place of the conventional or stereotyped form of the art.⁶²

Yet the work was not without its controversy. The above writer's compliment of "keeping pace with the times and giving us the later development of dramatic lyrical work" had a bit too much of a Wagnerian ring to it, as did Mackenzie's music, to satisfy many of the critics. Virtually all recognized the influence of Wagner in this work,⁶³ yet were divided in their responses to it. Clearly the most negative view toward this tendency—applauded by the above critic—was the view expressed in the *Daily Telegraph*.

We have often pointed out the "wasteful and ridiculous excess" which keeps a full orchestra labouring on through insignificant passages of dialogue, and we have insisted

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⁶⁰One writer commented: "The star of English opera, and of English music generally, is rising, slowly but surely. . . . Sullivan, Villiers Stanford, Mackenzie, Goring Thomas, and others are, we think, the precursors of an English school of operatic composers. Solitary instances have not been wanting before, but here are four composers living at the same time, all of whom have written operas which have been successful." "English Opera," *Orch.*, n.s., 12 (2 May 1885): 55.

⁶¹Produced at Drury Lane, 8 June 1886.


⁶³The critic of the *Standard* wrote: "Mr. Mackenzie is a known adherent to the new school. The set phrases and cut and dried numbers of conventional operas have no friend in him. In composing *The Troubadour*, there is no doubt as to whose influence has been predominant with Mr. Mackenzie. ", quoted in *MusW* 64 (12 June 1886): 378.
on the value of such passages when treated so as to give the musical attention a moment's grateful surcease. But Wagnerian composers cling to their symphonic orchestra as a boy who cannot swim keeps fast hold of supporting bladders. There is a superstition about this from which Mr. Mackenzie, in The Troubadour, takes a short step towards emancipating himself. We hope that other and longer steps will follow as part of the general modification of the composer's method in favour of those more determinate forms which he has abundantly shown himself able to associate with all needful freedom of expression. In such a case, what might not Mr. Mackenzie do for our lyric stage? The genius of music is with him, and with him all the power if confers; while, by his achievements in other lines, he has won the public ear. Everything depends upon whether he will also win the public heart, through making some concessions to its preferences.64

As suggested by the above writer, the through-composed concept of Wagnerian music drama was considered to be in direct opposition to the national tendency in English opera, which was best characterized by the quality of tunefulness and closed forms.

Frederick Corder's Nordisa was the last in the succession of English operas produced by Carl Rosa at the Drury Lane.65 While Corder had a strong Wagnerian reputation,66 Nordisa constituted a major departure from those proclivities. Corder himself considered his opera to be a “singspiel,” inasmuch as it consisted of isolated musical numbers separated by spoken dialogue and melodrama. This feature prompted more than one critic to see the ghost of Michael Balfe. Most reviewers considered it to be an uneven work marked by moments of musical strength, yet spoiled by longer periods in which there is “little to interest the musician.” Yet even amidst the criticism there existed the optimistic hope for English opera. “It is the work of a man of genius, and we heartily congratulate Mr. Carl Rosa on the addition of such a recruit to the group of young English composers to whom we look for a national school of opera.”67

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65Prior to its London premiere, Nordisa was presented in the provinces by the Rosa company. The Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool was the site of its premiere on 26 January 1887.

66Corder translated many Wagnerian librettos into English.

The season of 1887 was a financially unsuccessful one, however, which prompted Rosa to cease London productions and direct his efforts toward Liverpool as lessee of the Court Theatre, where his company worked with great success.\textsuperscript{68} The cessation of English operatic productions by Rosa at Drury Lane prompted the question of state support for national opera.\textsuperscript{69} This issue provoked considerable debate that would continue throughout the time period that marks this study. Rosa himself was a key player early in the discussion through an article that he contributed in April 1887 to the newly-founded Murray's Magazine.

While Rosa articulated many points regarding English opera, particular attention was given to the subsidy question. Rosa held little optimism that Parliament would subsidize a national theater, owing to the persistent attitudes of Puritanism still very much present in England. "But is subvention from the State essential to put opera on a firm and financially sound basis? I think not."\textsuperscript{70} After surveying the manner in which subsidized opera in France, Italy and Germany affected managerial and repertorial concerns, Rosa argued for a national opera based upon private enterprise rather than state support. Rosa did consider the German model to be preferable to the others, yet "everywhere a certain baneful control from the powers above is felt, but still not enough to jeopardize the artistic result." Nevertheless, he held that Germany "as far as opera in concerned, is not progressing either in creative or executive power."\textsuperscript{71}


\textsuperscript{69}While the circumstances of 1887 brought the subsidy issue into full light, it had been anticipated for some time. Writing in 1886 a writer remarked: "England, unlike other European countries, has no national opera. Mr. Carl Rosa only visits London for four weeks in the year, and his operas in English are among the most popular events of the season. But his efforts are those of a private individual. To be successful, national opera should be given in the national tongue, and should be supported as a national undertaking." "Italian and English Opera," MMR 16 (1 August 1886): 174.


\textsuperscript{71}Ibid., 268.
In the commentary that accompanied a report of Rosa's article, a *Musical Times* writer, despite acknowledging Rosa's contribution to the cause of English opera, found his concerns to be thoroughly unconvincing. He wrote: "Mr. Rosa disposes of the question of State municipal subvention without approaching the subject in a satisfactory way. He is a manager, and, therefore, looks at the matter from the point of view occupied by his position. From the public side another aspect appears."  

Simply put, the *Musical Times* writer argued that a state subsidy would better serve the interests of the public and the composer, because the success of the financial venture would not be the over-riding criterion in production decisions. Furthermore, the public would benefit in an educational, in addition to a financial way. One example relates to the topic of admission prices.

A German can hear five or six performances from a comfortable seat, for the same amount which an Englishman is expected to pay for one. A lover of music of either nation will not grudge having spent two shillings for a bad performance, and will not be much hindered by the cost, if he desires to patronise the theatre in the hope of hearing something better next time. If he has to pay half-a-guinea for a single visit, he hesitates before making a second venture.  

The English opera composer also would benefit from a subsidized opera house, as a national theater would make premieres and continued runs possible where now only financial concerns matter. Indeed, any hope for a school of English opera composers depended upon performance opportunities. In fact, the writer argued, England would not be facing her current musical crisis had there been the type of state support that the continental countries enjoyed.

The establishment of English opera as an institution must be made, like other British institutions, of small beginnings, perseveringly maintained. If all the previous efforts to establish English opera had been continuous, each one an improvement upon

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the other, there would be a different tale to tell this day. If a subvention had been granted in England, we might have had a National Opera long ago.\textsuperscript{74}

The following year saw the continuation of the question of state support, specifically in the encouragement of the foundation of an educational institution that would have as its primary aim the development of the operatic art in England. A private conference, chaired by the Lord Mayor, met at the Mansion House in July 1888 to discuss the issue.\textsuperscript{75} London, it was said, stood alone among the capitals and other cities of Europe in that it had no training school for national opera. While there existed three large schools of music,\textsuperscript{76} it would be the purpose of the new school to educate “for the exposition of the operatic art in the English language.”\textsuperscript{77} The plan would benefit not only aspiring performers but also English operatic composers “who now do not devote their time to such compositions owing to the uncertainty that their works will ever be performed before a British audience.”\textsuperscript{78}

An interesting commentary upon the above-described project was provided by Frederick J. Crowest in an article appearing in the \textit{National Review} during the following October. Crowest was notorious for representing the extreme right wing in the nationalist debate. Having begun by stating his amazement that England had started a musical idea without the aid of outside influence Crowest continued:

Considered merely as a spasmodic art throe, this National Opera idea, so well initiated at the Mansion House meeting recently, must be encouraging to a large section

\textsuperscript{74}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{75}Among those present were composers Mackenzie, Parry, Stanford, Goring Thomas; administrators George Grove, H. Weist Hill, Frederick Leighton; as well as Carl Rosa, Hans Richter, C. A. Barry, and W. H. Cummings.

\textsuperscript{76}Royal Academy, Royal College, and Guildhall School


\textsuperscript{78}Ibid.
of people of this country who had grown to believe that we took all our musical ideas, and methods from continental neighbours.\textsuperscript{79}

Crowest's remedy for the cause of English opera turned significantly more radical as he urged a complete boycott of all foreign opera. "The ideal English Opera of the future can only be evolved out of surroundings from which every shred of foreign influence has been eliminated."\textsuperscript{80}

This view, as expressed by Crowest, provoked a response from Charles L. Graves. Writing in the \textit{Musical Times}, Graves initially commended Crowest's support for the national opera scheme but summarily dismissed his boycotting theory as being both undesirable and impossible.

Graves's greater concern was the perplexing attitude of Crowest toward the Mansion House Committee. Although, as we have seen, the sole purpose of the Mansion House group was the promotion of native opera, Crowest was not sure he could support it. "Before seeking to build up a structure of national lyric art, it would be wise to ascertain the country's feeling about it, lest there be produced a something that may prove intolerable."\textsuperscript{81}

Graves questioned the logic of Crowest's argument that stated, on the one hand, that England must have a native opera, yet on the other, confessed that he [Crowest] was not at all sure that the English character was one that would be well-presented in a operatic production designed to reflect that character, which he described as being cold-blooded, phlegmatic, matter-of-fact, undramatic, unromantic.

The desire for a national opera and its cultivation, pitted against serious questioning as to whether the operatic medium could be a credible and appropriate mode for national expression was a scenario that would be replayed at regular intervals. Issues involving

\textsuperscript{79}Quoted in "Mr. Crowest on English Opera," \textit{MT} 29 (1 November 1888): 651.

\textsuperscript{80}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{81}\textit{Ibid.}
suitable librettos, popular appeal, and whether or not the English people even liked opera arose during the late 1880s but were particularly prominent during the decades that followed.

The 1880s, a decade that began and progressed with great promise, ended with disappointment, debate, and death. The cultivation and production of recently-composed native operas ceased after the failure of Corder’s *Nordisa* in the spring of 1887. The debate over the state subsidy question, while gaining momentum as the decade progressed, would not reach its full height until the turn of the new century. Finally, Carl Rosa died in Paris on 31 April 1889, and to many, the promise of English opera died with him. Yet, the desire for an English national opera persisted into the following decade—a decade marked not by hope invested solely in the entrepreneurial skill of one man—but a decade in which the national opera question was pursued by careful attention to the key problems and factors respecting its establishment.

**The Problems of the 1890s**

The decade of the 1890s opened with the publication of Sir John Stainer’s inaugural lecture at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, on the topic of “The Present State of Music in England.” Stainer, after rehearsing the familiar story of the historical difficulties that had confronted English musical growth, turned to the subject of opera. The period between the

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82 In an account of Rosa's death one writer reported: "A heavy misfortune has befallen English opera. . . the public at large will have reason to regret the loss of a man who did his utmost to please them, and to uphold the credit and dignity of the national school of operatic music. . . . The public had, to a great extent, lost faith in it. They were discouraged by the generally speaking feeble and half hearted attempts made to revive a belief in native opera, or at least opera in the English language. Carl Rosa came to the rescue at a critical time, and confidence was speedily restored, for they saw in him a man resolved to do the thing well." "Death of Carl Rosa," *MO* 12 (1 June 1889): 430.

83 The lecture, in fact, had been delivered 13 November 1889.
demise of Italian opera in England and the not-yet-established German opera provided the English composer with a present opportunity of gaining a foothold.

Stainer reviewed the recent inroads made by Mackenzie, Stanford, and Goring Thomas on behalf of true English opera, the success of the comic operetta of Gilbert and Sullivan, and the contribution of Carl Rosa on behalf of opera in English. "It is perfectly certain that no real progress will be made towards a national school of opera until we English are accustomed to listen to our own language with the same respect we give to the Italian or German." In particular, Stainer singled out Sullivan as one whose genius, it was hoped, "will some day take a higher flight." Yet, according to Stainer, there were two problems that prevented Sullivan and other composers from pursuing a more ambitious national opera. In citing these concerns Stainer anticipated the key issues that would provoke considerable discussion during the 1890s.

The first problem centered upon the want of a national opera house. In affirming the need for a national opera house that would be funded either by the central government or by local municipalities, Stainer stated:

Surely, the time is ripe for the serious consideration of this question. Annual grants are made to the National Gallery, the British Museum, and other educational institutions; why is there no grant for a National Opera? Is no public effort to be made to educate the nation in music, the art which is the common heritage of the lowers as well as the highest born? Compared to the sums voted for other educational purposes the amount asked for the sustenance of an Opera would be ridiculously small, and it would become less and less as musical taste and knowledge became more widespread. By a National Opera I do not of course mean one exclusively for the production of English works, but, one in which the finest operas, German, Italian, and French, could be heard, and where the fear of possible pecuniary loss would not exclude an English Opera of undoubted merit.

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85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.
Therein lay the principal set of arguments that would support, time and again, the appeal for a state-subsidized national opera house—a comparison with other institutions receiving government money, an appeal to the educational focus of the venture, the inclusive (rather than parochial) character of the enterprise, and the removal of financial concern as a production determinant.

The second problem, according to Stainer, was the lack of good librettos. Although much of the music produced by English operatic composers was greatly admired, the same could not be said for the librettos they chose. Of the operas proceeding from the 1880s Mackenzie's *The Troubadour* was especially cited as having an unsuitable libretto. As one writer stated: "Music sterling and strong, in many places of rare beauty and genuine dramatic utterance such as we have not known since Wagner ceased to write—yet wedded to a libretto so repulsive and so dull, that, as an opera, its prolonged existence must be a matter of grave doubt."^87

The first English opera to be produced in the new decade was Cowen's *Thorgrim*, presented by the Rosa company at Drury Lane on 22 April 1890. The weaknesses of the libretto were summed up by a critic writing for the *Magazine of Music*. "It must be confessed that in this tale there is little with which an audience can be expected to sympathize. Helgi is a coward; Thorgrim is a bully. The mother of the former is unfair in her anger. The young lady Olof is a colourless creature. These are scarcely the sort of personages to inspire a composer."^88 There was a remarkable consensus among the critics in the reviews of this work regarding the high quality of the music and the poor libretto. In

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^87^ J. B., "The Troubadour," *MagMus* 3 (July 1886): 63.

^88^ Mr. F. H. Cowen's New Opera *Thorgrim,*" *MagMus* 7 (June 1890): 104.
fact, one writer nearly two years after the premiere stated: "Nothing but a wretched libretto prevented ‘Thorgrim’ from being the finest opera yet written by an Englishman." 89

The libretto problem generated a number of articles that sought to address the concern. 90 Some argued that the chief problem with English opera was the want of more upstanding plots and librettos. As was stated in an editorial in the *Musical Herald*: "That opera takes no hold in England is still a subject of lament among musicians. We will offer one reason for this fact; it is the need of more wholesome and healthy plots." The writer proceeded to contend that a plot that provides a picture of "animal passion in which jealousy, revenge, conjugal unfaithfulness, and finally murder and suicide are the leading events" may play in Italy, but would be considered most objectionable by the English mind. The writer concluded, stating: "We venture to say that until librettists can do better, so long will the sober judgment of our country declare against opera." 91

In his lecture Stainer had also expressed the desire to see Sir Arthur Sullivan tackle a more sophisticated topic and libretto. This the composer did in *Ivanhoe*, which premiered 31 January 1891 at London’s Royal English Opera House. 92 The opening was greeted with great anticipation in that here at last was the opera for which England had been waiting—the work by the composer who had captured the hearts of his countrymen, the

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90 Even despite the frequent expression of concern an article from 1918 would show the situation not improved. Warren Monk would state that even at that time there were no modern British operas worth producing due to the "seeming impossibility" of acquiring decent librettos. "Every British opera written during the past half century has a bad book." See *MS*, n.ill.s., 11 (5 January 1918): 13-14.

91 "Editorials," *MH*, no. 569 (1 August 1895): 240. For another argument on behalf of wholesome plots see Charles Maclean’s article on the libretto and plot requirements for English opera in *MS*, ill.s., 11 (18 February 1899): 98-100 and the libretto entitled "The Lost Key: A Domestic Episode," as a spoof on those requirements in *MS*, ill.s., 11 (4 March 1899): 134.

92 The work, in fact, inaugurated The Royal English Opera House on Shaftesbury Avenue, restored and managed by D'Oyly Carte.
opera that would take its place next to great national operas such as Boris Godunov and The Bartered Bride.\textsuperscript{93}

To be sure, Ivanhoe met with positive responses from the press. Even before recording a formal review of the work the Monthly Musical Record reported:

From the little we have heard of the music we are inclined to predict a triumph. The solos are rich and melodious, and the choral and concerted music will, we think, be pronounced as being worthy of the composer. Sir Arthur Sullivan has caught something of the spirit of the fine old English ballads and madrigals, and the music is written in a broad and effective style.\textsuperscript{94}

A remarkable feature of the reviews of the opera are the many accolades bestowed upon D'Oyly Carte on account of his new theater.\textsuperscript{95} In one of the two reviews reprinted in Musical Opinion a critic wrote: "Mr. Carte's gorgeous new theatre is an English opera-house; there is set forth on its stage a story which is the inalienable birthright of every Englishman; and the story is told to music which is, above and before everything, English."\textsuperscript{96}

While to the above writer the opera breathed a thoroughly English essence (as did the house), others saw a more eclectic character there, with a strong indebtedness to

\textsuperscript{93}The anticipation and enthusiastic reception of the work is caught in a MT blurb which stated: "Though not published in book form, volumes have been written, since the date of our last issue, upon the subject of Sir Arthur Sullivan's opera. Rarely has interest in a new work been so carefully--we will not say artfully--developed and stimulated as in the case of 'Ivanhoe.' Paragraphs appeared long ago, like single spies and then as whole battalions. As the day of production drew near the morning papers opened with their big guns, and the climax came at last with a packed crowd inside the theatre, a noisy mob outside, and general huzzning to the glory of composer, librettist, and manager." "Ivanhoe," MT 32 (1 March 1891): 149.

\textsuperscript{94}"Royal English Opera," MMR 21 (1 February 1891): 41.

\textsuperscript{95}In fact, it was the joint venture of new theater and Sullivan's Ivanhoe that to many signaled the new day for English Opera. As one reviewer wrote: "If Ivanhoe succeeds--as it certainly deserves to succeed--the opening of Mr. Carte's new theatre may give an immense impulse to native talent. It will act as an incentive to the composition of operas by composers who have never trodden that path before, but are not on that account less fully justified in making the attempt than those who have hitherto essayed it." "Ivanhoe," MO 14 (1 March 1891): 213.

\textsuperscript{96}A. B. W., "Ivanhoe' at the Royal English Opera," from Illustrated London News reprinted in MO 14 (1 March 1891): 212.
Wagner. As the *Spectator* critic noted: "The eclecticism of his style is shown by a number of obvious reminiscences, most of them, curiously enough, echoes from Wagner, a composer for whom we had hitherto supposed that Sir Arthur Sullivan did not cherish a very strong predilection." We must add that the reviewer did not find particular fault as this observation was made. Others, however, maintained that the opera was thoroughly English in character.

In spite of all temptations to belong to other nations—Wagner exhorting him to be unmelodious and to transfer what tunes he may have from the performers' mouths to the orchestra; Gounod whispering him leave all and follow "Faust;" Verdi and Ponchielli inviting him to be the "devil incarnate, an Englishman Italianate"—Sir Arthur Sullivan remains an Englishman... Of course, he has not altogether escaped foreign influences... But, on the whole, the opera is original, and, as I have said—it cannot too often be said—English.  

 Amidst the popularity of *Ivanhoe* and the optimism it seemed to promise for a new era of English opera, Carte announced a project that shocked many English hopes. Carte had offered a large sum of money for the performance rights of Messager's comic opera, *La Basoche*, with the intention of producing it in English and playing it on alternate nights with *Ivanhoe*. The primary difficulty that Carte had encountered was not a lack of popularity for *Ivanhoe*, but the problem of expenses. The expenses generated by an eminent cast and elaborate stage production surpassed anything seen on an English operatic stage, forcing either an increase in ticket prices or a full house every night. As it turned out, *Ivanhoe* was withdrawn after a run of 156 performances—an impressive string, but not enough to set a new course for English opera. It was appearing more and more clear to

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97 "Ivanhoe' at the Royal English Opera," from the *Spectator*, reprinted in *MO* 14 (1 March 1891): 213. The Wagnerian attributes cited by the *Spectator* critic included the orchestration, modulations, and use of leitmotif.

98 A. B. W., "Ivanhoe," 212.


100 *Ivanhoe* was revived at Covent Garden in 1910 under Beecham's direction. Arthur Poyser commented in his review. "For moments... one felt that one was listening to an ideal English opera."
many that the future of English opera depended not on a single composer nor on a single work, but on a subsidized house.

After the withdrawal of *Ivanhoe* other important attempts followed, including Goring Thomas's *The Golden Web*, Cowen's *Signa* and *Harold*, MacCunn's *Jeanie Deans* and *Diarmid*, and Stanford's *Shamus O'Brien*. Of these, only *Harold*, *Shamus O'Brien*, and *Diarmid* could boast London premieres. The reviews of most of these works were mixed, with some exception. Cowen, it was felt, was still plagued by poor librettos, especially in the case of *Harold*.

The operas prompting the more positive reviews were the two comic works, *The Golden Web* and *Shamus O'Brien*. The former, commissioned by Rosa in 1887, was premiered in Liverpool on 15 February 1893. The fact that it was Goring Thomas's last opera lent particular interest to the event. The *Musical Times* reviewer wrote:

> In writing the music it would seem that Goring Thomas had the idea of striking a happy mean between the puerilities of *opéra bouffe* and the necessary elaboration of serious opera. It is a delightful score, full of refined and elegantly written melodies, approaching perhaps nearer to those of Adolphe Adam and of Ambroise Thomas in his lighter moods than any other composers of lyric drama.  

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101 These occurred at Covent Garden (8 June 1895), Opéra Comique (2 March 1896), and Covent Garden (23 October 1897), respectively.

102 One reviewer wrote: "Well, the libretto is before me, and I shall presently show that if the music is not good, the 'words' are at any rate a great deal worse... How could we expect Mr. Cowen or any composer to do any good work with this as a basis to build on? The thing is preposterous; and though I do not wonder with some critics why Mr. Cowen should have attempted to set the stuff at all—for I have long known that Mr. Cowen's taste in poetry is of the crudest—yet I regret as sincerely as they that he did endeavour to set it." "Mr. Cowen's New Opera," *MagMus* 12 (July 1895): 145.

103 "The Golden Web," *MT* 34 (1 March 1893): 152. It will be recalled that virtually all critics detected a strong French influence in the composer's earlier operas.
Stanford's *Shamus O'Brien*, together with the above-mentioned works of Hamish MacCunn represent the “celtic fringe” element that prompted many to write of a “British” school of opera, ably represented by works exhibiting Irish and Scottish tendencies. In fact, one does not find attention given to the separate countries until the mid-1890s. According to one critic, *Shamus* was “by far the freshest of Professor Stanford's later works.”  

So great a success has been achieved that the occasion is not unlikely to become historically memorable, and may even prove to have inaugurated in these isles a native school of opera, in which subjects and personages identified with each separate country of our composite kingdom shall be dealt with by librettists and composers who belong to that particular portion of the soil.

To be sure, the plot of *Shamus* was thoroughly Irish, set in the time of the Rebellion of '98, prompting one reviewer to write: “Those of the audience who had a strain of Celtic blood were thankful of it, so pitiful a figure do the English cut in 'Shamus O'Brien.'” Yet, the reviews in general congratulated Stanford on his achievement of a nationalist quality, without being local. “None but a Celt could have succeeded in this, without a slavish use of Irish folk-song themes, and in this vice Professor Stanford has not indulged—there are but two Irish songs impressed into service during the whole opera: the rhythmic characteristics of Irish music, on the other hand, have been most skilfully exploited.”

The mid-decade was marked by more in-depth consideration of the national opera question, no doubt generated by the successes and failures of the mid-80s and early 90s.


An important attempt to explore the topic was provided by John F. Runciman, soon to be critic for the *Saturday Review*. In a lengthy article written for the *Magazine of Music*, Runciman argued that the efforts of both Carl Rosa and D'Oyly Carte had been misdirected. According to Runciman, both went about establishing English opera wrongly. Runciman wrote: "With one exception, the works supplied to their orders were not English in subject; in none of them was there shown the smallest degree of English spirit; without exception, the music was in structure, form, and feeling (when there was any feeling) thoroughly German." In addition to the above concerns, admission to the theaters was limited to the rich due to high ticket prices. Runciman reasoned: "Whatever else national opera may be, surely it should possess some national characteristics, surely it should be accessible to a not-inconceivably small fraction of the nation!"

The major portion of the article finds Runciman developing the concept of national opera in general, and English national opera in particular. In Runciman's view national opera was, first of all, serious opera, "an expression by the composer of the highest and deepest and noblest thought and passion in him." Secondly, on the basis of other accepted uses of the adjective "national" in reference to calling, dress and amusement, he affirmed that national opera means "opera common to--that is practised or enjoyed by--a whole nation." A further distinguishing element would be that it is not common to other nations. Yet, "before an art can become national, it must be acceptable; to be acceptable, it must be an expression of those deepest thoughts and feelings of the nation, which, by their

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108 John F. Runciman, "English National Opera," *MagMus* 10 (July 1893): 161. In fact, two of the operas were based upon English subjects, *The Canterbury Pilgrims* and *Ivanhoe*. Yet, given the direction of his argument, Runciman was probably referring only to serious operas.


strength and frequency, constitute, together with the actions they prompt, the national character.”

Where does the creative artist fit into this national scheme? Runciman writes: “The artist is one of his nation; in him the national characteristics of thought and feeling are exaggerated, intensified; his life is an epitome of the nation's life; in his work the national life will find its completest interpretation.” A third characteristic of national opera would be that of accessibility. If the price of admission to the opera is so high that the poor are excluded, that opera can not be national, since the poor make up a large percentage of every nation's population. Runciman had now achieved his definition of national opera. “National opera, then, is opera acceptable and accessible to a whole nation.”

In turning to the more specific question of English national opera, Runciman asserted that all English operas produced to date had been imitations of German form. Not that this was all bad. In fact, Runciman maintained that English national opera must begin with the German form, but adapt it to English wants and needs. He provided three ways in which English national opera would differ from its German counterpart. First, English opera would be more concerned with the dramatic element, rather than the musical. The plot must be reasonable and would dictate the overall form of the opera, which should be divided not according to musical numbers (e.g. solos, duets, choruses), but in reference to dramatic considerations.

Secondly, English opera would be characterized by the choice and literary treatment of the subject. From the first point, it follows that the story will receive primary attention, and “English literary culture will demand that it be finely told, that the manner as well as the

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112 ibid.
113 ibid.
114 ibid.
matter be beautiful; the words as well as the music and dramatic arrangement of an English opera must be artistic." Runciman also maintained that the story must address current concerns. "If opera is to get a deep and a strong hold on the English people it must deal with the deepest thoughts and intensest feelings of this time."

Finally, the difference between German and English opera would be reflected in the music. Runciman readily admitted that this area was more difficult to articulate. "It would be easy to say that English music must be more direct, less mystical, more or less this, that, or the other than German; but it seems to me that the differences will be most marked in the qualities are undefinable in words." He did, however, specify certain features—extensive counterpoint and word-painting—that would be absent in truly English music.

Toward the conclusion of his article Runciman offered the three conditions he believed to be necessary for the growth of an English national opera: (1) "the development of a truly national life, and the raising of the national ideal, the ideal of the average man;" (2) "the singing and playing of true and beautiful, instead of rotten and ugly, music in our Board and other schools, both by scholars and teachers; and the thorough musical education of the latter;" (3) "the establishment of one or more municipal opera-houses, and a permanent municipal orchestra, supported by the municipality in every town."

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115 Ibid., 162.

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid. "All that can be said is that English music must possess the subtle qualities necessary to make it acceptable to the English people. That is to say—remembering the nature and function of music—that truly English music can only be produced by an Englishman, a consummate musician, thinking the noblest thoughts and experiencing the deepest emotions of the English; he, taking the musical structures and forms of Beethoven and Bach, as Goethe took the dramatic form and structure of Shakespeare, will produce English music, replete with English feeling—music which will act like magic on the English-speaking nation, to which it will be acceptable." (162-63).

In summary, Runciman expressed his optimism in regard to the future of English opera.

We have seen that the English have refused the false article hitherto offered them. We have seen that certain qualities must characterise the genuine article, and the fact that many of those qualities are present in Wagnerian opera is a powerful support to my contention—for Wagner's are the most popular of all operas with the English. And it seems to me that by following to some extent the road he opened out, yet remaining true to ourselves as Englishmen, by becoming convinced of the necessity of the conditions of the production of a national opera as I have laid them down, and by working with our whole energies to secure those conditions, will we arrive most speedily at the goal: *an opera acceptable and accessible to the whole English nation.*

The twin concerns of acceptability and accessibility articulated by Runciman would prove to be the dominant issues in the opera discussion throughout the decade and well into the new century. As time progressed many considered the chief rival of English opera to be popular entertainment, rather than foreign operatic imports. It was the public who regularly attended the music hall, burlesque houses, and vaudeville shows that the proponents of a national opera sought to attract. If a national opera would be thus defined as one acceptable to a large proportion of the English public, it followed that a national opera must be popular in character.

The popular appeal of the comic operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan were considered by many to be a true index of national taste. The continued popularity of Balfe's *Bohemian Girl* and Wallace's *Maritana* was deplored by many critics, as we have already noted. Yet, if popular reception was to be a major factor in national music, these works could lay legitimate claim to being national operas. In many articles dealing with the topic an appeal to popularity continued to be a dominant feature. As early as 1880 Joseph Green, in

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119 i.e. the unsuccessful productions launched by Carl Rosa and D'Oyly Carte.

120 Runciman, "English National Opera," 189.

writing of the popular success of Gilbert and Sullivan, noted that the music in his day had become quite complicated; he thus urged the young English dramatic composer "to return to simplicity." Quoting Schlegel, Green argued against excessive theorizing and encouraged the young dramatic composer to take the "straightest road to its end." Green concludes: "In language less elegant, and indeed in the language of the music-halls, for which we can find a corner in our philosophy, we would add: 'If you have a decided leaning for the stage, if you feel there is melody in you, 'shove it out!'" Writing over a decade later, Watson noted the glut of comic opera productions during the 1892 season, a situation that argued "either an increasing appetite for such entertainment on the side of the public, or an unusual rashness on the part of the managers." Watson, in essence, argued for the former since "unless an opera can be produced with a very reasonable hope of financial success, it will not see the light of day." Thus, the entrepreneurial system fostered the ascendancy of popular entertainments. Watson reminded his readers of the popularity of Balfe and Wallace, "despite all the lecturing bestowed on us and the sneers at the British public."

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123 _Ibid_. , 113.
124 _Ibid_. , 114.
126 _Ibid_. , 442.
127 _Ibid_. A letter to the editor as late as 1920 demonstrates that the topic was still of current interest. "But with all [a well-known impresario's] efforts to elevate the public taste in matters musical I am still of opinion that there are a great number of people who even now prefer Balfe to Wagner. British opera to be successful and 'national' must be supported by the general public, and it is just as unreasonable to expect the general public to support new English opera composed on Wagnerian principles as it would be for the modern British composer to defy his critics and without disgracing himself write a work the general public could understand and appreciate." E. W. Lloyd, "Correspondence," _MO_ 43 (February 1920): 367.
In their recognition of the ineffectiveness of the private entrepreneurial system to foster a national opera, many composers and critics called for a subsidy that would ensure both the establishment and continuation of a national opera tradition. The subsidy debate, as we have noted, arose during the late 1880s. Ten years later would see a resurgence of that debate, with even greater intensity.

The essential issues in the debate that would rage during the last years of the decade were laid out by Fuller Maitland in an article entitled, "Wanted--An Opera." He articulated three key points: the effect of financial stresses on the production of opera, the value of opera to artistic life of a nation, and a proposed solution to England's operatic woes.

The financial aspects of the problem struck in two areas. The first related to public concerns and addressed the question of accessibility to those people who would most enjoy operatic productions. The high ticket prices necessitated the exclusion of a large percentage of the regular concert-going public who simply could not afford the cost of comfortable seating at the opera.

The second area of financial stress was in the sheer expense of operatic productions. Fuller Maitland affirmed earlier efforts which very nearly resulted in the establishment of a really national opera. The primary reason for the failure of those earlier efforts was financial. Insisting that he was not proposing a radical departure from sound English economic theory, Fuller Maitland wrote:

> In ordinary affairs the law of supply and demand is a good enough working principle, but here there is one very serious consideration, namely, that the expenses of an opera season, even without the gigantic salaries that are paid to performers of European celebrity are so heavy as to entail a great loss upon the manager who shall attempt to give opera at theatre prices.\(^{129}\)

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Fuiler Maitland then proceeded to detail differences between opera and theater production costs which related both to repertorial concerns and to salaries of singers.

Another issue addressed by the author was the legitimacy of opera as an art form worthy of cultivation. For reasons he would state later, Fuller Maitland pointed out that this was a view which needed justification only in England. "In all parts of the continent, the intellectual value of the opera is recognised, just as much as that of non-theatrical music or of the other arts. In England alone there still survives the curious impression that music, and more especially the opera, has some element of dissipation about it."

Yet, Fuller Maitland believed that this was a problem that would ultimately find solution in the growing cosmopolitan character of England. Since the time would come when people would demand opera. The proposed solution to these concerns was to be found in continental practices. As the author writes:

Yet the solution of the whole question, a solution which has been adopted in every capital of Europe, is only just beginning to be suggested here as a brand new idea. Some kind of grant or subvention from without is absolutely essential if opera as an institution is to do a really useful work, or to take a place among national enterprises.\(^\text{131}\)

As we have already anticipated, one of the greatest roadblocks to the achievement of a national opera based upon state subsidy was rooted in the attitudes of many Englishmen toward the opera. Fuller Maitland named three attitudinal obstacles that confronted the state subsidy suggestion: the remnant of Puritanical feeling, the view that theater is frivolous entertainment with opera being no different, and the dread of an increase in taxes.

 Fuller Maitland contended that state subsidy had long been affirmed in principle, as the British Museum and the National Gallery were both beneficiaries of government support. Why should a national opera that would also serve an educational function not be

\(^{130}\)Ibid., 979.

\(^{131}\)Ibid., 981.
subsidized? Furthermore, he held that the establishment of a permanent opera house in London would have a positive effect throughout the Empire serving as an example for other major cities to follow suit. The author realistically asserted that an actual governmental subsidy at that time might be too much to hope for, but maintained that a suitable home for opera provided by either the Corporation of London or the London County Council should be quite possible.

In support of his proposal Fuller Maitland briefly outlined a financial scheme, but acknowledged that more consideration was needed in reference to other specifics, such as management policy and projected goals. He did set forth some non-negotiables of his plan. The repertoire must include worthy operas from all nationalities, to be performed in the English language by performers who were, as far as possible, English. Also, he envisioned the administration of such an enterprise to "represent, not merely the business side of the scheme as a pecuniary speculation, but the various schools of thought in music." But fundamentally, Fuller Maitland saw the establishment of a state subsidy to advance the cause of English opera by providing opportunities for premieres, successive performances, and revivals of operas by native composers.

That series of fine operas which Mr. Carl Rosa was mainly instrumental in bringing before the English public as the typical work of Englishmen, must be brought once more from the retirement where they have been left by so many managers, and the younger men in the English musical world must be encouraged to undertake the composition of operas by the knowledge that every worthy work will in time be produced at a national theatre.

A response to Fuller Maidand's article appeared in the form of a lead article that appeared in the *Musical Standard*, written probably by Edward A. Baughan. The writer


134Although the article is unsigned, it appeared during Baughan's editorship and reflects his views on the matter as developed in a later piece. Cf. Edward A. Baughan, "A Municipal Opera: An Alternative Scheme," *MS*, ill.s., 9 (25 June 1898): 401-03.
agreed with Fuller Maitland in respect to the importance of national opera and the financial obstacles that had prevented its establishment. Furthermore, he argued for a subsidy, but resisted state involvement. He saw the solution, rather, in a national private subscription effort. "Never shall we have an artistic Opera until it is subsidised. Better than a state subsidy would be a national subscription to found a fund. . . . It is certainly time something were attempted to preserve and nationalize a fine form of musical art."^135

The subsidy question was addressed again by the same journal in its next issue. The article quoted a petition that had been delivered to the London County Council on 21 June, and bore the signatures of "practically all the leading men of London."^136 Baughan, in his commentary on the petition, absolutely agreed with the needs expressed there, but expressed doubts as to whether it would, or indeed should, happen. The view expressed in the *Musical Standard* earlier finds an echo here. The solution to England's operatic woes was not to be found in state subsidy, but rather in private subscription. Even if London were to have governmental subsidy, Baughan argued that it should follow the lead of Vienna, St. Petersburg, Berlin and Paris--receiving a state subsidy--rather than municipal support that would be more appropriate for provincial cities.

A key place where Baughan parted company with the views of the signatories was in their use of analogy to support their argument for state subsidy. We have seen that Fuller Maitland claimed that national opera was deserving of subsidy after the precedent set in regard to the British Museum and National Art Gallery. Baughan contended that those institutions reflect a "truly democratic spirit" in that admission is completely free. The

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analogy would apply to the opera house only if the state subsidy advocates were willing to dispense with ticket prices altogether so that all classes would be on the same level and have an equal share of what their taxes had gone to support. Baughan concluded:

If admission to a State opera-house be not free, so that all classes may participate in its advantages, we simply are reduced to this: by means of State money certain classes of the nation that are able to pay certain sums of money for their musical and dramatic entertainments are given a fuller value for that money.\footnote{Baughan, "A Municipal Opera. An Alternative Scheme," 402.}

Baughan doubted whether there would be any advantages of state subsidy, given the complaints from abroad regarding management of those houses and monetary waste.

The concern over state management also was expressed by F. Gilbert Webb.\footnote{F. Gilbert Webb, "A Municipal Opera House," \textit{MusN} 15 (2 July 1898): 13-14.} Like Baughan, Webb argued for the necessity of a subsidized opera house, but considered a private subsidy to be preferable to the state, which might impose conditions and restrictions. Part of his plan was also the establishment of a school attached to the opera house.

The \textit{Musical Standard} sought further to bolster its argument against a state-subsidized opera house as it published an interview with the director of the Paris \textit{Opéra Comique} on the topic of English National Opera. In a nutshell, the director doubted whether a state-subsidized opera would accomplish all that its advocates hoped. He stated that the English people would not have a better and cheaper opera, and that even in the state subsidized institutions in France, the financial success of a new opera had to be guaranteed before it could see production. Furthermore, there was an essential difference between English, as opposed to French attitudes toward governmental control. "The English are not so accustomed to parental control by their Government as we are here, and from what I know of them they are quite capable of refusing to patronise a theatre which is under State
control. Mark my words—if the Council should grant the petition, it would not be long before, of itself the undertaking died.”  

The battle over the issue continued throughout the following year. As Baughan observed, however, there was unanimity of opinion over the need for a subsidized opera house, the point of disagreement was in respect to the source of that subsidy. While some considered the continental practice of state support to be worthy of emulation in London, others felt that a state subsidy would bring with it state control that would have a profoundly negative effect on the cause of artistic progress.

One of the strongest advocates for a state subsidy was Charles Villiers Stanford. In a letter to the *Times* Stanford set forth many of the same arguments that had appeared in Fuller Maitland's article of the previous year. The European precedent, the worthiness of operatic cultivation, and the impact of London's potential influence upon the provinces were issues frequently cited by advocates of state subsidy. Stanford also pointed out an area of inconsistency in respect to accepted practice. “The education which has been thrown open to the musical youth of England has been regally endowed, but the career in which the bulk of their years is spent has been totally uncared for.” In other words, precedent had been set with a government endowment given in support of educational institutions such as the Royal Academy of Music and Royal College of Music for the training of musicians. Was it so unreasonable to use state funds to provide an opportunity for the professional employment of those musicians once trained? Stanford summarized the wants as being three: (1) a site, (2) an opera house so designed as to allow for the

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139 Interview of director of Paris Opéra Comique in *Morning Leader*, quoted in "State Aid," *MS*, ill.s., 10 (9 July 1898): 27.


comfortable seating of a large number in the cheaper seats, and (3) a sum, for installation, and for providing an endowment for at least three years.

While most felt the establishment of an opera house and subsidy would settle the problem of composition and subsequent performance of English operas, others saw the problem to be much deeper than mere financial and structural matters. Some correspondents, such as S. A. Herbert, contended that—except for Ivanhoe and Shamus O'Brien—English opera did not exist. Simply put, Herbert maintained that the establishment of a national house before the establishment of a national genre was to place the cart before the horse. The problem with English opera and opera in English was one that would not find solution in a subsidy.

It is doubtless quite true that the entire artistic world would sincerely welcome the establishment of a permanent English opera, and if opera should eventually become, as Lord Dysart puts it, "part of our national life, as it is in Germany," we should all rejoice and be glad. This is, however, an entirely different thing from supporting the petition to the County Council for the subsidization of English opera.

Herbert felt that if opera were truly a national art it would flourish without state support, as did drama, oratorios, and orchestral music. The reason why opera could not pay its way in England, according to Herbert, was that there had been too little English opera worthy of the name. What was needed, he stated, was first of all a repertoire of opera in English upon which native composers could build.

A related view was argued in the Monthly Musical Record, where the writer held that what was really needed was the cultivation of popular support for opera. He stated that it would be premature to build a house before there was ample evidence that the English people really wanted opera. The real key to the establishment of a state-subsidized opera

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142S. A. Herbert, letter to the Times (11 April 1899), reprinted in MusN 16 (22 April 1899): 419-20.

143S. A. Herbert, letter to the Times (n.d.), reprinted in MO 22 (May 1899): 537.
house was in public support of the movement. "Those of us who want opera must set ourselves to stimulate the popular appetite for opera. When the popular appetite is sufficiently stimulated, the popular voice will make itself heard and we shall get what we want."144

While the discussion of 1898 and 1899 set forth the central issues of the debate over the subsidy question, the matter continued to be pursued into the new century. The popular element of the discussion assumed a central place as many asked whether the English as a people even liked opera. If so, what kind of opera would best be received? One thing was clear. The comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan needed no advocacy, no state support, no national opera house to ensure their continued performances. Even with the arguable success of Ivanhoe, it would never stand as a formidable rival to H. M. S. Pinafore and The Pirates of Penzance. Perhaps the national opera issue was already settled in the success, popularity, and English voice of the music of Sir Arthur Sullivan. The new century would bring a host of challenges to the plight of English opera, not the least of which was the loss of Sullivan, whose death in 1900 marked the closing of an era.

The Challenges of the New Century (1900-1910)

The new century began with the question of subsidy still occupying a central place in all national opera discussions. Edward A. Baughan, a key opponent of state subsidy, continued to set forth his views as editor of the Musical Standard. In his articles that date from the early 1900s Baughan developed a number of vital issues. In essence, he distanced himself from the frequent references to continental precedent in respect to all aspects of the opera question. First, he questioned the suitability of performing foreign

144 English Opera and the Opera Season," MMR 29 (1 May 1899): 101-02.
works in English translation, for reasons derived both from artistic considerations as well as from the quality of the translations themselves.\textsuperscript{145}

Baughan expressed also his lack of sympathy with the national opera movement within the larger context of national music. Confessing his weariness of the topic Baughan stated:

The writers are generally men who have not studied the matter very deeply, and are fired by Wagner's interminable dissertations on the folk-song basis of music. . . . We hear a deal of the spacious days of Elizabeth, but it is forgotten that Queen Bess's militant Britishness was largely a self-conscious attitude, adopted in opposition to the rapidly growing cosmopolitan spirit of the day and as a protest against the foreign influence from which England had suffered. But the energy of the Englishman even in those days was all towards cosmopolitanism. He was doing his best to make himself a citizen of the world. And that we are cosmopolitan and yet keep a strong national character is our strength. The Englishman is always an Englishman. It is in this that one may look for a final English school of music.\textsuperscript{146}

In particular, Baughan found the Englishman most different from the continental European in his taste for opera. In Baughan's estimation, the plight of English opera was due to fact that the nation did not really want opera. If the English public wanted opera, they would have it. Baughan writes:

The nation as a whole has never been in love with this form of art. Something in our character—a dislike of the expression of emotion, perhaps (the essential of opera)—has been against the growth of the art here as a native product. The attitude of Addison towards the Italian opera of his day—then more or less an innovation in London, and the parody of it in Gay's "The Beggar's Opera" represent the opinion of the average cultured and sensible Englishman towards opera, and it is an opinion shared, we have no doubt, by many of the typical Englishmen who subscribe to Covent Garden. At any rate the nation as a whole has never wanted opera in the same way as a [sic] Germans or Italians want it.\textsuperscript{147}

\textsuperscript{145}See his articles in \textit{MS}, ill.s., 16 (17, 24 August 1901): 99-100, 115-16 written in response to Hamish MacCunn's comments.

\textsuperscript{146}Edward A. Baughan, "Comments and Opinions," \textit{MS}, ill.s., 16 (17 August 1901): 100.

\textsuperscript{147}Edward A. Baughan, "Comments and Opinions," \textit{MS}, ill.s., 16 (24 August 1901): 115-16. See also "Rambling Reflections," \textit{MS}, ill.s., 17 (1 February 1902): 71 where "Bombardo" argues against state subsidy on the basis that the English public is constitutionally indifferent to opera, and that opera itself as an art-form is an anachronism.
Thus, Baughan placed himself at considerable variance with the essence of the frequently-
cited reasons for the non-existence of an English national opera, namely the lack of opera in
English, and the view that the public wants it but simply cannot afford it.

Others held the same view that the central problem with English national opera was
the average Englishman's ambivalence toward opera itself. In 1895 J. F. Rowbotham, in
his article "How to obtain a School of English Opera," had asserted, "There is plainly a
market for opera, and a very considerable one," yet this view was challenged. One
writer in the *Musical Times* questioned whether the English public really wanted such a
school. According to the writer, there was nothing to substantiate Rowbotham's claim that
the English were hungering and thirsting after opera.

We do nothing of the kind. If we did--to put the case in another way--we should soon
be satisfied; we should no longer depend for grand opera upon arrangements between
Sir A. Harris and the aristocracy, and Covent Garden Theatre would be open nine
months in the year instead of eleven weeks, while some other managers would be free
from the need either to cater for lovers of degrading tomfoolery or shut their doors.

A few years later W. J. Galloway's book, *The Operatic Problem*, appeared in
which the author argued the necessity for the establishment of a great state-subsidized
national opera house in London, with others sprinkled throughout the provinces funded by
the municipalities. A reviewer, writing in *Musical Opinion*, complimented Galloway for
his description of the variety of current continental practices in the running of opera houses,
yet expressed doubt that any plan such as those would ever work in England. The state
and municipalities were already overburdened and "there is nothing to show that national

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148 J. F. Rowbotham, "How to Obtain a School of English Opera," *Nineteenth Century* 38 (July
1895): 103-10.

149 "X.", "From My Study" [on obtaining a School of English Opera], *MT* 36
(1 September 1895): 591.

opera—that is to say, opera by English composers sung in English by English artists—
would prove the flourishing plant that Mr. Galloway anticipates.”

Another point Baughan had argued was that the English public, rather than opera,
wanted drama and musical comedies. “It may seem absurd to mention the modern musical
comedy in an article dealing with opera, but the modern musical comedy is the only musical
stage play for which the British public has expressed a keen desire.” Thus, if national
opera was to be achieved, it would be generated from the root of the English character and
temperament rather than be superficially imposed upon the English public by virtue of a
state subsidy. He observed that while it was customary to sneer at popular works, such as
The Bohemian Girl and Maritana (not to mention Sullivan’s Savoy Operas) it was now time
to “restrain our sneers and examine our facts.”

I would suggest that it may be the nation has no love for the exaggerated emotionalism
of grand opera, and that had an English opera developed steadily on the basis of
melody and humour, we might have a fine national opera to-day. . . . In brief, the
English people has never had an opera that reflects itself. Such as it has it has
supported. Is it too late to begin? It may be, but it is a curious fact that our modern
composers are leaving stilted musical tragedy and are writing musical comedy—

This attitude had been around for quite some time. Writing specifically of Balfe and
Wallace in 1881, E. H. Turpin lamented the lack of opportunities in England for fostering a
ture musical dramatic art. Yet, he stated, even if England could present composers with the
same means as did Continental cities he doubted whether the “national turn of mind” could
produce a Wagner, Gounod, or Verdi. “The English art-temperament is reflective rather
than demonstrative; and it may fairly be doubted whether, taking all things into account,
aspirations after a native lyrical drama are not perhaps more wisely discouraged than

153 Ibid., 25.
nursed." According to Baughan, the possibilities for a future for English opera were to be found in the comic operas of Sullivan.

J. F. Rowbotham, cited above, had also advanced the claim that only light opera could succeed in England. The problem with the foundation of an English national opera would not be solved by state subsidy or by changing the attitude of the English public. The solution would be found when the English composer turned his attention to the composition of light opera.

This attitude continued to gain momentum into the new century, one of its strongest advocates being music critic, Arthur Poyser. Writing six years after Sullivan's death, Poyser lamented the closing of the Savoy Theatre's doors to comic opera. He wrote: "There are very few forms of entertainment so attractive to educated men and women in an English theatre as a comic opera of that national type hall-marked at the Savoy." While Poyser did not eliminate the possibility for the establishment of a "native grand opera," he did present the comic opera as a legitimate starting-point for the forging of a national operatic style. As he would later write: "If the English theatre is not ready for the whole-evening English opera, national in idea, permeated with the spirit of the folk song, and racy of the soil, why not begin with the operetta and give the blossom before we produce the fruit?"

Poyser clearly articulated the idea that the English national opera toward which so many were striving would be rooted in folk song, following similar movements in Germany and Russia. "We must start with operetta if we want to gain a passageway to

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folk-opera in England. Not otherwise shall we win our English Glinka or our English Weber.”

Although, as we have seen, considerable discussion existed over the English public's attitude toward opera, the arguments for state subsidy experienced a resurgence. Many of the traditional arguments found repetition in Rendall's "The Prospects of an English Opera." Asking for similar consideration for music as was given to art Rendall argued: "We contend that an opera house should be recognized as another form of national gallery." As was the case with the National Gallery, he argued, private founders might initiate the plan but ultimately would be supplemented by government subsidy.

The idea of a national opera built upon the twin foundations of private wealth and state endowment continued to find support during the years that followed. During the period following Baughan's tenure at the *Musical Standard*, that journal began to turn toward advocacy of state-subsidized music. Responding to a growing opinion that all musical endeavors ought to receive benefit of subsidy, the *Musical Standard* carried the following opinion.

To our minds it will be quite sufficient for the present for the Government to consider a scheme of National Opera. The good that its adoption would do would be to encourage native talent, both executive and creative, and provide opera—it is hoped all the year round—at prices that would enable the poorest to attend. It is a big subject. It matters not what subsidies are allowed abroad; the thing should be discussed entirely on its merits. Let us hope that National Opera will seriously be considered when Parliament next meets, and that something practical will eventually result.

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159 "Comments and Opinions: Subsidised Music," *MS*, ill.s., 21 (2 January 1904): 3. The above article cited the appearance of a recent Parliamentary White-Paper in which were tabulated the financial support given to the performing arts (musical, operatic, theatrical) in foreign countries. To many, this Parliamentary paper demonstrated that opera could only flourish with the benefit of state support, that only without the strain of financial anxiety could a national opera takes its place as an educational and artistic institution. Only on the basis of a subsidy could the ticket prices be within the range of all classes and...
Stanford remained an undaunted and tireless advocate of a state-subsidized national opera. His essay, "The Case for National Opera," his most complete defense of the project, appeared in 1908. Much of Stanford's line of argument had found earlier expression in his correspondence to the *Times* and elsewhere during the late 90s. In the 1908 essay the arguments were interlaced with historical descriptions of questionable expenditures. Recounting the encouraging gestures of the Committee of the London County Council, which included the reservation of a plot of land and the public acknowledgment of lack of state support on behalf of music, Stanford observed: "Shortly afterwards a sum of over £300,000 was expended by the Council upon the Thames Steamboats, most now for sale; and the estimated deficiency on this year's working is over seventy-five per cent in excess of the sum required to provide a subvention for a National Opera House."^ 160

Stanford insisted that the establishment of a national theater must precede the serious composition of English opera by native composers. The high tide of enthusiasm generated by the achievements of the English musical renaissance had to be captured before the opportunity slipped away. Yet he was acutely conscious that his arguments, drawn from continental and even English practice, met with formidable resistance.

I am well aware that a strong prejudice exists in some quarters in this country against the subvention to or endowment of a theatre. The same hands which applaud the purchase of a Raphael for the National Gallery are held up in horror at the expenditure of a much smaller sum for providing the nation with a musical masterpiece. Surely the opponents of a subvention have not really thought out the logical results of their objections. The principle is either good or bad, and if it is bad for our country it is equally bad for other countries. Yet centuries of experience have not made all other countries think it anything but good. As a matter of fact there is no country in the world where opera (or a permanent drama) can be placed before the people of moderate performance decisions not depend upon passing trends of popularity. cf. "National Opera," *MS*, ill.s., 21 (16 January 1904): 44. and Adolph Schloesser, "National Opera," *MMR* 37 (1 July 1907): 151-52.

means without subvention; and if Europe to-morrow decided that the principle of subvention was wrong, and suspended it, _opera would cease to exist altogether_. . . . To a Frenchman the Académie de la Musique and the Théâtre Français are as important national possessions as the Louvre and the Luxembourg. If any government ventured to suspend their subventions and so destroy them, there would certainly be barricades.\(^{161}\)

In the case of England state support for opera would free her from two evils: the “fatal principle of the ‘run’” and a repertory dependent upon box-office considerations. Of the first, Stanford called it “a test which the best opera ever written could never stand.”\(^{162}\) When box-office considerations govern production choices, many works are cast out before they have become familiar enough to gain success. Stanford cited _Carmen_ and _Faust_ as works that achieved great success even though they were originally regarded as failures. The establishment of an English national opera must be rooted in a revolving repertory in which works can “afford” to be heard on a regular basis.

The remainder of Stanford's essay addressed primarily financial matters as he compared current expenditures with what was needed on behalf of a national opera. Yet having presented all of his arguments, information, and budgetary considerations, Stanford found prejudice to be the greatest hurdle.

What man has done, man can do. What Europe has done, England can do. The most difficult rock to surmount is prejudice, the fixed, innate dislike of Englishmen to make a new departure. . . . We ask a site, a building costing £100,000 and £10,000 a year for music from a State which has done the like for the sister arts at thirty times the outlay required for music.\(^ {163}\)

Despite the unsettled state of the endowment question, there were signs of hope evident in new operas by established composers\(^ {164}\) and also in the rise of new personages.

\(^{161}\)Ibid., 10-11.

\(^{162}\)Ibid., 12. Stanford questioned: “For who would want to hear even _Don Giovanni_ every night for three months?”

\(^{163}\)Ibid., 21-22.

\(^{164}\)For example Stanford's _Much Ado About Nothing_ (Covent Garden, 30 May 1901) and Mackenzie's _The Knights of the Road_ (Palace Theatre, 27 February 1905).
Among the new names in the British musical scene were Ethel Smyth, Liza Lehmann, and Thomas Beecham.

Ethel Smyth's operas were among the most important ones produced during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Her first three operas, Fantasio, Der Wald, and The Wreckers, had been produced initially in Germany, with the latter two receiving London performances before the close of the decade. The 18 July 1902 performance of Der Wald at Covent Garden generated positive response. While virtually all reviewers noted a strong Germanic influence in the work, most felt her individuality was also evident. As Baughan observed: "Brahms, Weber, Wagner, and Humperdinck—all have had a hand in the writing of the opera. Yet I do detect the voice of Miss Smyth herself." Baughan proceeded to explain that the German flavor of her music was not "crude imitation" but rather was due to assimilation. Der Wald demonstrated considerable dramatic instinct on the part of the composer, and "has so many fine qualities that one may be sure Miss Smyth will soon break from the Wagnerian jungle and advance along a path of her own." London's first acquaintance with The Wreckers was in a concert version of portions of the work given at Queen's Hall on 30 May 1908. In a notice that followed this performance Paul Seer referred to its English quality resulting from its setting in a Cornish village and use of tunes from that locality. He writes:

The harmonic texture is a blend of the quaintly old with the eccentric new, while the solo vocal writing is effectively dramatic. The inclusion of the few complete songs might, in incompetent hands, tend to dramatic stagnation. The chorus is used with striking effect and some of the ensemble climaxes are thrilling indeed. It is perhaps hardly too much to say that the production—even in so mutilated a form—of "The

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165 Fantasio (Weimar, 1898; Carlsruhe, 1901), Der Wald (Dresden, 1901; Berlin, 1902, Covent Garden, 1902, 1903), The Wreckers (Leipzig, 1906 as Standrecht; His Majesty's 1909, Covent Garden, 1910).

166 A. B[ughan], "The Opera: Miss Smyth's 'Der Wald,'" MS, ill.s., 18 (26 July 1902): 54.

167 Ibid.
"Wreckers" may prove a land-mark in the progress of things operatic in our midst, as it can hardly fail to arouse a still keener interest in the welfare of native opera.\textsuperscript{168}

Following the first complete and staged performance in June 1909 the \textit{Musical Standard} was not quite so enthusiastic, yet considered the work to be very commendable. Yet even this more reserved estimate was distinctive among the predominantly negative reviews of the London press.\textsuperscript{169}

Liza Lehmann attracted considerable attention with the performance of her opera, \textit{The Vicar of Wakefield}, based on Goldsmith's novel. Prior to the opera's Manchester premiere, she had been well known as a song writer.\textsuperscript{170} The Manchester critic, William Henry Gaunt, discerned in the vocal writing of this work "the same atmosphere we find prevalent in the compositions of the 17th and 18th century writers--thoroughly English in spirit."\textsuperscript{171} Arthur Poyser, writing of the London premiere the following month, called the work a "ballad" opera, in light of its combination of melodrama and musical numbers.\textsuperscript{172} Poyser recognized also the thoroughly English character of the music, yet his review was far from blindly enthusiastic. He noted:

The public is only too ready and willing to appraise and appreciate this form of work which has a flavour of the folk-song about it and which is, in all its attributes, essentially English. . . . Here was old England--the delightful old England of Addison and Steele--put upon the boards of an English theatre in so complete a manner as to eclipse mere illusion and beget reality.

The music has the lilt of homely English airs about it and, when necessary, the words and melodies of our national songs are introduced to give the requisite local colour. Of course the "additional lyrics" by Shakespeare, Ben Johnson [sic] and


\textsuperscript{170}The premiere occurred at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester on 12 November 1906. It was first performed in London at the Prince of Wales' Theatre exactly one month later.


\textsuperscript{172}Lehmann had called the work a "Light Romantic Opera."
Goldsmith proved more than mere powerful rivals to Mr. Laurence Housman's muse; and the fragrant tunes of "Come, lassies and lads," "Drink to me only," and others that have defied the lapse of time, made Miss Liza Lehmann's melodies seem but well-intentioned imitations and nothing more.  

While Poyser assessed the work as falling short of the Savoy prototypes, his reception was, nevertheless, enthusiastic as he expressed hope that it would mark the resurgence of "a native art-form so long neglected and set aside for less worthy entertainments."  

Although these and other composers created a degree of excitement regarding the compositional future for English opera, the arrival of Thomas Beecham upon the operatic scene in 1909 generated the greatest promise of an awakening. Although Beecham had founded the New Symphony Orchestra in 1906, the beginnings of his importance to the cause of English national opera date from 22 June 1909 with his performance of Smyth's *The Wreckers* at the Afternoon Theatre (His Majesty's Theatre). Shortly thereafter he was considered to be one conductor who would promote the interests of the English composer and English music. He firmly believed that there was no lack of musical talent in England, rather a lack of recognition of that talent. The only thing lacking in the cause of English grand opera was the support of the English public for the medium. In respect to a national opera house he was quoted as saying, "if a public can be shown to exist, an opera house will follow."  

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175 We might mention here Frederick Delius and Joseph Holbrooke as two other opera composers who appeared in the late part of the decade. Delius's *Koanga* and *A Village Romeo and Juliet* were premiered on the continent in 1904 and 1907, respectively. Although the former was not performed in England until 1935, the first English performance of the latter work was at Covent Garden (22 February 1910). Holbrooke's arrival was marked by performances of *The Stranger* (His Majesty's, 1908), *Pierrot and Pierette* (His Majesty's, 1909).

The following year marked Beecham's first season at Covent Garden, which included productions of *The Wreckers* (Smyth), *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (Delius), and a revival of Sullivan's *Ivanhoe*, in addition to productions of Strauss operas. Arthur Poyser expressed enthusiasm in his report of the revival of *Ivanhoe*, seeing in Beecham a new hope for the future of English opera. "Since D'Oyly Carte's time we have had no such men as Beecham, and his excellent man of affairs, Mr. Thomas Quinlan, to pave the way for native talent. They have performed wonders already: but that is nothing to what they may yet do if the people of England really desire a national school of opera."\(^{177}\)

Later that same year Beecham announced his plan to present a season of opera in English at His Majesty's. Among the twelve operas were two native works--Stanford's *Shamus O'Brien* and Clutsam's *A Summer Night*. Following the London season Beecham took his troupe on tour of the provinces for four months, visiting Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Birmingham, in addition to Dublin, Belfast, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. Of this venture Tom Browne wrote: "If in this matter any man can give us faith in ourselves, faith in the future as a musical nation, it is assuredly Thomas Beecham."\(^{178}\) After listing Beecham's achievements on behalf of the plight of native musical composition in England, Browne continued: "In all his achievements of the past, his plans for the future, British art has a foremost place; from which it would appear that at present in Thomas Beecham lies the hope of British opera."\(^{179}\)

Although Beecham had planned to include more native works in his second season at Covent Garden (1911)--specifically Delius's *Koanga*, and revivals of Mackenzie's

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\(^{178}\) Tom Browne, "The Opera Season: Is an Awakening at Hand?", *MO* 33 (September 1910): 841.

\(^{179}\) *Ibid.*
Colomba and Sullivan's Ivanhoe—no native works were produced there. Yet, his contributions to English musical life were nonetheless significant as he introduced Diaghilev's Russian Ballet to London audiences in 1911 and almost single-handedly kept the cause of English operatic performances alive during the First World War.

In his 1915 and 1916 seasons at the Shaftesbury and the Aldwych Theatres, Beecham performed twenty-five operas, all but two in English. At the Shaftesbury three native works were performed, namely Lehmann's Everyman (28 December 1915), Stanford's The Critic (14 January 1916), and Smyth's The Boatswain's Mate (28 January 1916). A reviewer, writing in the Era Annual, noted the amazing accomplishment of staging nearly 300 performances in a period of about 40 weeks during the heart of wartime. Yet the most encouraging aspect of Beecham's achievement from the point of view of native opera, the writer continued, was in the:

production of these three British works, and the unqualified success of two of them. Opinions were divided about "Everyman" but "The Critic" and "The Boatswain's Mate" both in book and music combine British sentiment and British humour so happily that their places in public esteem seem to be assured.

Despite the success of his wartime accomplishment, Beecham was quite forthcoming in his scornful remarks regarding the London public and its attitude toward opera. A key catalyst in the cultivation of this attitude was the press, Beecham argued, which devoted considerably more attention to the latest music hall revue, than to the production of a new opera. Consequently, the readership was given the idea that opera lacked importance. Of the capital city Beecham asserted:

London is nothing but a mob. It has no pride in its institutions--no character--no dignity--no anything. There are two publics for opera. There's the upper-ten public,
who don't care very much about paying for it, but are willing to come and hear it—that is, after the first or second Act. To suggest that they might change their dinner-hour, and so arrive at the theatre in time for the overture, would give them a galvanic shock from which they would never recover. . . . They'll fall down and worship every long-haired, unwashed foreigner that comes over here to bang the piano or scrape the fiddle out of tune, but they simply won't believe that English people can play or sing or do anything. Then there's the other public who like "Faust," because they know it; "Butterfly," because it's sentimental; "Boheme," because it's short and lively, and they don't want to hear any other opera ever. 182

Another report of Beecham's remarks included all of the English people, where it was reported that they “are the most commonplace, uncultured race in Europe. Their intelligence is just about equal to the cinema, or the gramophone, or football, or cricket.” 183

In their response to Beecham's accomplishment, many critics believed that he had done a significant work for national opera, particularly in his attempt to create a opera-going public. 184 Yet this was not enough, they believed. The next stage in the process needed to be addressed—the fostering of a real school of English opera. While some would question whether Beecham had done all he could for this phase of the development of native opera, none would deny the significance of his accomplishment for the cause of opera in English. Some would make even bolder statements. Edmondstoune Duncan wrote: "When the history of English music comes to be written, the doings of Sir Thomas Beecham, Bart., will be found to sum up much of the greatest vital force of our time." 185

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182Sir Thomas Beecham, quoted in MT 57 (1 September 1916): 404. Walter Wearenear-Yeomans found Beecham's remarks justified. "London has never properly appreciated Beecham, and he is wise to work in the provinces, where concentration of effort is more easy than in London, which is too vast for centralisation." Walter Wearenear-Yeomans, "The Enterprise of Thomas Beecham," MS, n.ill.s., 11 (5 January 1918): 11.

183Sir Thomas Beecham, quoted in MH, no. 822 (1 September 1916): 312.


Wearenear-Yeomans was no less enthusiastic in his praise for Beecham’s wartime accomplishment. “In all his work Beecham is alone, and, therefore, he is unique. Never before in the world’s history have we had one man, or even a combination of men, doing this work which is of supreme national importance. There is no official conventions around Beecham. He is a man of action who believes in rapid progress.”

While the importance of Beecham’s work during wartime was substantial, closer examination of the period reveals a number of vital efforts during the war decade. These included the publication of important books, the continued agitation for a national opera house and state subsidy, and the Glastonbury experiment of Rutland Boughton.

*The War Decade (1911-20)*

The decade began with the publication of two books that would greatly influence the national opera discussions, Boughton and Buckley’s *The Music Drama of the Future* and Forsyth’s *Music and Nationalism*. The former consisted of essays written by composer Rutland Boughton and poet Reginald Buckley, together with the libretto for *Uther and Igraine*, the first of a series of music-dramas dealing with contemporary Britain, yet based upon national legend.

In his “Essay on Choral Drama” Boughton set forth his plan to continue the work begun by Wagner. Boughton claimed that Wagner had “opened the way to the perfection of modern dramatic art,” but had not worked out all of the implications of his aesthetic construct.

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188 As the full range of Boughton’s argumentation is outside the bounds of this study we will confine our remarks to those aspects of the discussion that relate directly to his principal goal and the cause of national opera.
In essence, Boughton commended Wagner’s use of national legend as he strove for an indigenous symbol to represent the religious side of his music-dramas. Boughton saw the religious aspect of drama as that which communicates the sense of mystery and wonder which, when blended with beauty, made authentic dramatic art possible. Yet, this was a dramatic art necessarily wedded to real everyday life and was no longer to be found in churches. “The drama of life is only possible where the sense of wonder grows creative in beauty... But although the element of Beauty is preserved in the churches it is out of all contact with reality... A life without beauty is a dungeon; but beauty without life is a madhouse.”

It was this attention to the religious element that prompted Wagner to distinguish between opera and music-drama. Where opera is amusement, the music-drama is a divine service. Opera, Boughton wrote, is a “story composed for the amusement of theatre-goers who like a good proportion of music thrown in,” and consequently belongs to the lowest order. Music-drama, on the other hand, is “a story of the symbolic type which can only be adequately expressed in the continuous emotional mood of music,” and thus belongs to the highest order.

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189Boughton had argued that a crucial step in the growth of human drama had been achieved when it attained a religious significance. As symbol is an important device in religious expression, so also is music. In fact, he believed the connection between music and expression of a religious idea was so strong they were inextricably bound. “Music is, in fact, the only really creative art; and no religious drama, using music, can fail to become a music-drama, while if it do [sic] not use music it ceases to be religious.” Ibid., 4.

190He wrote: “It is only when men realise that sacred and secular things cannot be separated that they are able to laugh at them in the absurdity of their isolation; or, better still, recreate their joy afresh by reuniting them in Fiona Macleod’s trinity of wonder and mystery and beauty.” Ibid., 12.

191Ibid., 11-12.

192Boughton further stated that opera may be composed according to a recipe, while “a music-drama must be waited upon, because the composer must first of all undergo a living religious experience which enables him to express the mystery of spiritual drama with clearness and conviction.” Thus, the music-drama will always be an expression of the realities of the creator’s inner life. Ibid., 20.
The music-drama has three principal elements—physical, intellectual, emotional—that make three distinct appeals. Of the latter two Boughton observed that the intellectual element was conveyed through the words, while the emotional element arose “when the intellect gets into contact with vast vague feelings of mystery, wonder, beauty.”

According to Boughton, Wagner fell short in the way in which he related these elements to one another. Wagner successfully subordinated the physical and sensuous dramatic appeal to the intellectual. “What he did not thoroughly understand was the equal necessity for the subordination of the intellectual appeal, if music-drama is to reach that spiritual place which music demands for its due development.” Simply put, Boughton felt that Wagner was too purely intellectual.

All of Boughton’s essay had been leading up to this point as he now introduced his plan to succeed where Wagner had failed.

The reason of Wagner’s incomplete success was not, as so many of his critics say, that he was too great a musician to write dramas. The exact reverse is the case—he was not sufficiently consecutive a musical thinker to write music-dramas. He gave us a taste of them, but his frequent reversion to the intellectual attitude of the prose-drama effectually prevented him from achieving thoroughly what he set out to do. Brought up, as he was, in the atmosphere of the secular theatre, he could not be expected to realise what the old Greeks knew so well, and some modern churches still have a faint conception of—the atmosphere of the “Mass.” Therefore, it was that he missed the significance of the most important factor of all in music-drama—the significance of the chorus.

In his description of the genesis of his idea Boughton observed that the one element lacking in the Wagnerian drama was (by a strange and fortuitous circumstance) the very same which is the very channel of English musical expression, namely the chorus. He then

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193 Ibid., 21.

194 Boughton cited Wagner’s failure to sustain the emotional content of Tristan und Isolde, Act II in King Marke’s intellectualization. He also pointed to the parallel act in Die Walküre.

195 Ibid., 24-25.
described how he sought to combine the Wagnerian dramatic style with soloist and choral expression in the English oratorio.\(^{196}\)

One of the more important features of this discussion is his concept of the “oversoul” of a people and the ability of music to express that identity. In an earlier treatise “Music and Democracy,” Boughton had become aware of the “truly popular nature of all the greatest art and of the fact that the greatest artists acquire their superhuman power by acting as the expression of the oversoul of a people.” Furthermore, Boughton recounted his own understanding of the purpose which led Wagner to choose folk-subjects—namely, that they were produced by that “oversoul.” In response to his discovery, Boughton planned an operatic cycle based upon Arthurian stories. Shortly thereafter, however, he received a cycle of poems for music-dramas on Arthurian subjects written by Reginald Buckley. The poems had been sent initially to Elgar, and then to Bantock—both of whom declined the poet's invitation—before finally settling in Boughton's hands. Boughton wrote: “These poems were planned for Wagnerian treatment—the passages for purely musical development being represented by what Buckley called a verbal orchestra—and the whole thing was so musically suggestive that I jumped at it.”\(^{197}\)

Recounting the dramatic functions served by the chorus in Greek drama—to create the right emotional atmosphere and to move the story forward wherever the psychology of the crowd was needed—Boughton stated that neither had been properly developed by Wagner.\(^{198}\) Boughton then proceeded to describe the comparative functions of on-stage

\(^{196}\)He described how he laid out a 14-day epic on the subject of Jesus Christ in which he depicted scenes from Christ's life in Wagnerian dramatic style and applied those scenes to modern life in the form of English oratorio. This work, he had hoped, would be the crowning achievement of his life.

\(^{197}\)Boughton, Music-Drama , 26.

\(^{198}\)Boughton suggests that Wagner had used only the orchestra to achieve the first function, that of creating the emotional atmosphere. As for the second, Boughton notes Wagner's employment of the chorus to provide the interaction of the individual characters and the mass-peoples in Rienzi and Die Meistersinger.
vs. orchestral choruses in his music-drama concept. The on-stage chorus would serve in many capacities—sometimes as a "symbolic representative of mental and natural powers," more often as revealing the interaction of the individual characters and the mass-peoples.\(^{199}\)

Boughton proceeded to argue, however, that the most important choral function is the communication of the "mass feeling of the chorus." The choral element was most vital in national music since it revealed:

the sense that the nation is gaining expression as well in the whole as in its more outstanding details of typical individuality; and for Wagner to sacrifice that mass-expression, using the chorus for little but processions and forms of ritual, is a sheer loss, not only of medium, but of dramatic breadth also. For in the mass of peoples there is an oversoul quite distinct from the quantity of its individuals, even as the mass of trees we call a forest gives a feeling, not only nor chiefly of a number of trees massed, but a feeling of mystery and solemnity of which the single tree has no suggestion. To attempt a national festival drama and omit the nation is leaving out the main dramatic factor with a vengeance.\(^{200}\)

While Boughton saw this national role of the on-stage chorus as the most important one of many, it was the sole \textit{raison d'etre} for the orchestral chorus. Because the on-stage chorus was there also as an objective dramatic vehicle, "it can never give a convincing subjective expression to the extent which is necessary if the hearts of the onlookers themselves are to be drawn into the play."\(^{201}\)

In essence, the key innovation of Boughton's work was the role of the orchestral chorus, which carried the essence of nationality and, in his view, superseded the choral orchestra of Wagner.

The choral orchestra of Wagner has for its function the sense-expression of the primitive wonder; but only our orchestral chorus can link-on the feeling and the action to minds of the audience, and join them in the feeling that the drama is their own, both individually and as a joyously united body. The congregational chorales in Bach's

\(^{199}\)As in the second dramatic function cited above.


\(^{201}\)\textit{Ibid.}, 31.
"Passions" afford an elementary example of such a chorus; and it is well known that the Greek drama acted as the very heart's core of the national life. The latter fact was due in some degree to the national myths, but clearly also to the fact that by means of the chorus the people were bound heart to heart in an immediate act of religious worship.\(^{202}\)

Boughton proceeded to argue from the abstract to the specific. He contended that the use of an orchestral chorus, in principle, would serve to draw the audience into the music-drama in ways not anticipated by Wagner. Boughton felt that this is especially true of England. "The choral singing which is the chief glory of British music, and the love of pageantry which is now so happily reviving, find their inevitable union and climax in such a work as ours."\(^{203}\) He declared that choral drama will succeed where all else has failed in the history of art.

As was the case with Wagner and Bayreuth, Boughton claimed that the music-dramas envisioned by Buckley and himself would necessitate the building of a new theater. This Temple Theatre, as it was forenamed by Buckley, would serve as a religious center of an artistic commune.\(^{204}\)

In his essay "The Growth of Dreams," Reginald Buckley provided his own rationale for the national music-drama scheme. Buckley, as did Boughton, candidly stated his indebtedness to the Wagnerian model, particularly the *Ring of the Nibelung*. Writing of his plan to "hew a huge music-drama . . . with Merlin as Britain's Isaiah, Galahad her Parsifal, Arthur her type of manhood," Buckley envisioned a "dramatic and poetic art,


\(^{203}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{204}\) *Ibid.*, 37. Boughton wrote: "The theatre we are intent on making the centre of a commune. There have been many communes and they have failed—for lack of a religious centre. Our theatre supplies that. It shall grow out of the municipal life of some civically conscious place if we can get such a place to co-operate with us. Failing that, a new city shall grow around the theatre."
wherein the sane, healthy England might bathe, as in the pure, rhythmic sea of Cornwall, loved by all flaming souls, from the Table Round till now.”

_Uther and Igraine_ constituted the first attempt to bring national legends before the people in contemporary guise. As Buckley wrote: “We do not seek to exhume the body of Arthur, but to bring the soul of him into modern life, till the Arthurian spirit become [sic] as potent a factor in the people’s life as a budget or an education bill.” Finally, Buckley stated his dream for a happier and healthier England as a result of their national efforts. “A strong and loving humanity, encouraged by a clean, national art, is our dream. With your goodwill, we will strive further to symbolise the heroes of our island home, kindling images to make life more lovely and art more full of hope.”

A principal respondent to the volume of Boughton and Buckley was Douglas Donaldson, writing in the _Musical Standard._ Donaldson was somewhat skeptical of such lofty ideals as those finding expression in the above quotation and, in fact, accused the writers of being smart and wily businessmen. While Donaldson did find agreement with many of the views expressed, he did level some dispute. For instance, he contended that Wagner employed the orchestra as he did specifically because he “knew the inability of words to express the value and composite atmospheric background--of peoples, lands and epochs--necessary to a drama of epic proportions.” Donaldson further remarked that in

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205 Buckley, _Music-Drama_, 45.

206 Ibid., 47-48.

207 Ibid., 52.


209 Ibid., 5.
Uther and Igraine he saw little evidence, if any, that Boughton and Buckley had succeeded where Wagner failed.

Much of the ensuing dialogue was in respect to the quality of Buckley's poetry (since the music had not yet appeared), but Boughton did respond to Donaldson's point regarding Wagner. Writing from Berlin on his way to Bayreuth Boughton responded to Donaldson's "chief blunder" in that he imagined:

that the orchestral chorus was intended to supplant the work of Wagner's choral orchestra. Of the value of Wagner's work in this direction, perhaps, we also have some slight appreciation. However, as complementary to that, we believe that our orchestral chorus is a real contribution to the art of the Drama.\(^{210}\)

The following month Boughton, from Berlin, took advantage of another opportunity to advance his views regarding the possibilities of a national music-drama.

Boughton contrasted the English and German views toward the opera.

Opera in England is the most exquisite amusement of the cultured; in Germany it is a real act of religious worship. In England it is practically confined to London in the fashionable season; in Germany it takes place in every town of decent size all the year round, the Sunday performances being the most popular. In England it is run upon a commercial basis, and limited accordingly; in Germany it is supported by the States and municipalities, which recognize that all the arts are of immense importance in the development of national character, and opera of especial importance because it unites music and the drama, the two arts of strongest and widest appeal. . . . The German audiences listen and enjoy. The English audiences go to be amused and very often get bored.\(^{211}\)

The key to England's musical future was to be found in a changed attitude toward music, one that was cognizant of music's spiritual power, particularly when united with drama.

Once we get it forced in upon us that music is a divine mystery, and drama the most influential (for good or evil) of all the arts, we shall at once see to it that music shall be continuously allied with noble thoughts and feelings, and in their union continually offered to the British people for their spiritual uplifting. We cannot afford to give our national carelessness the rein here. We cannot carry out any great destiny in the world unless we are open to receive beautiful and noble ideas. Nothing so predisposes men to ideas as when their feelings are excited in sympathy therewith; and music, of all

\(^{210}\)Rutland Boughton, "Reply," MS, ill.s., 36 (15 July 1911): 42.

things known, is the most powerful agent in this matter. A great national music-drama
could regenerate the British people.212

Cecil Forsyth's *Music and Nationalism* was another attempt to analyze the problems
of English national opera and propose a solution respecting its future. On the first page of
his volume Forsyth stated the primary maxim that prompted his study. “Failure demands a
philosophy by which to explain itself, while success calls only for a chronology of
praise.”213 In essence, Forsyth sought to answer the question as to why the English
people had never been able to develop a school of national opera. He set forth the problem
stating:

In music alone, and especially in Operatic music, England has failed. A scholar may,
indeed, count to her credit a solitary artistic figure whose genius illuminated the first
days of her Operatic history,214 but his name and his works are now almost as little in
her memory as that of the builder of Stonehenge. Nor, of all the works written since
his death, can we reckon more than two which she still hears with pleasure;215 and,
when we qualify our reckoning by the consideration that these two works, in their
threadbare poverty, now excite only her languid attention, we may safely say that no
single English Opera exists in which the English people recognize any full expression
of themselves, of their aspirations, or of their national genius.216

Having stated the problem, Forsyth then offered his explanation for its existence.
He first listed those pursuits in which England had distinguished itself—poetry, painting,
statecraft, navigation, and exploration—where “we find men whose iron will, far-seeing
wisdom, and incarnate imagination place them above and in front of their European
contemporaries.”217 In stark contrast were the operatic composers “whose almost

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212Ibid.

1911), 1.

214Henry Purcell

215Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl* and Wallace's *Maritana*


217Ibid., 4
unearthly want of courage and imagination condemns them irrevocably to a place behind and beneath their own generation.”218

Seeking to provide an explanation for this situation, Forsyth presented his theory of externality. Foundational to this theory was the belief that the successful cultivation of music demanded “long periods in which the general average trend of the national mind is inwards.” England, unlike Germany, belonged to a class of nation (like ancient Rome) whose gaze and energies were directed outside its borders. Such an attitude, Forsyth contended, checks the growth of national art, which must proceed from internal focus.219

Forsyth cited Germany as providing an example of this introspective artistic climate. “In such a nation there is no national projection of energy outwards, but there is an intense and cherishing spirit of national pride inwards—a spirit which often produces a sturdy defensive militarism and which ties up the whole nation into a band of brotherhood.”220

According to Forsyth, the preoccupation of England with achieving importance outside her borders had stifled her musical significance. While the other arts could bear the externalizing tension, it played havoc with a nation’s music.221 English musical progress had been frustrated by the “terrible weight of externality” that had existed for three centuries. Forsyth neatly encapsulated his theory as follows. “It may almost be said that national musical productivity is in inverse ratio to sea-power.”222

218Ibid.
219See Ibid., 32-45.
220Ibid., 37.
221Forsyth considered poetry, painting, and sculpture as external art forms.
222Ibid., 42, 87.
A parallel concern that proceeded from the above problem was the English obsession with imports, in this case the foreign musician. Forsyth asserted that the efforts of the upper classes to impose foreign culture upon the national popular culture had produced a continual struggle between these two factions. The virtual inaccessibility of Covent Garden to the native composer well demonstrated Forsyth's point.

The charge against it [Covent Garden] is not that its record is not grand and glorious, but that it has achieved a record in which we have no part and from which we can draw as a nation neither present benefit nor hope for the future. Its grandeur and its glory are to us as the grandeur and glory of one foreign country which defeats another.

Later in his essay, Forsyth wondered:

How long will it be before we realise the fact that where the foreign musician is there is the enemy. He may come to this island in shoals, but he comes for one purpose only—the money he can take back across the water, and well he knows that the surest way to make his position firm here is to denationalize our music.

Despite the problems that plagued English opera in its past, Forsyth nevertheless expressed optimism respecting its future. One reason for his optimism was his belief that the time was drawing near when the Empire could no longer be expanded, thus checking her tendency toward externalization. “Given such a case, where the nation has at once great wealth and the opportunity of peaceful reflection, the musical results should be on a scale of strangeness and immensity hitherto unknown.”

Yet the opportunities that lay on the horizon would need to generate a truly national opera based upon the national temperament and national convictions, and reflect the dramatic instincts of the people—not the foreign bias of the aristocracy. In his most extensive statement of hope, Forsyth articulated his vision for an English national opera.

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223 Ibid., 124.
224 Ibid., 131.
225 Ibid., 260-61.
226 Ibid.
It is surely not too much to look forward to the day when opera will no longer be allowed to stand alone in its present isolated pre-eminence as a matter of national unconcern. Till that day arrives the operatic composer must remain silent. He cannot turn for inspiration, as he should turn, to the magic of his atmosphere, the infinite variety of his scenery, his woodland-ways and sweetly running waters, the noble silent spaces of his great downs, his countryside and its cottages that hold his folk-lore, the little happiness of his home, the drawn curtains and the blazing fire; the heavy magnificence that glows through his slowly moving dreams of eastern empire, the august procession of his saints and heroes passing through his imagination like an army of torchmen; even the sea itself that is at his feet winter and summer calling aloud for an expression which it has never yet known. All this noble inheritance which he should be able to join, in his drama, to the passions of men and women, must remain for him a thing only to be remembered, not revealed.227

Forsyth's opinions and recommendations provoked considerable discussion in the reviews of his book that appeared in the professional literature. Douglas Donaldson in his review of *Music and Nationalism* was sympathetic with Forsyth's thesis, calling the work the "latest and sanest attempt to analyze the question."228 Yet, in the second of his articles on the topic, Donaldson revealed that he was not concerned with whether the causes assigned by Forsyth to account for national sterility were true and sufficient. Donaldson's interest in the book, it appears, was more attributable to Forsyth's championing of the idea of national opera than to Forsyth's analysis of the specific cause of the problem.229 In Donaldson's view English opera was in a lamentable state because it had never truly been cultivated. He writes:

From the importation of Italian works in the eighteenth century to that of modern French in the twentieth, our operatic history has been, from the national point of view, one of continued degradation. Excepting that rather doubtful growth the "ballad opera" there is nothing of importance that is really English until Gilbert and Sullivan. And there is very little since, as we all know.230

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227Ibid. 301.


229Douglas Donaldson, "English Opera that is to be," *MS*, ill.s., 37 (20 January 1912): 36-37.

230Ibid.
He concluded, therefore, that England's operatic greatness must lie in her future.

Furthermore, it would be achieved in the form of an opera that was not elitist, but had a broad-based popular appeal. He continues:

> Until the public demands opera, declares itself willing to pay for opera, as it does just now for bioscopes and music-halls, our much-battered Magdalen must continue to crawl from pillar to post as she does to-day... Either opera is dead or it has not yet lived... If there is to be an English operatic school it must not languish in early infancy for lack of nourishment. Everything points to the need for a state subsidy.\(^{231}\)

The only hope for opera in England, Donaldson argued, was the foundation of a national opera, supported by state subsidy, driven by significant contributions by English nationally-minded composers, and patronized by a public that sensed its value to English national life.

A crucial inconsistency with Forsyth's externality theory was pointed out by Fuller Maitland in a review that appeared in the *Musical Times*\(^{232}\). Forsyth had written that England had been an exteriorizing type of nation "from Elizabeth's day till now." That England during Elizabeth's reign was an externally-focused sea power was a well-established fact. Yet, equally well-established was the high standard of musical composition that characterized that same period. In other words, Forsyth's dictum that "national musical productivity is in inverse ratio to sea-power," was clearly refuted by the achievements of the age of Elizabeth. To be sure, if Forsyth was specifically addressing his argument to the rise and cultivation of opera his point might stand, but he did not seem to distinguish operatic output from general musical life at this stage of his thesis.

Forsyth's most severe critic was Rosa Newmarch, who referred to his book as "an example of the patriotic spirit run wild and pushed to unprofitable extremes."\(^{233}\) While she

\(^{231}\)Douglas Donaldson, "English Opera that is to be," *MS*, ill.s., 37 (27 January 1912): 53-54.


did grant that the first part of the book was interesting "if not completely sound," she took
great exception to his attitude toward foreign musicians in the second part.

Despite their different foci both *Music Drama of the Future* and *Music and Nationalism* were attempts to breathe life into English opera through the establishment of an opera that was truly national. The issue of government subsidy was not absent from these books, nor from other writings appearing during the war decade.

The experience of Oscar Hammerstein, in particular, provoked the renewed interest in the discussion.\(^{234}\) J. Cuthbert Hadden in the pages of *Musical Opinion* rehearsed the traditional arguments for state subsidy: the appeal to Continental precedent, a comparison of government spending between music and all other arts,\(^{235}\) the impossibility of maintaining an opera based upon private enterprise. He also reminded his readers of the Parliamentary White Paper that had appeared in 1904, and offered a review of its contents.\(^{236}\) Hadden concluded:

> Now what Italy, France, Germany and Belgium can do, England can surely do also. Is there any reason why England should not follow the example of these musically enlightened countries? Is there any reason why (say) the small capital of Bavaria should produce a complete cycle of the operas of Mozart or of Gluck while England remains ignorant even of the names of the majority of them?\(^{237}\)

A new aspect in Hadden's discussion was his dispute with the supply and demand theory of national opera that had been argued by Edward Baughan and others. He contended that this principle was not quite so tenable in art as in economics, and argued that

\(^{234}\)Oscar Hammerstein had arrived from America in 1911, and initiated a season at his newly-built London Opera House. Unfortunately, the venture failed and Hammerstein left the country after but one year.

\(^{235}\)The state subsidy figure for literature and art, cited by Hadden was c. £342,000 (not including Ireland and Scotland). Music, he said, received but a slim £1000 for training purposes at RCM and RAM.

\(^{236}\)See fn. 159.

\(^{237}\)J. Cuthbert Hadden, "Should Opera be Subsidised?," *MO* 36 (October 1912): 11.
supply and demand exist in a reciprocal relationship in the latter but not in art. "If demand creates supply, supply also creates demand. In art matters, a big section of the public never knows what it wants. Less than thirty years ago, the British public did not want Wagner at any price; to-day, Wagner is the god of the music drama." Hadden extended his argument to include operatic genius as well, stating that genius was also dependent upon opportunity for its cultivation. "Certainly we have no such 'genius' for opera as the Italian has, but that is largely because we have not had the Italian's opportunity of developing what 'genius' we possess. Opera in Italy is a national affair, supported and fostered in every possible way by the nation in its corporate capacity." That a poor country like Italy can support 250 grand opera companies at a given point in the year, while all of Great Britain has but a half-dozen was, he maintained, the strongest argument in favor of state subsidy.

The debate over state subsidy continued along lines similar to those it had followed in previous decades, with essentially the same points being bantered back and forth. The state subsidy debate was not laid to rest until Britain found herself embedded in deeper concerns affecting her survival—namely, the First World War. Yet one must not assume that the hope for national opera diminished during the war. The light that shone from

\[\text{\textsuperscript{238}}\text{Ibid.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{239}}\text{Ibid.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{240}}\text{Manners, the quoted source of Hadden's information, in a letter to } MO \text{ corrected Hadden's figure, raising the number of Italian opera companies to 360. cf. Charles Manners, "Should Opera be Subsidised?," } MO \text{ 36 (December 1912): 196.}\]

Glastonbury marked a vigil until the nation could manage once again to pursue her aesthetic interests.

The Glastonbury enterprise of Boughton and Buckley virtually dominated the press discussions of native opera during the war years. Boughton's advocacy of a national opera went at least as far back as 1901 when he contributed a brief article to the *Musical Standard* entitled "National Opera: The Chances of it." In his mention of Greek drama and the German national operatic achievement, Boughton clearly anticipated the course of his later discussion in *The Music Drama of the Future*. Not holding any hope that Covent Garden would lead the way toward establishing a national opera, Boughton hoped for: "An Opera which shall be as much a part of our national existence as the Greek drama to the children of the cradle of art; or 'Der Freischütz' and the Wagnerian works to the modern German—to the living pages of which we can resort rather than to the dead and dusted tomes of our school days."242

According to Boughton, because there was no national opera, composers, like Elgar, were forced to channel their dramatic expression into mongrel forms, such as the cantata. Writing of Elgar's *Caractacus*, Boughton asked: "Had there been a national opera think you Elgar would have preferred the half-hearted mule of a cantata?"243 While Elgar was the only composer mentioned by name, Boughton did suggest that there were other talented composers, even younger, waiting for their opportunity. In retrospect it is difficult not to regard the article's closing paragraph as a cloaked self-advertisement. "When will he

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242 Rutland Boughton, "National Opera: The Chances of it," *MS*, ill.s., 16 (10 August 1901): 85. In the leader that appeared in the same issue the writer, while admiring Boughton's enthusiasm, distanced himself from Boughton's opinions regarding national opera. cf. 84.

arrive who shall give this embryonic British Art its initial impetus? His hour is quickening; and, whoever he be, his name will be a scarlet fire in its annals for ever."

To date, it does not appear that the name of Rutland Boughton has become "a scarlet fire" in the eternal annals of British art, yet the significance of his work on behalf of national opera during World War I was recognized by his contemporaries. One writer, commenting in the midst of the war, wrote:

\[\text{I believe that Boughton's work will eventually be recognised as one of the most remarkable achievements in the story of our music. It may not reach its full fruition for many years; but he is advancing ideas (in some tribulation at present), which I am convinced will, sooner or later, come to very joyful harvest. By reason of his unique endowments he is our national leader in this matter.}\]

Plans for the Glastonbury Music-Drama Festival had begun with Buckley's and Boughton's collaboration in 1907, and were fully articulated in *The Music Drama of the Future* of 1911. That volume also contained, as we have seen, a description of the genesis of their plan to produce a series of music-dramas based upon King Arthur. Thus, the idea of Glastonbury Music Drama Festival and the Arthurian cycle were conceptually bound from the beginning.

An important component of their Glastonbury scheme was the construction of a special festival theater that would become a national art center. Thus, the plan offered not only hope for the cause of Boughton and Buckley, but for the cause of national art. As Caunt wrote: "If they should be able to collect the necessary funds to build the theatre that they need for the production of the Arthursian trilogy, there is no doubt that there will be at last a home for English music, and an opportunity for English composers to have their

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244 *Ibid.*

works produced under the best conditions." The Festival began in August 1914--the same month as World War I--without the benefit of a newly-constructed theater.

The initial work slated for production at that first Festival was *The Birth of Arthur*, a substantially-revised version of *Uther and Igraine*, the prologue to the trilogy that had appeared in *Music Drama of the Future*. As of 1914 the other titles in the "Arthur of Britain" cycle were *Merlin*, *The Holy Spear*, and *The Death of Arthur*.

Yet even when the festival idea had been projected, many asked: "Why Glastonbury?" One principal reason was the long-held suspicion that London had little if any potential to foster national art, particularly opera. As a result, some national opera advocates were inclined to consider the possibility of the provinces.

Glastonbury had many features that supported Boughton's choice of it for a national art center. In addition to having an abbey and being surrounded by beautiful and typical English scenery, Glastonbury could boast many traditional and historical associations. It was popularly believed to be the place of King Arthur's burial, as well as the site of the Holy Grail. Thus, considering Boughton's conception of a music-drama

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247 Boughton, looking back upon the time and circumstances in which the Festival began, determined that those factors which seemed most threatening turned out to be most helpful. He named three benefits in particular: the delay in the construction of a theater that allowed him time and opportunity to attain valuable knowledge in that respect, the situation further allowed the festival participants to develop along more individual lines, and finally the circumstances helped them to develop a deeper concept of what constituted a national school of music drama. He wrote that they were "forced into presentations in a simple, natural, straightforward manner, expressing ourselves by means of those subjects and that musical idiom which lie nearest to us." Rutland Boughton, "The Glastonbury Festival School and Its Work," *MT* 57 (1 June 1916): 280-81.

248 At the time of the first Glastonbury Festival, only the music of *The Birth of Arthur* had been performed. See W. L. C., "A British Bayreuth," 270-71.

cycle based upon King Arthur, Glastonbury seemed to be a logical choice of location for a national music-drama. Furthermore, choral singing, which figured prominently in Boughton's plan, had long been associated not only with English musical life, but specifically with provincial life. Charles Kennedy Scott, one of Boughton's chief supporters, wrote:

For good or evil the chorus has always been the chief factor in English musical life; it still seems to hold good even in these days of increased attention to the orchestra. The problem is to build upon our national resources, and as these resources can be joined with music-drama in a perfectly natural and unstrained way, there is at least a prospect of much hope about it all.250

Many articles about the Festival, by Scott and others, leaned more toward advocacy than criticism. They plainly sought to arouse and enlist public support, both moral and financial, for the Glastonbury venture. For instance, Walter Wearenear-Yeomans declared specifically that his purpose in writing was to create a lively public interest in the Festival. Yet, H. C. Colles provided a more objective glimpse of the Glastonbury experiment.251

Colles's article was occasioned by the first complete performance of any of the Arthurian music-dramas, namely The Round Table.252 He found the work, particularly the first act, to be dangerously similar to another music-drama, and observed that "only the adroitness of the musical treatment saves the drama from becoming a pale reflection of the 'Ring.'"253 Writing of the performance adjustments necessitated by wartime, Colles also noted "one is convinced that the final establishment of the Arthurian cycle of music-dramas

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250Ibid.


252Performed 14 August 1916. Although scenes from The Birth of Arthur had been performed the previous year, the entire opera was not performed until 16 August 1920.

253Colles, "Glastonbury Music-Dramas," 399.
will be something very different from the original conception, as well as different from the makeshift presentation which is the only one possible now."²⁵⁴

Another work performed during that third Glastonbury Festival was Boughton's *The Immortal Hour*. This music-drama, based upon Fiona Macleod's version of an old Celtic legend, had been premiered during Glastonbury's first year before enjoying four successful performances at Bournemouth in January 1915. A enthusiastic reviewer observed:

Mr. Rutland Boughton's setting of this story belongs emphatically to the things that are new. The composer is one of the boldest and most progressive of the younger school of British musicians. His work is striking and original. And in the present instance, he has furnished us with a notable specimen of modern English music, - a native work based on a native legend.²⁵⁵

The Glastonbury experiment, however, suffered a halt in its progress in September 1916 when Boughton was denied exemption from military service. Boughton's enlistment provoked an outburst from George Bernard Shaw among others. In a letter written to the *Western Daily Press* Shaw denounced the action of the tribunal in forcing into the military one who had:

By extraordinary ability and perseverance, succeeded in founding a school of music, and in presenting a series of elaborate and highly serious musical and dramatic entertainments, carried out in all their details by native talent. He has attracted singers of international reputation who have come to help him as volunteers; and, what is more, he has been able to place beside them pupils of his own who have sustained the comparison so well that I do not hesitate to say that as an old and experienced musical critic, that they could not have been replaced with advantage from the most famous centres of musical culture in Germany or Russia.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁴ I b i d. The company consisted equally of amateurs and professionals.


²⁵⁶ George Bernard Shaw, quoted in "Notes and Comments," *MS*, n.ill.s., 8 (16 September 1916): 203. We might add that *MS* quoted Shaw's comments with approval.
In his “Farewell Letter,” 257 which appeared shortly thereafter, Boughton expressed his view that England's warfare with Germany had actually begun prior to August 1914 and would continue long after peace reigned in the field. According to Boughton, Germany was already making plans for the “musical reinvasion” of Britain once the war was over. So long as England will neglect the cultivation of her own art and “forego the musical expression of our own nature and character,” so long will she leave the field clear for the ascendancy of German national art. 258 Even despite his enlistment, Boughton expressed his satisfaction for the development of the work in Glastonbury and his confidence in its continued growth after the war.

Boughton was granted temporary leave from the military in December 1917 to address the Royal Musical Association on the subject of the Glastonbury Festival. Many of the points expressed in his earlier writings found rearticulation in his lecture there, notably the necessity of a nation cultivating its own artistic resources and the accomplishments of Glastonbury. In addition, he criticized the English attitude that considered music to be of no national importance—an attitude specifically manifested in the taking of many musicians into the military, “many of them men physically and mentally unfit for military work.” This, he added, was a “blunder our chief enemy never made.” 259

257This was sent to the editor of The Central Somerset Gazette and Western Counties' Advertiser and printed in MS, n.ill.s. 8 (30 September 1916): 244.

258Ibid. "The farther the reach of German music and art, the less opportunity for proper development had the art and music of other nations. That is one of the chief reasons why the American and British peoples have no proper music of their own; they have been almost entirely occupied in propagating the musical culture of Germany."

Another significant feature in this lecture was his advocacy of folk-music nationalism. Although he clearly separated himself from a cultish obsession with folk song, Boughton nevertheless counseled:

I think it is well for the music of the future to hark back to its origins, back to the music made by the simple people themselves, before they were lured to the trap of city-life, before country-life had lost its fullness, variety, and joy. I do not believe that folk-music is the culmination of musical righteousness; but it is worthy of note that nearly every European renaissance within the historical period of cultivated music has been accompanied by an increased interest in folk-music.\textsuperscript{260}

As folk music was foundational to national music, so also would national legends and early English mystery plays inform dramatic material. According to Boughton, the idea was "to get into touch with what is original to us, and to start creating and re-creating from that point of contact."\textsuperscript{261}

After the war, Boughton resumed his work in Glastonbury and continued his quest toward the establishment of a national opera house. Although his partner Buckley had died, Boughton reacquainted post-war Britain with the Glastonbury venture in a letter to the \textit{Musical Times}.\textsuperscript{262} After reviewing his achievement on behalf of British music,\textsuperscript{263} Boughton wrote:

We appeal with confidence to all who are anxious to restore to English life the heritage of beauty of music and of drama that once belonged to it, asking them to support this live and growing creative work by giving it adequate material home and surrounding.\textsuperscript{264}

\textsuperscript{260}ibid., 23-24.

\textsuperscript{261}ibid., 25.


\textsuperscript{263}Specifically, he cited 79 public performances, of which 47 were operatic, including first performances of five music-dramas by British composers. The 1919 Festival also featured a revival of Shirley's masque, \textit{Cupid and Death}, performed for the first time since 1659.

\textsuperscript{264}Boughton, "An Appeal," 553.
Boughton's letter bore the endorsement of George Bernard Shaw, Edward Elgar, and Henry Wood, among others.

The following year saw the appearance of a letter by Elgar and W. H. Hadow, once again calling for financial support of the Glastonbury Festival, which they considered to be a movement of no small significance.\textsuperscript{265}

We believe that Glastonbury has in it the development of a movement of the greatest importance, both for British music and the regeneration of the countryside. It will form a musical and dramatic centre for the study of British music from the Elizabethan period down to the present time.\textsuperscript{266}

Two things in particular were needed to sustain the Festival: a regular income and a site for a permanent home. Yet neither was forthcoming. Despite the energies of its influential advocates, the Glastonbury enterprise was doomed to failure. As one critic wrote: “The Idea is the great thing about Glastonbury; it is an idea which so far has only imperfectly materialised.”\textsuperscript{267}

We might extend this critic’s remark to refer to the pursuit of English national opera throughout the period 1880-1920. These years were marked by various endeavors, yet by 1920 English national opera had been only “imperfectly materialised.” In reality, the articles dating from the post-war period show no evidence that any lasting accomplishment had been achieved in the realm of English opera. Of the problems of English opera--its lack of place in the permanent repertory, the need of a national opera house and support by state subsidy, the need for first-rate composers and suitable librettos, the questions of comic vs. dramatic idiom--virtually none found resolution by 1920.


\textsuperscript{266}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{267}R. C., "The Glastonbury Players in London," \textit{MT} 61 (1 July 1920): 466. In reality the Glastonbury Festival limped along until 1927 when it closed permanently.
Claude Trevor, writing in the *Monthly Musical Record*, provides an able summary of many of the frustrations experienced by the national opera advocates. According to Trevor, opera in English was an accomplished reality in Great Britain by 1920, yet “English opera” at that time virtually did not exist. “Since the earlier part of the last century, genuine English opera as an established fact has been conspicuous by its absence.”268 He reviews the many failed attempts made by Pyne and Harrison, Carl Rosa, D'Oyly Carte and others to secure English opera. Furthermore, he suggests that it was not for want of worthy products that English opera floundered, and cites works by Mackenzie, Goring Thomas, Stanford, Corder, Sullivan, already mentioned in this chapter. He recounts that when they “were produced we were led to expect that the turning-point in English opera had come, and that the composers of the above list would have to be reckoned with by foreigners.”269 Yet, each was pulled from production after a short existence. The conclusion of the matter would be a national opera theater not only in London but throughout the provinces. He concludes: “Good translations of foreign Operas are very necessary for our Opera in English, but even so, without the permanent and constant giving of Opera by native composers we can never be justified in thinking to have established in our midst *English Opera.*”270

Thus, despite the expenditure of considerable thought and energy, the cause of national opera was not considerably advanced in 1920 over what it had been in 1880. Although progress had been made, it did not yield its full promise. Britain would have to wait until the close of another world war for the full realization of her operatic dreams, specifically in Britten's *Peter Grimes* of 1945.

268 Claude Trevor, “English Opera and Opera in English,” *MMR* 50 (1 March 1920): 54.
RECLAIMING A MUSIC FOR ENGLAND:
NATIONALIST CONCEPT AND CONTROVERSY IN
ENGLISH MUSICAL THOUGHT AND CRITICISM, 1880-1920
VOLUME II

DISSERTATION

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PART THREE

NATIONAL MUSIC AND CRITICAL RECEPTION
CHAPTER VIII
CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

To this point our study has been concerned primarily with questions of aesthetic foundations and methodological formulations, from the fundamental issues of nationality in music to a consideration of bases upon which a national music might be built. In the final section of this study English nationalism will be addressed from the perspective of critical reception, as we observe how the national debate informed, affected, and influenced critical reception.

By analyzing critical response to the music of English composers we move from the general to the particular, focusing upon the reactions to the practical demonstration of the aesthetic concepts, namely the music itself. Chapter eight, after reviewing several analyses of contemporary English composers, addresses nationality as a classification scheme, seeing it as one of six principal categories. The final chapter focuses upon four key composers, significant both for their prominence in English musical life as well as for their place within the national-music debate.

The two factors most frequently cited by critics as providing evidence that England had indeed experienced a musical renaissance were the quality of composition and the growing number of significant composers. It was commonly recognized that English composers at this time were composing music of a higher calibre when compared to that of their counterparts from the previous two centuries. Further testimony to the higher standard was that recent English music was gradually gaining not only a native audience,
but was stimulating interest also upon the continent. In addition, there was the recognition that this higher quality was not limited to the works of but a few composers, but proceeded from a substantial number of native-born musicians. Many critics noted that it had not been since the golden era of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that England had been able to boast such a concentration of formidable composers.

From about 1900 there were a number of attempts on the part of critics to classify this impressive number of composers according to both stylistic influence and aesthetic orientation. Yet while the critics were compelled to evaluate the renaissance in this respect, an analysis of these attempts reveals that it was a difficult task, resulting in a considerable variety of opinion. Edwin Evans, one of the principal analysts of English composers, pronounced in 1919: "The variety of the recent native musical output defies all classification." Nevertheless, critics continued to analyze, evaluate, and categorize the musical output of their contemporaries in spite of the resultant frustration.

In this chapter we will survey the various attempts on the part of critics to classify the composers who comprise the English musical renaissance, and to isolate six dominant modes of classification that recur throughout these discussions, nationalism being one of those categories. Although the precise placement of composers within these areas would be a topic of dispute, the use of such labels was common to most critics and writers on music.

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1 In fact, it could be argued that the order of this sentence is reversed. In the case of Elgar, for instance, it was the endorsement of Richard Strauss after hearing the German performance of The Dream of Gerontius that caused some of Elgar's countrymen to take notice.

2 An earlier study we should mention was Charles Willeby's Masters of English Music from 1893. While the work was quite up to date in its focus upon the most prominent English composers living at that time--Sullivan, Mackenzie, Cowen, Parry and Stanford--it suffered terrible reviews. As one critic complained: "These essays have no critical value. Mr. Willeby has chatted with his subjects; probably he has eaten their dinners, and, as a gentleman, he can hardly be candid in his 'placing' of them. His depreciation, when it occurs, is wrapped up in a great many coats of sugar." Review of Masters of English Music by Charles Willeby, in MH, no. 545 (1 August 1893): 233.

The desire to explain the renaissance and grant credit to its leaders provided notable incentive for articles on late Victorian composers. Inevitably, composers such as Hubert Parry, Charles Stanford and Alexander Mackenzie were grouped together because of their contemporaneity, academic orientation, and collective efforts on behalf of English music. Fuller Maitland had considered these three (to which he added Frederick Cowen and Goring Thomas) to be the leaders of the renaissance. Yet A. E. Keeton, while seeing the legitimacy of the grouping, dismissed their leadership stating "the long and intimate connection of three of them with the stereotyped, academical, commercial methods of musical instruction, which have proved so fatal to any true advance in our general musical culture, surely precludes their being accurately termed 'leaders' of an English musical Renaissance."6

Ernest Newman referred to the above named composers as "the older group" in his 1911 assessment of the English musical scene. He had stated: "One sign of the progress is that we have three distinct strata, as it were, of composers."7 The first stratum, the generation of Parry, Stanford, and Mackenzie, no longer commanded the respect it once had due to the achievement of Edward Elgar in the "Enigma" Variations and The Dream of Gerontius--two works that "made us more critical of all that had gone before or that came after."8

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4 See Joseph Bennett's series of articles on "Victorian Music" appearing each month in MT 38 (1897), and George Hopper, "Some Victorian Composers," MO 27 (June, July 1904): 688-89, 760-61.

5 See chapter three.


8 Ibid.
In these works, from 1899 and 1900 respectively, Elgar accomplished the beginnings of an English orchestral style and the eclipse of the older and predictable oratorio style. Thus, according to Newman, Elgar stands at a pivotal point in English music and together with Granville Bantock and Frederick Delius constituted a “middle group” of composers. In particular, Newman considered Bantock’s principal contribution to be his infusion of English music with a new quality of sensuousness and spirituality. He “sharply wrested [it] out of the sacred rut into which it had fallen.”

Like many others, Newman would find that the intensely personal style of Delius made it very difficult to classify his music.

In Newman’s classification the younger group consists of Josef Holbrooke, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Walford Davies, Cyril Scott, and others. In his listing of the above composers Newman did not intend to suggest any cohesive unity among their styles as he considered each to be quite distinct from the others. In summary, although Newman did provide some stylistic rationale for his groupings, his classification is primarily a chronological one, consisting of an older group (those born in the 1840s and early 50s), a middle group (those born in the late 1850s-early 60s), and a younger group (those from the 1870s).

In his evaluation of recent composers, which appeared the following year, Gerald Cumberland stated: “No student of modern music will deny that during the last twenty years Great Britain has produced a number of composers of very great talent and in some cases even genius; indeed, not for two hundred years has our country been so richly productive in the field of music as it is to-day.”

Cumberland cited eight composers: Bantock, Elgar, Holbrooke, Davies, Boughton, Vaughan Williams, Delius, and Smyth.

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9Ibid. 118.

10Gerald Cumberland, “The Unimportance of Nationalism,” MO 35 (June 1912): 626
Of those eight he considered only Elgar and Davies to be "national" composers—not that this was a negative factor in Cumberland's view. In fact, his stated purpose in writing was to show that nationality had not played the dominant role in modern English music as some had claimed. His evaluation of Vaughan Williams may sound somewhat surprising as he writes: "In spite of his interest in British folksongs and of his university training, he is temperamentally as little English as Debussy is Norwegian."^11

In 1914 there appeared a series of essays on recent English composers by R. A. Streatfeild written for *La Revue de Temps Présent*. Streatfeild selected six composers as representative of the variety of musical styles in England. Prior to identifying these key figures, Streatfeild expressed the value of the contribution currently made by such deliberate nationalists as Vaughan Williams and Balfour Gardiner, finding in their music a "truly English character" which marked a significant departure from the composers of the preceding generation. The six composers selected were Elgar, Delius, Parry, Stanford, Smyth, and Bantock.

Streatfeild's comments regarding Delius, Parry, and Bantock are of particular interest, as he considered them to be representative of cosmopolitan, nationalistic, and oriental trends, respectively. Of Delius—"the cosmopolitan artist of the future"—he wrote: "There is no national characteristic in his music, it knows no frontiers, it speaks with equal force of sincerity to every hearer, French, German, or English."^12 Although many writers tended to categorize Parry as a continentally-influenced academic, Streatfeild considered his style to be predominantly national. The esteem in which his music was held, he affirmed,


was best explained by its "essentially insular character." Bantock's debt to Eastern influences gave him a clear identity within his generation, yet he was stylistically more complex than being merely an "orientalist." In fact, the "flexibility" of Bantock's musical expression--ranging from the influence of orientalism to that of Elizabethan England--was clearly impressive as well as enigmatic to Streatfeild.14

The musician, who has devoted his genius to describe the splendour of the ancient Orient, was not born in the country where the Ganges pours her golden tinted waters towards the Indian Ocean, but on the misty banks of the Thames. No palace of pleasure in superb Xanadu... gave shelter to his youthful head; for he grew up to the age of adolescence amidst black and prosaic chimneys in a gloomy part of London.15

As Newman had identified three distinct strata of composers--suggested largely by chronological factors--other writers noted a threefold classification based upon other considerations. Cecil Moon, just months prior to the onset of World War I, suggested a basis of division more closely reflective of stylistic differences.

The first group, according to Moon, consisted of those who followed the ideal of Purcell, namely Edward German and Arthur Somervell.16 A clearly-defined individualistic style marks the composers who comprise Moon's second group--in his words "those who turn out all their music as from their own skilfully invented mould."17 In this group Moon placed Elgar, Bantock, Holbrooke, and Scott. The final group--those showing adaptable compositional personalities--consisted of such diverse personages as Roger Quilter,

13Ibid.

14The works specifically mentioned were Omar Khayyam and his unaccompanied choral symphony Atalanta in Calydon.


16While Moon did not specify in what manner the Purcellian model was mirrored in the work of his (Moon's) contemporaries, we might suggest the Stuart composer's legacy was probably most evident in German's theatre music and in Somervell's song literature.

17Cecil Moon, "Concerning the British Composer," MS, n.ill.s. 3 (4 April 1914): 318.
Balfour Gardiner, Frank Bridge, and Arnold Bax, among others. This classification, somewhat arbitrary in nature, Moon justified as consisting of "those whose methods are the most pliable and whose utterance is entirely governed by the nature of the subject to be expressed."\textsuperscript{18}

The period toward the end of and shortly after World War I saw another wave of analysis of the work and style of native composers. These descriptions reveal the clarity provided by a more distant historical perspective as critics considered the influences and styles that were manifest over the four decades of this study.

A key participant in these discussions was Edwin Evans who commented upon the contemporary English musical scene both as lecturer and writer. As he surveyed the developments within English music of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Evans noted primarily an overriding chronological scheme. He stated: "One of the unmistakable signs of the rapid development of British music was the fact that each period of fifteen years confronted us with a new generation of composers, markedly different from the preceding one."\textsuperscript{19}

He proceeded to identify four classifications of composers based upon birth years: (1) prior to 1855, (2) 1855-70, (3) 1870-1885, and (4) after 1885. Of the first group Evans contended that their significance should be measured against those who preceded them, rather than against later generations. As such, he maintained, they were pioneers.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{19}"Mr. Edwin Evans on Eugène Goossens and John Ireland," lectures reported in \textit{MT} 59 (1 July 1918): 321.
\item \textsuperscript{20}While the article does not list specific names we might identify the following individuals: John Stainer, Arthur Sullivan, Frederick Bridge, Alexander Mackenzie, Hubert Parry, Arthur Goring Thomas, Frederick Corder, Frederick Cowen, Charles Villiers Stanford.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
The second group in Evans's analysis formed the "first definite stage of emancipation." The significance of the third group was that it provided the "plainest evidence that the English renascence was not a dream but an accomplished fact." The fourth group, at the time of his writing, Evans confessed to be still a scanty one, but this he regarded positively since, in his opinion, the reputations of the previous generation had been too quickly established.

One of the clearest and most insightful descriptions of the composers active during the four decades of this study was provided by John Chelsey, immediately following World War I. As had others, Chelsey favored a threefold division, but his careful attention to stylistic and aesthetic issues marks a significant departure from previous discussions. Indeed, no one could completely disregard chronological aspects, yet in Chelsey's analysis the subject of chronology is clearly only a secondary consideration.

Chelsey's first division was derived from those English composers who "followed in the logical footsteps of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, without taking that tremendous leap which one cannot fail to notice in other of their brethren." In this group were listed names not only of the older generation of Parry, Stanford, Mackenzie, and Cowen, but

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21 The only names provided by Evans were Elgar and Bantock. We might add Ethel Smyth, Algernon Ashton, Frederick Delius, Edward German, Liza Lehmann, Arthur Somervell, and Walford Davies.

22 Evans spoke of this group as being "extraordinarily numerous and productive." The only names provided by him are Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Dale as those marking the chronological boundaries of the group. We might add: Richard Walthew, Gustav Holst, Martin Shaw, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, William Yeates Hurlstone, Havergal Brian, Thomas Dunhill, Roger Quilter, Balfour Gardiner, Rutland Boughton, Josef Holbrooke, Frank Bridge, John Ireland, Cyril Scott, Geoffrey Shaw, Hamilton Harty, Hubert Bath, Arnold Bax, and George Butterworth.

23 At the time of his lecture the eldest of this generation would have barely reached the age of 32. The only composer specifically mentioned was Eugène Goossens, one of the subjects of the article. We might add: Arthur Bliss, Herbert Howells, and E. J. Moeran.

also Somervell and German. Two important considerations are developed by Chelsey in his description of this category. First, these composers traced their heritage to Germanic sources yet wrote music that was essentially national, albeit not deliberately nor aggressively so. Second, their conscientious regard for the significance of that heritage prevented them from taking a radical leap into “modernist” compositional practices, a feature of Chelsey’s third group.

The chief distinguishing characteristic of Chelsey’s second group is its belief in the existence of a British idiom, which resulted in a purposeful and deliberate striving after a national style. Chelsey writes:

The great names in this group are Vaughan Williams and John Ireland. The former makes a great use of old folk-tunes, and is perhaps the strongest British musical force in existence to-day, whereas the latter is, I think, the most sincere. Ireland has done for England what Debussy has done for France, and Ravel, to a great extent for Spain—i.e., shown that national characteristics can be shadowed forth both in the new as in the old kinds of music.

Other names suggested by Chelsey as belonging to this group include Martin and Geoffrey Shaw, Roger Quilter, and George Butterworth. Even at the time of his writing (1918) Chelsey said: “The school or group is only in its infancy, and when more fully grown many think it will prove the salvation of our national art, which heretofore has been more than sincere in its flattery of other countries.”

Chelsey’s third group is distinguished most obviously by its substantial differences with the previous two categories of composers. Thus, the chief criterion for inclusion is twofold: composers of modernist and/or of cosmopolitan orientation. Some of the principal names belonging to this category are Bantock, Bridge, Scott, and Bax. “Their

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25Note that Cecil Moon had listed the last two as following the ideal of Purcell. Chelsey also stated that most of England’s organ composers would also fit into this category.

26Chelsey, "Style and Outlook," 270.

27Ibid.
music strikes one as being Oriental, or at least Russian, in idiom. France has undoubtedly influenced them, too."^28 Chelsey, for unstated reasons, discounted Delius and Goossens in his British purview, but noted that they would belong to this third group if the issue of their inclusion were forced.

Elgar occupied a unique position in Chelsey's analysis in that he was not the exclusive property of any single category, yet belonged equally to all three. Thus, he was considered a truly composite creative personality tracing his heritage from the German musical giants, yet demonstrating a distinct British idiom in his music and inclusiveness in his appropriation of foreign stylistic elements.

The most complete assessment of modern English composers was provided by Edwin Evans in his series of articles written for the *Musical Times*. In the introduction to this series Evans expressed the above-quoted comment of the seeming impossibility of confining contemporary English composers within classification schemes. Yet, in the introduction, he nevertheless provided a general framework in which to place the individuals who would be the topics of his future articles.

Stanford, Parry, and Mackenzie were again designated as the forerunners of the current movement. The dawn was recognized in the composers born prior to 1870,^29 and included such figures as Elgar, Wallace, Bantock, and Smyth. He also added Delius as one who "represents the more cosmopolitan aspect of this section."^30

A central tenet that characterized the thought of composers born since 1870--those Evans called the "progressive school"--was a growing impatience with the influence of Brahms. The emancipation from the Brahms cult was a notable achievement since,


^29*Remember his four generation classification mentioned previously.*

^30*Edwin Evans, "Modern British Composers," *MT* 60 (1 January 1919): 11.*
according to some, the reverence for Brahms had been more destructive to individuality than had the wave of Wagnerism. Vaughan Williams was considered as the unrivalled head of those composers who broke away from the dominant Germanic tradition—a composer “whose works contain in an exceptional degree elements which have come to be regarded as characteristically English.”

Evans credited the revival of folk song and the rediscovery of England’s musical past with empowering the English composer to move toward the production of substantial works that express the national spirit.

While the nationalists occupied one corner of his description of progressive composers in England, Evans placed at the opposite side those composers whose attitude “is frankly and unreservedly modern in its outlook.” Yet irrespective of differing attitudes toward the value of the past, Evans found a unifying factor among all members of the progressive school to be “the desire to break with the immediate past, its pedantic outlook and its subservience to foreign influence.”

As he recognized the considerable diversity that characterized the music of those composers born after 1870, Evans urged the futility of attempting to establish common ground between truly representative composers of the modern movement. This “variety of outlook”—so persistent in the music of the younger set—was exemplified in two composers born in the early 1890s, Herbert Howells and Eugène Goossens. The composers, while both characteristically English, demonstrated traditionalist vs. modernist

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31Ibid.

32Ibid., 12.

33Ibid.

34Evans cited three composers John Ireland, Cyril Scott, and Frank Bridge—all born in the same year of 1879—suggesting a considerable variety of outlook in their respective musical output. While not disputing the differences between these three composers, it could well be argued that just this point exposes the weaknesses of Evans’s persistent use of a chronological classification. In other words, the fact that the only point of contact between the three composers was the year of their birth does not obviate other stylistic and aesthetic bases of classification.
approaches to composition. Evans saw Howells "as working his way through youthful, classical predilections towards an English idiom, which has much affinity with memories of those remote days when there were English classics."^35 Whereas, Goossens demonstrates a musical outlook that is quite modern and individualistic, yet also reveals an "entirely English personality."^36

In describing varied attempts on the part of some critics to make sense of the multiplicity of composers and styles present in England during the four decades of this study, we have seen that the critics themselves approached the task with a degree of frustration and perplexity. Yet a survey of the criticism throughout the period leads us to discern six dominant modes of classification that pervade virtually all serious discussions of music composed at this time. The identification of these categories does not imply that they were particularly rigid classification schemes or even clearly articulated concepts. In fact, they were loosely defined, yet they are catchwords that pervade virtually all critical discussion of the music. The multi-faceted nature of the composers' personalities--generating shifting musical styles--also contributed to the slippery nature of these classification schemes.^37 They are: continental influence, modernism, individualism, cosmopolitanism, orientalism, and nationalism.

We have already noted that the influence of the continent was a prominent factor in discussions of the older academic group, namely Parry, Stanford, and Mackenzie. Of course, this observation regarding the music of English composers was not a new one,^35 Evans, "Modern British Composers," 13.

^36 Ibid.

^37 This point bears underscoring. Although the identification and interrelation of the six trends is basic to the discussion of this chapter, there is no intention on the part of the writer to suggest that any one of them completely satisfies the complexity of a composer's output. Composers will be cited as providing demonstration of these trends, yet the reader should not assume stagnation on the composer's part, an observation that, hopefully, will become clear as the chapter proceeds.
having been made frequently during the two centuries prior to the renaissance—at times engendering substantial criticism. While Handel and Mendelssohn had occupied dominant positions of influence throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, those continental figures most influential after 1880 were Wagner and Brahms.

The fact that most English composers had studied in Germany did not, of course, lessen the strength of the connection. Virtually every principal composer (and we might add teacher) of the middle-to-late nineteenth century had studied in either Leipzig or Berlin. Sterndale Bennett, John Francis Barnett, Arthur Sullivan, Alexander Mackenzie, Hubert Parry, Frederick Corder, Frederick Cowen, Charles Stanford, Algernon Ashton, and Ethel Smyth, to name but a few, could boast German musical training.

Despite the obvious manifestations of the Celtic fringe element in some works of Stanford and Mackenzie, other works by both men revealed a definite Germanic influence. Stanford’s symphonies, in particular, show great affinity with German symphonies written a half-century earlier, notably those of Mendelssohn and Schumann.

The presence of Brahms was actively felt during the closing years of the century, especially among those teachers and students associated with the Royal College of Music. Yet Brahms’s influence was greater than any single school or city, and was most obvious in the instrumental music of the generation of Parry and Stanford.

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38 For example the "Irish" Symphony and Irish Rhapsodies of Stanford and Mackenzie's "Scottish" Piano Concerto and Scottish Rhapsodies.

39 A reviewer, writing of Coleridge-Taylor’s cantata Hiawatha’s Wedding Feast, remarked: "There is certainly no trace of the influence of Brahms in his music, a very remarkable fact, considering that he has studied at the Royal College of Music, where Brahms is worshipped almost above all other masters." "Reviews," MT 39 (1 October 1898): 673.

40 Parry's orchestral music, particularly the symphonies and the E minor Variations, have been frequently cited as suggesting the influence of Brahms. Yet we might add that it is difficult to listen to the final movement of Elgar's first symphony without being reminded of its counterpart in the third symphony of Brahms.
As Brahms dominated the instrumental genres, so Wagner's influence was most evident in opera and cantata, namely those works for voice and orchestra. In the previous chapter we cited critical responses to Mackenzie's *Colomba* (1883) and Corder's *Nordisa* (1887). These operas, along with cantatas by Parry and Corder, prompted identification with Wagnerian tendencies.

While the continental influence was most evident in its German manifestation, English composers also were attracted to French models. Sullivan's music suggested the influence of Gounod to many, and in notices regarding his light operas he was frequently dubbed the "English Offenbach." The operas of Goring Thomas, specifically *Esmeralda* (1883) and *Nadeshda* (1885) were commonly acknowledged as representing the "modern French school."

Although observations regarding continental influence were most frequently applied to the generation of composers born during the decades of the 1840s and 1850s, one should not assume that it was exclusively so. Critical response to music by younger figures as Donald Francis Tovey, Walford Davies, Thomas Dunhill, Hamilton Harty, and John Ireland also suggested influences of Brahms and others.

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41 *Prometheus Unbound* (1880)


43 Specifically Parry, Stanford, Corder, Mackenzie.

There is a sense in which modernism as a classification was a logical and chronological outgrowth from the trend of continental influence. When English critics used the term "modernist" to describe the music of their contemporaries, the implication was that those composers were influenced by their contemporary Continental counterparts rather than by those from a previous period. Thus, modernism as a classification meant essentially that the influence of Strauss or Debussy was more prominent in a given composer's music than was the influence of Brahms or Gounod. Edwin Evans's series on "Modern English Composers" in 1903 constituted an early attempt in evaluating native composers from a modernist perspective. Evans's stated intention was to include only those whom he considered truly modernist in compositional orientation, in contrast to those whose only claim to a modern classification was a chronological one. Although he expressed appreciation for the contributions of the generation of Parry, Mackenzie, and Stanford--those he dubbed "the old Academic school"--he dismissed the notion that they could be considered modern in any sense. The principal distinction between the older academic school and the newer modernist group was not the fact of continental influence, but rather the identity of those influential composers. Among those represented in his series of articles were Josef Holbrooke, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Cyril Scott, Algernon Ashton, Liza Lehmann, Richard Walthew, Edith Swepstone, William Yeates Hurlstone, and Thomas Dunhill.

Delius's *Mass of Life* provoked the following report, which well illustrates an English perspective on modern music.

There are undeniable traces of influence from Germany, and there are passages which are not only written but orchestrated in the style of the *fin-de-siècle* in France. The final section, "The Message," has a strong harmonic resemblance to Wagner. "The Forest"

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45 Edwin Evans, "Modern British Composers," *MS*, ill.s., 19 (3 May 1903): 321-22. Early in his career Evans, Jr. usually signed his articles E. E. A few years later his father--also a prominent writer--would append the designation of "Sr." to his written contributions to the same and other journals.
in Part H, though its beginning is apparently much younger music than the rest of the work, ends with an early Debussyan essay in the pastoral.  

Consequently, modernism was frequently equated with post-romantic or impressionistic tendencies which especially affected aspects of harmony, form, and orchestration.

A key point in defining modernism to the English critical mind was the extension of Wagnerian ideas beyond music-drama to the sphere of absolute music. The channel for such an extension was through the influence of Richard Strauss. To some critics the Wagnerian aesthetic applied well to the union of word and music in the music-drama, but was ill-used when extended to encompass absolute music.

Edward Elgar's name stands at the head of the list of composers at that time considered to be modern. In fact, although difficult for us to believe today, some suggested that he alone had the reputation of extreme modernity. In addition to Delius and Elgar, other composers to whom the label modern was applied included Frank Bridge and Arnold Bax.

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48 This was a key criticism of Strauss and Delius. J. H. G. Baughan complained that they "tried to carry the Wagner music into the independent or absolute branches of the art. That is just what modern men are trying to do: they consider that Wagner must be taken as one of the links in the chain of musical progress and not as an isolated phenomenon. There is really no reason why an absolute music composer should go back to Beethoven or Schumann or that he should even take Brahms as his starting point. Wagner just as much belongs technically to the absolute music school, or at least he must be reckoned with. That is the tendency of all modern composers: not to write music-dramas but to extend absolute music." "Comments and Opinions," *MS*, ill.s. 11 (17 June 1899): 370.


As modernism’s principal departure from continental influence was a chronological one which, of course, had stylistic significance, cosmopolitanism was seen as an attribute in which a composer did not show a dominant influence of any particular composer, school or nation, but freely incorporated a variety of stimuli into his/her idiom. As a result the truly cosmopolitan composer may be said to belong to all nations and to none.

Frederick Delius, although cited above as a modernist, was the composer whose biography and music best demonstrated the cosmopolitan attribute. He was in fact called “a cosmopolitan of the cosmopolitans,” having been born in England of German parents, later residing in Florida, prior to spending most of his life in France. As one writer observed: “No school, no cult, no coterie, can claim him, and almost equally no nationality.”51 His choice of subjects for musical expression further emphasized the cosmopolitan orientation of Delius.52

Of his music Philip Heseltine wrote: “Nationality is not a factor that counts for anything in the case of Delius. Indeed, he himself never vaunts his English origin, preferring to be considered a pure cosmopolitan, ‘a good European’ as Nietzsche would have called him. Nevertheless, vagueness of nationality is a source of great mystification to many.”53 Some saw in his early music the strong influence of Edvard Grieg, while others considered him to be impressionistic, thus implying the influence of French composers. Heseltine considered his position within the musical world to be one of “curious isolation.”54 Yet to many his idiom was “unconventional and subtle,” truly individualistic in nature.

52For instance, compare Brigg Fair, Appalachia, Sea-Drift, A Mass of Life, Paris, and Eventyr.
54Ibid.
Not surprisingly, the category of individualism was most useful in classifying composers whose music did not readily fall into any of the above categories. As such, it was frequently defined by a process of elimination and may be seen as the next logical step following cosmopolitanism. If a composer could not be isolated as manifesting the influence of early Romantic composers (e.g. Mendelssohn, Schumann), post-romantic composers (Strauss), or demonstrate a composite creative personality (blend of various national influences) that composer was usually termed individualistic. Yet in the acquisition of an individual style a composer may embrace unusual stylistic elements, and thus stand outside the usual classification schemes. In its most positive representation it would mean that a composer had successfully stamped all influences with the impress of his own definitive and identifiable creative personality. Edgar Bainton, although writing specifically of Hamilton Harty, considered this attribute to be a dominant one among all British composers. He wrote:

One of the most striking features of the modern movement in English music is the enormous diversity of style in the music of the various composers. Almost every one of the younger men has an individual stamp quite unmistakable and as different from all the others as Brahms is from Wagner. . . . you have a group of composers each member of which has an individuality of style so completely his own that, taken in the mass, shows a range of outlook and width of vision quite unique in contemporary art and almost unprecedented in the whole history of music. In its composite character lies its strength and vitality.55

Bainton’s list features Holbrooke, Boughton, Vaughan Williams, Scott, Davies, Gardiner, Bridge, and Holst. Other writers would cite Cyril Scott, Eugène Goossens, and Benjamin Dale.

A composer to whom the individualist label was frequently attached was Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. To a large degree Coleridge-Taylor’s individuality was attributed to the “African strain” in his heritage, as his father was from the West Indies. The perceptible

result, stylistically speaking, was a primitive character in his music that was considered unique among English composers. As one critic wrote:

That the romance and call of primitive life possessed for Coleridge-Taylor something subtle and intensely moving is evident, not only through the “Hiawatha” music but through further works, and to an extent that can hardly be regarded as other than convincing. For though by no means invariably unreflective of obvious outside influences, yet at his highest—or even in certain phrases not his highest—his appeals are not infrequently as though from some curiously aloof standpoint. In a way, he stands the first of his kind; necessarily, owing to his attainment of absolute first rank as a composer. . . .

In regard to personal aspiration, Coleridge-Taylor was, above all and despite pride of English nationality, the African: the pioneer of race in musical art, whose absorbing passion was that his every power, his every effort and ambition should help to range the man of colour alongside the white man.56

As one surveys the lists of works by composers of this period it is impossible to deny the persistent interest in Eastern themes and topics as subject matter for musical compositions. The oriental influence may be traced in a variety of genres (light operas, oratorios, song cycles, orchestral works) and in such diverse works as Sullivan's Mikado, Lehmann's In a Persian Garden, Pitt's Oriental Rhapsody, Bantock's Omar Khayyam, Coleridge-Taylor's A Tale of Old Japan, and Holst's Savitri and Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda. Thus, the oriental influence in England ranged from Japan, to India and even to ancient Persia. No critic would claim that any of the above composers was exclusively orientalist, but would nevertheless recognize the interest in the exotic that showed itself in some of the above composers' works. The influence was most obvious in the attraction of Eastern subjects and mysticism, but was also reflected in the use of eastern scales and tone colors.

From our survey of English composers earlier in the chapter we have seen that nationality was a dominant concern in the discussion of style. The influence of English folk music and art music from her past provided an obvious point of stylistic discussion in

assessing a composer's music. Although today they are greatly eclipsed by the towering figures of Vaughan Williams and Holst, composers Balfour Gardiner, Walford Davies, Roger Quilter, John Ireland, William Henry Bell, Edward German, W. H. Hurlstone, were considered to be front-ranking English nationalists.

A related group of nationalist composers, recognized as important to the cause of British music (though not specifically English), were the composers of the Celtic fringe. Of these composers the more prominent were the Scottish and Irish factions—the former consisting of Alexander Mackenzie, Hamish MacCunn and John McEwen, with Charles Stanford, Hamilton Harty, Arnold Bax, and Havergal Brian comprising the latter group. Generally speaking the national strain in the music of all groups was represented either in the presence of folk idiom or in literary allusions.

A substantial body of composers noticeably absent from discussions based on the above categories are the several women who contributed to the advance of English music. As one glances over the various books and articles that attempt to survey the course of English music during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, one usually finds but one female composer mentioned, namely Ethel Smyth. Although Smyth was at the head of the list of prominent female composers at this time, many others made significant contributions.

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57 In this connection we should mention works by Englishmen that also reflected this interest, for instance Frederick Cowen's Symphony no. 4 "Welsh," Granville Bantock's 'Hebridean' Symphony, as well as Josef Holbrooke's operas Dylan and The Children of Don based on Welsh legends.

58 In this same context Percy Grainger should also be mentioned. Though born in Australia and trained in Leipzig, his contribution to English musical life is undeniable. Although his settings of English folk songs were widely appreciated, critics frequently qualified him as a colonialist. In this regard it is interesting to note Boughton's assessment of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. "Standing apart from our other composers by reason of the African colouring in his music, but, at the same time, one with them, heart and soul, he is not a production of Britain itself, but rather a musical representative of the results of our Colonial policy." Rutland Boughton, "Studies in the Young British School. I.—Samuel Coleridge-Taylor." MS, ill.s., 12 (8 July 1899): 22.
contributions not only to the English musical renaissance but also to the cause of women in music.

A review of concert reports reveals an impressive list of women enjoying performances of their music: Alice Mary Smith, Maude Valerie White, Rosalind Ellicott, Edith Sweepstone, Liza Lehmann, Dora Bright, Frances Allitsen and Kathleen Bruckshaw, among others. Yet, in most cases, interest in the composer's gender eclipses any serious discussion of the stylistic attributes of the music. Or if, indeed, the press notice does treat questions of style those attributes most frequently discussed center upon masculine vs. feminine concerns.

The notices regarding three female composers will illustrate. Alice Mary Smith had been a student of Sterndale Bennett and George Macfarren at the Royal Academy, and first attracted attention with an 1861 performance of her Piano Quartet in Bb major. During her career, cut short by her early death in 1884, she ascended to a prominent place among English female composers. A noteworthy aspect of that career was her refusal to limit herself to song composition—the accepted channel for a woman’s creative expression in Victorian England—extending her reach to include quartets, symphonies, concertos, concert overtures, and cantatas. Consequently, she was virtually the first English female composer to write for the orchestra, both alone and in combination with voices. Her last major work Ode to the Passions, performed at the Three Choirs Festival held at Hereford in 1882, provoked the following critical response.

An exception to the rule of women’s non-productivity in the higher labours of musical art is undoubtedly supplied by Mrs. Meadows White’s “Ode to the Passions.” The work, however, has about it nothing that can be called distinctly feminine, and, therefore, is not “epoch-making.” For distinctly feminine music of a high order we have still to wait, with plenty of time to speculate upon the character it will bear and the influence it will wield when, if ever, it comes. Doing this we can easily imagine the

59or Mrs. Meadows White

opening up of a new world by the female composers who, with all the fine instincts and acute sensibility of her sex, writes music as a woman, and not as a more or less feeble imitator of men. Mrs. Meadows White may accomplish the feat and immortalise her name; but her “Ode to the Passions” is simply a striking reproduction of masculine art. The woman does not appear in it. Firmness, vigour, and strength mark the treatment of conceptions which are massive rather than graceful and elegant.\textsuperscript{61}

Ethel Smyth's significance in the cause of English national opera was noted in the previous chapter. Although she would ascend to a position of priority among English composers (male and female), her initiation into London concert life is revealing and indicative of how little the situation had changed during the following decade. Writing of a Crystal Palace Saturday Concert, a critic remarked that it featured:

a genuine surprise in the shape of a MS. Serenade in D, in four elaborate movements, by an unknown composer, hearing the not particularly romantic name of E. M. Smyth, which proved a work of extraordinary merit; and which, indeed—more especially in respect of that rare gift, spontaneity and wealth of musical invention, joined to remarkable \textit{savoir faire}—holds, to say the least, equal rank with any kindred native composition of modern date. But, surprise rose to absolute wonder when the composer called to the platform turned out to be a member of the fair sex.\textsuperscript{62}

A few years later the performance of her “Solemn Mass” prompted colorful debate on the question of suitability of that text in the hands of a woman. Some, although recognizing the quality of the work itself, felt the subject of the work to be innately unfeminine, as was expressed in the \textit{Sunday Times}, “what we would like her to do now is to write something in which she can be absolutely true to her own womanly nature and instincts.”\textsuperscript{63} A similar sentiment was expressed by others who felt that her music for the Mass ought to have been more reflective of her gender. The Mass “shows remarkable ability for a female composer, although she necessarily and properly fails when she


\textsuperscript{62}“Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts,” \textit{MO} 13 (1 June 1890): 383.

endeavours to become too masculine in her methods."64 Others, however, flew to her defense:

It was therefore only to be expected that Miss E. M. Smyth's "Solemn Mass" should have made a chorus of critics advise the young lady to keep to compositions more in accordance with her "womanly promptings" (whatever they may be in regard to music), and leave the stronger and more virile expression to its proper exponent, man. But, judging from the energetic character of Miss Smyth's music, we should think that she is not a young lady who would be deterred from writing in the manner which she finds most suited to her temperament; and, however much some of the more old-fashioned of us deplore the fact that she has thought fit to write a work on a large scale, and one which many have described as "marvellous for a woman," probably Miss Smyth will cap her last achievement with a still stronger and "unbecoming" composition.65

Still others considered the musical quality of the Mass, though not above criticism, to mark a milestone in both her career and for the cause of the female composer, and even of English music. "Some weaknesses have been pointed out, but these are trivial compared to the merits of what is probably the most advanced and complete work that any female pen has given us. The mass is a fresh and notable addition to the store of sterling music produced by English musicians of our day."66

As the person and works of Ethel Smyth became better known during the course of her career, attention would be increasingly devoted to the merit of her music, rather than to the fact of her gender. Yet the experience of Liza Lehmann reveals that this was not due to a general shift in attitudes toward women composers, but rather to the respect in which Ethel Smyth's music was held.

Liza Lehmann had been a leading soprano who, upon her marriage in 1894, chose to retire from concert life and dedicate herself to composition. She later stated in making this choice: "I had determined not to let my physical condition sever me from my musical

64 Ibid.


ambitions." Nearly two decades later, however, the fact remained that musical criticism of women composers was still primarily gender-oriented.

One thing that strikes the listener in Mme. Lehmann's music is the feminine quality of nearly all of it. Even when it is bold, it has not the sturdiness that proceeds from the masculine mind. The woman-nature is felt to be lurking not very far away. Though this may be of disadvantage to some of her work, it is said in no derogatory sense, for this femininity forms one of the greatest charms of her music. It is responsible for much of its grace and refinement, and for the sensitive spirit that also pervades it.

The point could well be argued that the critics of the day provided no better definition of what constituted femininity in music, than what traits defined modernism, individualism or any other category we have offered. What is striking about the use of these catchwords as one looks at the totality of musical criticism is their utter compatibility one with another.

As we evaluate the breadth of critical discussion the fact remains that these categories were far from being mutually exclusive. In fact, it would be an rare individual who was universally considered to belong to but one category. Most composers were considered to demonstrate at least two, if not more, of these dominant trends. For example, Parry's music was identified with strong Germanic influence, yet many would find a marked individualistic quality to it as well. The same may be said for Elgar whose music was commonly regarded as exhibiting the influence of Richard Strauss (hence both Germanic and modernist), yet also was recognizably individualistic. Granville Bantock, a composer whose name was often paired with Elgar, was profoundly inspired by oriental topics, yet no critic would suggest that he was exclusively so. Delius could be

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67 "To the Young Musician who would compose. An interview with Mme. Liza Lehmann," *Etude*, reprinted in *MS*, ill.s. 33 (11 June 1910): 373. In the following year (1911) she was elected the first president of the Society of Women Musicians.

68 George Lowe, "Ballad Writers XII.—Liza Lehmann," *MS*, n.ill.s. 2 (18 October 1913):

69 Ernest Newman, referring initially to the song cycle *Sappho*, wrote of Bantock: "Greece now counts as much with him as the further East, while his exclusively sympathetic and intelligent
considered as belonging to possibly three if not four categories. Probably no single composer better illustrates the elasticity of the above categories than Cyril Scott. A survey of the criticism of Scott's music reveals that he could be said to reveal all six trends, not only equally but in fact simultaneously. Note some excerpts from articles addressing his musical style.

Mr. Scott, who remains English of the English, . . . speaks an idiom which is inspired by the same Muse [as the Franckists]. . . . [His] chromaticism is not of the pseudo-modern order, but quite archaic in its effect, inasmuch as it possesses occasionally a distinctly modal flavour without, however, being directly traceable to the modes.\textsuperscript{70}

Many of the effects obtained by Mr. Scott in his piano compositions are quite Eastern in their harmonic colouring and imagery. They speak the language of the barbarian and are far remote from the conventionality of our present day civilisation.\textsuperscript{71}

Among those of the "advanced" school whose work claims full and serious attention, the names of Strauss, Elgar, Debussy, Bantock and Cyril Scott stand in the very front rank.

The music of Cyril Scott has perhaps more affinity with that of Debussy than with that of the other three writers although their ways of expressing themselves are very different.\textsuperscript{72}

The greater part of recent British music, while absorbing all the great developments of the past, reveals the best characteristics of our native folk music, showing thereby that it is but a completer expression of the same spirit which formerly found its only utterance in the unconscious art of the people; necessarily completer because all the resources of modern technique are at its command. Of the band of composers who form what is commonly called the "young British school" none is more interesting that Cyril Scott.\textsuperscript{73}

In Cyril Scott's music I see marked national characteristics as well as strong personal ones. Apart from the more obviously English note of energetic athletic gaiety orchestration of some Elizabethan melodies ("An Old English Suite") shows the appeal this very unoriental music has for him." Newman, "English Composers of To-Day," 117-18

\textsuperscript{70}Edwin Evans, "Modern British Composers. IX," \textit{MS}, ill.s. 20 (12 September 1903): 162.

\textsuperscript{71}George Lowe, "Cyril Scott's Piano Works," \textit{MS}, ill.s., 31 (29 May 1909): 341.

\textsuperscript{72}George Lowe, "The Songs of Cyril Scott," \textit{MS}, ill.s, 31 (13 March 1909): 165.

that balances the dreamy and lyric elements in his work, I find his creative habits typical of his country. He is instinctive and wayward rather than mental and painstaking in his compositional methods, an attitude I meet with remarkably often among English composers. . . . No doubt the German-speaking people (openhearted and generous towards foreign art and artists as they are) find Scott's very Englishness and the sharp contrast his methods bear to their own contemporary ones, refreshing and attractive. . . .

Debussy has called Cyril Scott "one of the rarest artists of the present generation." . . . He has, no doubt, something in common with Debussy. He may be, as many assert, the first English impressionist. This at least we may say; that his music is not like that of Bantock or Holbrooke, Delius or Grainger. It is plain that he has made a position for himself.

It must not be thought, however, that Scott is one of those extravagant ultra-moderns who throw all tradition to the winds, and seek to astound by the sheer eccentricity of their writings.

As the above selection of quotations demonstrates, critics found all six principal trends in Cyril Scott's music. On the authority of the above quotations we might conclude that Cyril Scott is a continentally-influenced modernist of Eastern and Debussyan tendencies whose music possesses a strikingly individual, yet recognizably English note.

The nature of this perception has profound implications as we consider the relationship of critical reception to the definition and identification of nationality in English music. What was true for the compatibility of other trends is no less so in respect to nationalism. In fact, this perception of compatibility had its greatest impact where nationality was concerned because it presented the greatest threat to more narrowly-defined concepts of English musical idiom. It is here that we find considerable latitude of opinion among nationally-minded critics and composers respecting what could pass for a national idiom. Was music national, as some argued, only when it resisted inclusion in any other classification, or could one be a modernist nationalist, a cosmopolitan nationalist, or perhaps even an oriental nationalist? Today, nationality in English music is most frequently applied to those aspects discussed in chapters five, six, and seven, namely folk

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song, historical precedent, and national opera. Yet it is the primary argument of this chapter that an overview of the criticism demonstrates that nationality for many critics was a broad and inclusive concept, rather than a narrowly defined one.

For many critics the cultivation and recognition of an English idiom did not demand a stance that was militantly and exclusively nationalistic in its resistance to the influence of continental composers. Furthermore, it did not necessarily imply a rejection of Eastern influences, recognizing only Western harmony and scale patterns. Neither did it necessitate a rejection of modernistic influences or of a composer's individuality. Many writers, as we have seen in previous chapters, could cite strong historical precedent for their arguments for “inclusivity.” As they reviewed England's musical past they recognized that it was precisely those periods during which England enjoyed the height of musical prestige that she was most open to the tendencies of the latest musical fashions, and the respective influences of Italy and France. Therefore, should recent English composers whose music does exhibit progressive stylistic features based upon continental models be excluded from an English designation?

While some critics believed that a national idiom permitted a composer's music to embody other characteristics, others insisted that--due to the very nature of England--a music that was truly national demanded a connection with other trends. Simply put, this view argued that one could be considered a nationalist composer not in spite of belonging to other categories, but in fact because he/she belonged to other categories.

Should not an English composer build upon the greatness of Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, not because they are Germanic, but because they are composers of great craft whose music transcends time and place in its ability to touch human hearts and souls? Is this not a suitable aim for an English composer?
Should not an English composer living during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflect the world in which he/she lives? Must English national music be equated with sentimental antiquarianism? Should not national music reflect the life of the contemporary English composer living in a modern urban world rather than the pastoral countryside of a world that no longer exists?

Should not an English composer reflect modern English life in all of its diverse manifestations? If a composer is to be truly nationalistic, should not his/her music exhibit a cosmopolitan style, since England and specifically London is cosmopolitan?

Does national music dictate that the English composer must submerge his own individuality to the claims of a national school, or subject his own stylistic development to musical patterns derived from unlettered peasants or composers long since buried? Should not English music be built upon the strength of individual expression, as has been the case with all other great English accomplishments? Should we not say “to thine own self be true” and thou wilt be true to thy nationality?

Should not an English music celebrate English interests in all corners of the globe? If Britannia, indeed, rules the waves should not English music give evidence of her imperial and colonial concerns? Should not the English composer living in Edwardian England proudly demonstrate in his/her music the expansive and vast domain of the British empire?

Should not the English nationalist reveal in his/her music the rich and multi-faceted heritage of the nation? Should not the truly English composer find inspiration in virtually all aspects of English life past and present? Should he/she not celebrate the beauties of her countryside and seascape, her language and history, her literary and dramatic heritage, her thriving and bustling capital city, the heroic deeds of her great men and women, as well as the contributions of her social, political and ecclesiastical institutions?
The point of the lengthy string of rhetorical questions is to show the breadth of the scope of questions and issues, and to suggest reasons as to why many writers, committed to the cause of English national music, could come to different conclusions concerning its promotion. Yet we must also emphasize that these issues did not live primarily in an abstract world of aesthetics but were intensely practical concerns as critics used the designation "national" in their assessment of English composers.

As the reader is probably aware, each of the above paragraphs applies to one of the categories previously cited. Thus, the argument was advanced that an English idiom merged easily, even necessarily, with any one or more of the classifications of continental-influence, modernism, cosmopolitanism, individualism, or orientalism. In fact, a survey of the use of the "nationalist" term in critical writings reveals that the composers so designated were frequently named in connection with these other attributes. Hubert Parry, Josef Holbrooke, Frederick Delius, Lord Berners, Cyril Scott, and Eugène Goossens in spite of their strong associations with other categories were also considered, by at least some writers, to be distinctively English.76

Not surprisingly, and perhaps somewhat predictably, a considerable number of writers took exception to this view of nationality in music, arguing that such a view promoted ambiguity and even confusion. This brand of nationalist writer conceptualized

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the English idiom as clearly defined, rooted in the folk song and art music of England's musical past, breathing an atmosphere both healthy and optimistic.

The reception of Edward German well illustrates this ideology. Of German's incidental music for Shakespeare's "As You Like It" a critic wrote: "The dances are characterised by that perfect sympathy with the old English merry-making spirit which forms so distinctive a trait of Mr. German's music, and which it is manifest powerfully appeals to the majority of English audiences to-day." Rutland Boughton wrote that German's music reveals "the beauty of our English woodlands and meadows, our English hills and valleys, our English moorlands and brooklets: nothing awe-inspiring, nothing pessimistic—no feeble lament, no neuroticisms—but everything healthy, pure, hopeful, and beautiful." Edward German provided a good model of the pure nationalist: not exotic, not modernist, not academic, and very accessible. D. C. Parker wrote of him as one "who paints a Merrie England which we are confident never, but certainly ought to have, existed." Other composers equally regarded as purely national were Walford Davies, H. Balfour Gardiner, and Roger Quilter.

In this chapter it was previously stated that the identification of the six principal categories, and the accompanying citation of their representative composers was not intended to imply a rigid connection between the two. One reason for this is the lack of

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77 "Mr. Edward German's music to 'As You Like It,'" *MT* 38 (1 January 1897): 26.


clarification in regard to the terms themselves, but a more compelling rationale was the shifting stylistic orientation of the composers. This attribute prompted strong opinions that led to inevitable conflicts, particularly when it was confronted by more narrowly-defined concepts of musical nationality.

While Granville Bantock's eclecticism was enigmatic to many critics, the reception of Gustav Holst is particularly instructive in this regard, as his career revealed shifting trends of compositional interest, rather than a diversity revealed in particular pieces. Writing of Holst's output prior to 1920, critics tended to see three phases in his music: a first phase inspired by English folk song, an oriental second phase, and a third phase which saw a return to English sources, specifically folk song and Tudor choral music.

King Estmere and the Somerset Rhapsody are two important works from the early period. These two works were considered by Edgar Bainton and most others to be clearly national.

The poem [King Estmere] is an old English ballad and the music throughout is of folk song character, although there is also plenty of the dramatic element. Melody there is in abundance, which will endear it to the hearts of choristers; and melody of the robust healthy kind, such as is found in much profusion in our splendid English folk songs.

Mr. von Holst has studied the folk songs of his country (and to study them is to love them), with the result that his music admirably reflects their spirit and has a distinctive English character.

81 It was difficult with Bantock to know for sure if he was an orientalist, a modernist, an eclectic, or a nationalist of the purest strain. In particular, see The Time Spell (1903), Lalla Rookh (1903), Sappho (1905) Omar Khayyam (1906-09), Pierrot of the Minute (1908), Old English Suite (1909), Atalanta in Calydon (1912), and Hebridean Symphony (1916). Yet, in contrast to Holst, Bantock's diversity is not explained simply by a chronological stylistic evolution, since he was consistently eclectic throughout his career. Because of the place of Omar Khayyam many considered him primarily an orientalist, a feature evident earlier in his output and one frustrating to the purely nationally-minded writer. Boughton had written in 1899: "That such a passion [for Orientalism] can assist in the progress of native art is, of course, entirely out of the question, but whether it may or may not serve in the development of art per se is a matter into which perhaps it will be worth our while to look." Rutland Boughton, "Studies in the Young British School. IV. Granville Bantock," MS, ill.s., 57 (23 September 1899): 198. Following a performance of Bantock's symphonic poem Lalla Rookh, an anonymous critic wrote: "On Thursday the 19th September, Mr. Wood introduced us to some invertebrate Eastern music ... To commence with, it is rather difficult to understand why an Englishman should bother about writing Oriental music at all." "Granville Bantock's Lalla Rookh," Cremona 1 (17 October 1907): 125.

82 Edgar L. Bainton, Some British Composers. IV.—Gustav von Holst, MO 34 (March 1911): 398. Bainton also wrote of the element of austerity in Holst's music, suggestive of a Puritanical strain in
While the spirit of modernity was also seen to be present in these early works, it was no more than a "tinge" and thus, did not threaten the perception of Englishness. As a result, there was substantial agreement on the part of most writers in their assessment of both the quality and nature of Holst's first phase.

Holst's second phase, which was marked by a movement toward orientalism, engendered more diversity of critical response. Bainton saw this development essentially to be a spiritual trend not in conflict with, but as a defensible continuation of, his earlier English period.

To such sources [Hindu literature] has Mr. von Holst turned for light and inspiration. It is in no spirit of apostasy that he has turned his face to the east; rather is it the natural consequence of a nature filled with the love (as is consistently revealed throughout all his work) of the "beauty of austerity." In the "Hymns from the Rig Veda," I find the same qualities of strength and beauty that exist in his early work; but in these the expression is finer, the workmanship more mature and the power of creating spiritual atmosphere immeasurably greater.

Sydney Grew, while seemingly complaining of Holst's diversity, also regarded Holst's shift to be essentially a spiritual one. Grew saw Holst's interest in the Vedic hymns not to be the superficial attraction of Eastern escapism, but a movement toward that which was more fundamentally human. Thus, he considered Holst's second phase to be of

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84 At least one critic argued this to be the essential difference between Bantock's brand of orientalism and that of Holst. Bantock, it was said, was attracted to oriental themes because of their "fantastic nature, opulent splendour, sensuous colouring, remoteness from the western world," whereas, Holst was chiefly attracted to poetry, religious ideas, and philosophy. "Mr. G. von Holst," MH, no. 844 (1 July 1918): 200.


86 "He has not yet adequately found himself. Thus, he writes in many styles and under most diverse inspirations." Sydney Grew, "Gustav von Holst," MO 37 (February 1914): 359.
greater significance from a primal perspective than from a cultural one. He wrote that the Vedic hymns:

in some respects are too ancient to be called oriental; for they belong to that prime Aryan root which is common in Teuton and Hindu, and thus they are as essentially a part of the West as they are of the East,—remembering always that a conscious Paganism is no longer a part of our spiritual imaginings. Mr. von Holst has therefore brought into English music matter of utmost fundamentality.®

H. C. Colles writing of modern English instrumental music adopted a wait-and-see attitude in respect to Holst's orientalism.

The influence of Eastern art upon English music is one of the most interesting developments of our modern music. It is very powerful in the works of several younger men, particularly Gustav von Holst (English in spite of his name) and Cyril Scott. One still waits to see how far that influence will be carried and to what extent it can become satisfactorily incorporated with the qualities that one feels to be inalienably associated with the national character.®

While Colles and others admitted the possibility of the incorporation of oriental elements into English music, to Geoffrey Shaw it was clearly out of the question. As we have noted previously in this study, Shaw represented the more militant side of the national debate, contending that most music popularly considered as English was, in fact, not English music at all. As we have noted previously, Shaw insisted strongly upon the distinction between music written by an English composer, and English music. His evaluation of Holst is illustrative of the spirit of his rhetoric.

In an article appearing in the Music Student, Shaw responded to Thomas Dunhill's opinion of Holst which stated that he was "one of the most individual and one of the most English of our writers." Shaw retorted: "Individual? Yes. English? No; not the least little bit," and challenged Dunhill to develop and defend his concept of nationality. In Shaw's view, Holst's music did not suddenly become un-English as a result of his turn to

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orientalism. It had never been English, even in the earliest phase. Of Holst's entire musical output, Shaw states: "I have not as yet seen anything of his that is English in feeling or style."\(^8^9\) If Shaw did not consider Holst to be English when writing music based upon English folk songs, scarcely can we expect him to see an English quality in Holst's music based upon Hindu texts.

The *Rig Veda* songs, all of which I knew before I wrote my first article, are hardly likely to make me re-consider my statement that Eastern Art has had no effect on English music. The *Rig Veda* music is Eastern certainly; but its composer has never written English music. Therefore, in his case, there has been no English music for Eastern Art to influence.\(^9^0\)

Even so, Shaw contends, this evaluation has no negative effect upon his admiration for Holst's work. "But all this does not mean that the gifted composer is English in style, any more than Elgar, or others of our composers, some of whose music I like."\(^9^1\)

The two major works that proceeded from Holst's third phase were his orchestral suite, *The Planets* and the choral work, *The Hymn of Jesus*. Many critics noted the prominent place of these two works, both produced during wartime. Edwin Evans saw them as indicating that Holst had reached a crossroads in respect to the precise nature of his national allegiance. Would he continue in the time-worn path of English choral music and thus build an English idiom based clearly upon historical precedent, or would he move toward the development of an instrumental idiom, always regarded as the principal domain of the continental composers?

Mr. Holst has now arrived at a very interesting stage of his development, and one which is destined to exercise the skill of the musical prophets. Will he join the ranks of the symphonists, as "The Planets" would seem to suggest . . . and thus take his place

\(^8^9\) Even Set III, of *Folk Songs of England*, was considered to be completely un-English in its harmonization, which, he maintained, sounded much more like Brahms.

\(^9^0\) Geoffrey T. Shaw, "British Music of To-day. II.—Modern Choral and Vocal Music," *MusStud* 8 (December 1915): 68.

\(^9^1\) *Ibid.*
in the present trend of European music, or will he turn more and more to the compositions of those massive choral works which have always been a characteristic feature of the English province?92

Holst's career and stylistic development presented a significant challenge to writers who maintained strict dogmatic views regarding the stylistic categories discussed above, and particularly that of nationalism. Yet while he has been singled out for discussion, his is not an isolated case. In fact, his career effectively summarizes the thrust of this chapter: the difficulty encountered by critics in categorizing composers, the slippery nature of the categories themselves, and the question as to whether a national idiom must be seen as exclusive of those other categories. Invariably, the answer to that question resides in one's concept of national idiom. In the final chapter we will apply the discussion to the perception of nationality as it relates to the careers and experiences of four significant English composers.

92Edwin Evans, "Modern British Composers. VI.—Gustav Holst," *MT* 60 (1 December 1919): 659-60. A strong characteristic of this third period, Evans had argued, was Holst's increased sensitivity to textual expression, a feature anticipated in Holst's earlier music and one which in Evan's view made his distinctive among English composers. Evans wrote: "He has sought consistently for the true melodic equivalent of English speech." "Modern British Composers. VI.—Gustav Holst," *MT* 60 (1 October 1919): 528.
CHAPTER IX
FOUR "ENGLISH" COMPOSERS

The final chapter considers the issue of national music from the perspective of the reception of four representative English composers. One factor that entered into their selection was a chronological one. The individuals included here flourished at differing periods within the four decades of this study. Thus, any allegiance to a particular decade or generation was avoided. Thirty years separates the birth years of the oldest and youngest composers treated in this chapter.

A second basis for choosing these composers was the variety of their respective backgrounds. While each of the individuals was English by birth, there are remarkable differences between them in respect to precise geographical region, musical background, the degree and nature of their professional training, and career portfolio.¹

A final basis for their consideration relates specifically to their respective roles in the cultivation of national music. Music by each of these composers was considered by a number of writers to be distinctly and recognizably "English," yet virtually no one would seriously claim that the "Englishness" of all four revealed a unified aesthetic understanding. In fact, each of these composers successfully retained their individuality in spite of their contributions to the cause of national music in England. Together they represent the breadth of the national-music consciousness. They were not chosen to dictate, or even to suggest, a narrow view as to what constituted "English" music—in fact, precisely the

¹I refer here to the various other "musical hats" they wore since none were composers exclusively. Their work as composers was blended with (some would say compromised by) other activities, e.g. teaching, administration, conducting, concert promotion, among other activities.
They are representative of the diversity, as well as the quality of English music during this time frame. The composers to be considered in this chapter are: Arthur Sullivan, Hubert Parry, Edward Elgar, and Ralph Vaughan Williams.

**Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)**

The place of Arthur Sullivan in the English musical renaissance has already been addressed in chapter three. In that chapter we noted differing opinions as to the significance of his contribution within that revival. One view held that his light opera was an institution of particular value in re-establishing an audience for the music of an English composer, but Sullivan's genius was considered not to be of sufficient strength to spearhead the renaissance movement. A contrary view claimed that Sullivan was a key player in the renaissance—if for no other reason—because his music revealed an English quality when other leading English composers were basically imitators of continental styles.

In chapter seven we noted that Sullivan was the one to whom virtually everyone looked to provide a truly national opera. Had *Ivanhoe* achieved an unquestionable success, that triumph alone would have ensured Sullivan's priority among his contemporaries. As it was, however, the achievement of *Ivanhoe* was also a subject of mixed opinion. Many who could not gainsay its commercial success (having run nearly 160 nights), nevertheless considered it an artistic failure. Yet Mackenzie, who regarded it a success doomed because of its singularity, stated: "As in the case of the proverbial 'one swallow,' it is obvious enough that one single English opera could not bring us the summer... we desire so much to see... no other birds accompanied its solitary flight."²

²Sir Alexander Mackenzie on Sir Arthur Sullivan, lectures given at Royal Institution, quoted in *MT* 42 (1 July 1901): 460.
Irrespective of the enduring artistic merit of Sullivan's works one contribution he made on behalf of national music was recognized by practically everyone. The immense popularity of his Savoy operas re-awakened the interest of English audiences in the works of at least one of their countrymen. J. Comyns Carr, after stating that it was difficult to guess what value posterity would place on Sullivan's music, expressed the following appreciation shortly after the composer's death. He asserted that one fact was indisputable, namely:

the extraordinary influence which he has exercised over his generation. There is possibly no Englishman in any realm of art who, during the last five-and-twenty years, has won the admiration of so many of his fellows: whose genius has entered with so sweet a welcome into so many English homes.\(^3\)

As Carr continued, claiming that but few could understand the technicalities of musical composition, he stated:

Its completed message owns a universal language that no other art can command. And those of us who know of music no more than the pleasure it confers, ought not, on that account, to withhold our tribute of praise from a master who has charmed us all. Let us not be too timorous in confessing our love of that which we have been permitted to understand.\(^4\)

While Fuller Maitland departed from those who made elaborate claims for Sullivan's historic importance in English music, he nevertheless asserted:

Though the great renaissance of English music, which took place in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, accomplished itself without any help or encouragement from Sullivan, yet it was greatly due to him that Englishmen acquired the habit of listening with respect to music written by their own countrymen, and conceiving it possible that English composition might be worth something after all.\(^5\)

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\(^4\) *Ibid.*, 86.

The significance of Sullivan's accomplishment in this regard would not lessen with the passage of time. In fact, the progress of the renaissance would not produce a substantial challenger to the place Sullivan occupied in the hearts of his countrymen.

Walter Wearenear-Yeomans, in a review of a recent recording of The Mikado, stated:

Of the world's great composers, I suppose Sullivan stands out by himself more than any of them. He had no predecessors (in style) and, as yet, has had no successors. He occupies a place all to himself. His individuality is unique. Furthermore, Sullivan is the only musician of note that has got home to the English people. His music is played, sung and understood in all ranks of English society. His melodies are loved everywhere, and his operas have afforded healthy recreation to thousands of persons to whom the wider field of music is unknown.6

To many, the national significance of Sullivan's light operas was not limited to their popular appeal. They were also widely regarded as being distinctly English in character. This assessment, we should add, was not reserved exclusively for those light operas based upon English subjects, for example H. M. S. Pinafore, The Pirates of Penzance, Ruddigore, or The Yeoman of the Guard. Sullivan's characteristically English music was also present in The Mikado, Utopia, Ltd., and The Rose of Persia.

An obviously nationalistic feature was his utilization of English historic musical forms, such as the glee, madrigal, sea chantey, and ballad.7 E. H. Turpin noted the significance of this aspect of Sullivan's nationality in his review of Haddon Hall from 1892.

The composer, with a true eye for the picturesque, and with a wide knowledge of the resources of his art, has found delightful opportunities for the skilful assumption, not for the first time, be it observed [sic] of the art forms so greatly perfected by our composers of former days. One of the most hopeful features of Sir Arthur Sullivan's

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7Examples include the use of a glee "A British Tar," nautical songs and hornpipe, and ballad "A maiden fair to see" in H. M. S. Pinafore; a glee "See how the fates," and madrigal "Brightly dawns our wedding day," in The Mikado; a ballad "In bygone days," madrigal "When the buds are blossoming," and nautical song and hornpipe "I shipped, d'ye see" in Ruddigore; a ballad "Ah. leave me not to pine" in The Pirates of Penzance, and the folk-like character of "I have a song to sing, O" in The Yeoman of the Guard.
specially English music is the fact that it is no servile imitation of a bygone art, but is
the adoption of forms containing living germs of real musical life. There are abundant
signs of a growing development, or rather resurrection of our once acknowledged
national style; the main characteristics of which are, a manly reliance upon diatonic
progressions which Beethoven declared and practically showed, contain the greatest
and noblest of musical idioms, and naturalness of expression. There are those who see
in English music of the best kind certain qualities analogous to the best traits of our
national character--simple earnestness, straightforward naturalness, and prompt, but
unexaggerated expression.8

Thus, Turpin saw Sullivan's English quality in his employment of old English forms
which were treated by Sullivan in a contemporary way all the while retaining the essence of
their national character. The particular focus in Turpin's article was Haddon Hall, yet the
same observation could apply to any other of Sullivan's stage works. Was it only the light
operas that could be considered English or could the same be applied to his other works
which included cantatas, songs, and orchestral music?

The "manly reliance upon diatonic progressions," widely regarded as a distinctly
English trait and pointed out by Turpin in the operas, was also a characteristic feature of
Sullivan's cantatas. As one writer said of Sullivan's The Martyr of Antioch: "There is a
broad diatonic flavour and solidity of structure about English music, which is a
conspicuous feature in the present day of shifting tonality and increasing modulation."9
Yet the relationship between Sullivan as a composer of light opera and Sullivan the
composer of serious music was greater than the question of nationality. To many the
consideration of these two sides of Sullivan's creative output opened up a whole set of
concerns.

In his essay on The Golden Legend, Sullivan's popular cantata from 1886, Charles
Villiers Stanford was enthusiastic in his praise of the work. "It would scarcely too much to
prophesy that a place, not only amongst the permanent successes of our generation, but

9Quoted in T. Hopkinson's letter to Yorkshire Post, reprinted in MO 6 (January 1881): 140.
even in the shelves of the classics, is ready for this masterly composition of the English school." Yet Stanford was considerably less enthusiastic in his consideration of the light operas. After his assessment that *The Golden Legend* was a suitable, yet more mature, successor to Sullivan's earlier works *The Tempest* (1862) and *Kenilworth* (1864), Stanford provided the following analysis of Sullivan's career during the intervening two decades.

Sir Arthur Sullivan turned his attention principally to a class of composition which, if always showing in unmistakable clearness the stamp of the musician's hand, was of a standard of art distinctly below the level of his abilities. If the world of music has to thank him for a purification of the operetta stage—no mean service in itself—it may still be permitted to regret that this much-needed reform was not carried out by a brain of smaller calibre and a hand less capable of higher work.

*The Golden Legend* was all the more remarkable, in Stanford's view, because with a single stroke it marked a twofold achievement. It restored Sullivan to a position of leadership within the English school by raising his reputation to the expected level he would have reached even had he not wasted the intervening years on operettas. Secondly, the work's genuine success would make it all the more difficult for Sullivan to yield to the temptation to resume his Savoy connection.

Stanford's prophecy would fail and Sullivan would continue his affiliation with Gilbert, producing such memorable works as *Ruddigore, The Yeoman of the Guard,* and *The Gondoliers.* Thus, the criticism of Sullivan's devotion to light opera, as Stanford had articulated, would escalate climaxing with the notices surrounding Sullivan's death and shortly thereafter.

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The *Times* obituary notice, written probably by Fuller Maitland, set off a substantial controversy regarding the nature of Sullivan's genius and its employment. Fuller Maitland stated that Sullivan's death sadly deprived England of her most "conspicuous" and popular composer, whose music had a remarkable tuneful quality. He further applauded the Savoy accomplishments of Gilbert and Sullivan regretting that there was no heir to assume their mantle. Yet the Sullivan devotees were incensed by his comment:

Many who are able to appreciate classical music regret that Sir Arthur Sullivan did not aim consistently at higher things, that he set himself to rival Offenbach and Lecocq instead of competing on a level of high seriousness with such musicians as Sir Hubert Parry and Professor Stanford. If he had followed this path he might have enrolled his name among the great composers of all time.

Fuller Maitland's analysis provoked outrage from Frederick Bridge, W. H. Cummings, and countless amateur musicians, who reminded the *Times* writer of Sullivan's successes in *The Golden Legend*, and his orchestral and church music. Furthermore, they considered the airing of such views—particularly before Sullivan had even been buried—to be in bad taste, if not un-English. The criticism of Sullivan as a serious composer from a number of corners, specifically the *Guardian* in this case, prompted the following diatribe.

The attacks that have been made on Sullivan and his compositions all proceed from one small pro-German clique; they will not affect his fame, or lower his reputation in the opinion of musicians or the people at large. He has given hours of refined pleasure to millions by his delightful operas, his sacred compositions are deservedly popular, both in church and the concert room, while his original and fine orchestral music will be esteemed by musicians, whatever the clique may say. . . . Purcell, Sterndale Bennett, and Sullivan constitute a trio of musicians we may all be proud of. Their fame will not be dimmed by time, whatever those who seek to depreciate English music may choose to say about them and their works.

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12The *Times* notice is reprinted in *MO* 24 (January 1901): 266-67.


Fuller Maitland would more fully develop his analysis of Sullivan's legacy in an article that appeared shortly thereafter in *Cornhill Magazine*. Simply put, Fuller Maitland found Sullivan to be a case of degraded genius and of unfulfilled promise—as a composer who, during the course of his career, rarely attained the height promised by his early success.

There was no exaggeration in the enthusiasm with which the music to "The Tempest" was received. It may seem difficult for us, over whom the full tide of the English musical renaissance has swept, to realise what a sensation the music made, without minutely comparing it with the average level of our national music before 1862. We cannot fail to see the great contrast between the dry, scholastic, uninspired work that represented English music at the time, and the blithe loveliness, the truly English note—unsounded for so long—and the masterly invention that distinguished this work of a stripling fresh from his studies in Germany.

While the anthems and services are praised as nobly carrying forth the English church music tradition the three oratorios, in Fuller Maitland's view, reveal "many symptoms either of inherent weakness, or else of deliberate yielding to the popular taste of the day." In particular, Fuller Maitland considered Sullivan to be at his most vulnerable in his tendency to bow to popular taste. He writes:

It was the spirit of compromise that did more than anything else to lower Sullivan's standard; for the demands of his public became of increasing importance to him, and, in one glaring and most deplorable instance, a work that ought to have raised him to the highest plane of his life's achievement was spoilt out of deference to the taste of the multitude.

Although *Trial by Jury, H. M. S. Pinafore, The Mikado*, and *The Gondoliers* are cited as worthy of praise, the success of those works contributed substantially to the failure of *Ivanhoe*. The latter work in Fuller Maitland's estimation is an uneven work, revealing

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16 *The Prodigal Son* (1869), *The Light of the World* (1873), and *The Martyr of Antioch* (1880).


18 *ibid.*, 307.
great qualities mixed with portions that clearly indicate "the composer's chief desire in their composition must have been to retain the patronage of any frequenters of the Savoy who might chance to be present."\textsuperscript{19}

In the final analysis Sullivan's genius, substantial and productive though it was, failed to realize its true potential. The key to Fuller Maitland's disappointment was that "such great natural gifts--gifts greater, perhaps, than fell to any English musician since the time of Purcell--were so very seldom employed in work worthy of them."\textsuperscript{20}

Others, however, considered that Sullivan's ultimate importance was better assessed in light of his accomplishments for English music rather than in the specific genres in which he chose to work. The most complete contemporary statement regarding Sullivan's national musical style--pertaining to both his comic operas and serious works--was Charles Maclean's lecture to the Royal Musical Association. Maclean was clearly of the opinion that Sullivan's primary contribution to English music was in his laying of the foundation for the further development of a national style. In fact, the purpose of his lecture was to correct errant views as to Sullivan's significance, and to provide an overview of a neglected topic--namely, Sullivan as a nationalist composer.

Maclean's thesis, in essence, was that despite the pervasive Germanic influence that marked his musical development,\textsuperscript{21} Sullivan from the first of his adult life consciously began to break away from that influence, and thereby forged an English style that he would continue to define throughout his career. The lecturer developed his argument by dividing Sullivan's career into five periods.

\textsuperscript{19}\textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{20}\textit{Ibid}., 308.

\textsuperscript{21}Maclean did note the exception in the area of church music, since Sullivan sang in the Chapel Royal as a boy.
The first (1856-63) was the Leipzig period. The works produced during that time are representative of the Germanic influence with no move as yet on the part of the composer toward establishing his own style. *The Tempest* music is the most enduring work to proceed from this early period.22

The second period (1864-70) marked the beginnings of Sullivan's movement toward a national idiom. Of the significance of *Kenilworth* Maclean wrote: "This gave him a lead, and the work was more English-like than anything since [Sterndale Bennett’s] 'May Queen' of six years before. It is delightfully fresh and rhythmic, is the dawn of Sullivan's nationality, and is far more important to us in England than the 'Tempest.'"23

In his third period (1871-85), the longest of the five, Sullivan established his national style, purging the areas of light opera and oratorio from their respective Italian and French, and Germanic influences. It was also the time which saw the production of the majority of the Savoy operas written in collaboration with W. S. Gilbert, the last one of this period being *The Mikado*, the high-water mark.

Of the fourth period (1886-92) Maclean wrote: "It began with that extraordinary work the 'Golden Legend'; passed through important works like 'Yeoman of the Guard,' the 'Macbeth' music (his finest overture), and the delightful 'Gondoliers'; and ended with the great effort (a torso certainly from a national point of view) of 'Ivanhoe.'"24 Thus, it was a time in which Sullivan deepened his national idiom in virtually every area.

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22Maclean departed from popular opinion in his assessment of the *Tempest* music. He recognized it as the work of a composer of genius, yet placed it as stylistically representative of most other music composed in Leipzig at the time.


24Ibid., 98.
During the fifth period (1893-1900) Sullivan did not enjoy the successes of the previous two, in fact most of his productions at that time were moderately successful at best. Yet the period ended with what, in Maclean's estimation, was the best of the operettas, *The Rose of Persia*, based upon Basil Hood's libretto. Unfortunately, Maclean neither develops nor defends this bold assessment.

In his conclusion Maclean does, however, address the oft-repeated criticism—frequently stated even by his admirers—that Sullivan squandered his genius on works unworthy of it. Maclean asserted:

Sullivan knew better than his adulators what was the proper canvas to work upon, and when and how to apply his powers. Surely there is no reason for further delay in fitting Sullivan into his place in history,. . . Sullivan was born into the world and given to England, at a time of England's musical need, to show that works of the highest class in a variety of departments of strictly modern art can be written with strictly English materials.\(^{25}\)

Sullivan's great accomplishment, as Maclean concluded, was the achievement of a blend of his own evolving artistic individuality with British character. His gift of tuneful melody (a frequently suggested national trait) was no small contributor to his success in this achievement.

Many critics, following his death and in the midst of the full-blown national movement, saw in his work a true precursor of English music. Even the advantage of historic perspective, however, produced no more eloquent articulation of Sullivan's individualistic and devoutly national character than that of the following writer.

For a man brought up in the chaotic London, in this kaleidoscope of cosmopolitan ideas, languages and races, to be able to catch firm hold of a pure English style, and at the same time to develop and preserve a distinct individuality—it requires, to all appearances, more than the strength human faculties are generally credited with: and yet, after calm consideration, we must acknowledge that this is what Sir Arthur Sullivan has done. [After returning from Leipzig] he bewildered his hearers with strains which were not elaborated and well disguised reminiscences of German or Italian music, but with strains simple, spontaneous, which seemed somehow to go

straight from the ear to the heart and there to evoke some sweet feelings of home and of old England. The young artist had instinctively treasured his native impressions, and when free to sing for himself, he sang his own dear England as it was, as he saw, and as he felt it in his British heart and brains. Yes, Sir Arthur Sullivan's music—if one listens to it with one's soul as well as with one's ears—is the mystical expression of those physical as well as intellectual nuances which are to delicate to be detected and defined by strangers, but whose sum total constitutes the great mark of each race; . . . The end of speech is to draw a man's spirit nearer to another man's spirit—the end of music is to draw a man's soul nearer to another man's soul, which is attainable only through the mysterious agency of sound which is capable of transmitting in a definite manner even those emotions that are too nice to bear transmission by words. Sir Arthur has achieved this: he has given his countrymen an English musical language through which, in the next century, they shall be able to express adequately the most delicate of tenderness and pathos of the so imperfectly understood English nation.26

*Hubert Parry (1848-1918)*

Of the composers featured in this chapter, Parry is the only one whose total compositional output falls between the boundary years of this study. We have seen that Sullivan's early works date from the 1860s and attain increasing importance throughout the following decade. Parry, on the other hand, arrived on the English musical scene in 1880 with the performance of his *Scenes from Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound"* and departed it with his death in October 1918.

The early works of Parry, of which *Prometheus Unbound* was the most prominent, demonstrated a strong attachment to the "modern German school" of Brahms and Wagner. In his chamber works, piano concerto, and *Prometheus* critics recognized a new voice in English music, most evidently due to his serious departure from Mendelssohn. In fact, *Prometheus* strayed so far from the public's expectations that its initial performance was generally regarded as a failure.27

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27 One reason for the failure of *Prometheus* was the expectation factor. Another factor, equally if not more significant, was the anti-Wagner sentiment in England at the time. In his 1957 lecture on Parry and Stanford, Vaughan Williams recounted Parry's importance as an early advocate of Wagner in England, stating that "He was one of the early champions of Wagner when other thinkers in this country were still
In the midst of the many adverse judgments that accompanied that initial performance at Gloucester, stands Ebenezer Prout's favorable, yet perceptive criticism.

Anything from Mr. Parry's pen deserves the consideration due to the work of an earnest, thoughtful, and conscientious artist. In his style the composer shows a strong leaning to the modern German school of music as exemplified in one direction by the works of Brahms, and in another by those of Wagner. Of the former Mr. Parry's instrumental works are an illustration; while the scenes form "Prometheus" are written, one might almost say, under the inspiration of "Tristan und Isolde."28

Later assessments of Prometheus Unbound, as we have noted in chapter three, would claim a unique place for it in English musical history. Of the change engendered by historical perspective W. H. Hadow observed: "No one seems to have had any idea that, on that evening in the Shire Hall, English music had, after many years, come again to its own, and that it had come with a masterpiece in its hand."29 Yet in Fuller Maitland's view, it had still not received sufficient recognition for its historic as well as enduring musical value.

It was typical of the state of music in England at that date that this work should have been a failure almost unqualified. . . . It is possible to speak with the more confidence about the work itself, since it was revived by the Bach Choir on two occasions; yet even so, a reading of the score makes it difficult to believe that it has not been hailed as one of the first and greatest glories of the renaissance of English music.30

Thus, Parry burst upon the English musical scene as a promising English disciple of the most recent German music. While virtually all critics recognized this, opinion would change during the early years of the following decade.

calling him impious." In the same lecture Vaughan Williams also stated: "In 1891 when I first went to Parry he was indeed an out-and-out radical both in art and life. He introduced me to Wagner and Brahms—which was quite contrary to curricula then obtaining in academies. He showed me the greatness of Bach and Beethoven as compared with Handel and Mendelssohn." See Heirs and Rebels, 94-95.


In 1892 the *Musical Herald* carried an article entitled “Dr. Parry and the English School.” The anonymous writer developed three essential points. First, English music had experienced a new awakening after a long period of dormancy. Secondly, Hubert Parry was cited as the pioneer of the new English school. Finally, the writer described those attributes of Parry’s music that were characteristically “English.”

Not written from the standpoint of narrow isolationism, the writer recounted the influence of the continent on Purcell, citing that composer as example for others. “Purcell himself was guided by Lulli, yet Purcell’s music is English to the backbone; and in like manner the pioneer of our new advance must be able to take all that is best in the style and diction of foreign school, and use it for the expression and embodiment of English ideas.”\(^{31}\) Stating that it would be impossible for modern English music to shield itself from the contemporary musical developments in Germany, the writer acknowledged those influences on Parry’s work. Yet even in the early works Parry showed “unmistakeable anticipations of a maturer [we might specify English] style.”\(^{32}\) Thus, Parry stands as the new Purcell. “By influence, by example, by achievement, he has indicated the lines on which our freedom can be regained; and it is not too much to say that the prospects of our English art depend on the extent to which we accept his leadership.”\(^{33}\)

Parry was not only a modern composer, but a modern composer of English music. His work reveals that “straightforward manliness and vigour which is the central characteristic of true English music.”\(^{34}\) Musically speaking, it consists of “strong diatonic melody, which rides on its bass as a ship rides on the water, rhythm that can change

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\(^{31}\)“Dr. Parry and the English School,” *MH*, no. 536 (1 November 1892): 324.

\(^{32}\)Ibid.

\(^{33}\)Ibid.

\(^{34}\)Ibid.
without being restless, and continue without being monotonous, sentiment that is sane and healthy with not touch of extravagance, or affectation." With insightful perception, the writer identifies three dominant aspects of Parry's English style that would be taken up by later critics: the breadth of Parry's thought that characterizes both his choral writing and orchestral work, the balance achieved by Parry in his attention to the claims of both text and music, and, finally, the skill with which Parry sets English verse. This last was vitally important. "If his music had no other value, it would at least have earned our gratitude by teaching us 'to span words with just note and accent.'"

This attention to proper musical declamation of the English language, exemplified in Purcell and resurrected by Parry, was also developed by E. D. Rendall two year later. Parry's accomplishment, as seen by Rendall, was in his ability to handle the English language in a way that no English composer had done since Purcell. The parallel between Purcell and Parry is attributable not to any conscious imitation on Parry's part, but rather to the commonality of their source of both composers' Englishness--namely, the English language, though separated by two centuries. "The English language has still the same natural cadence and accent that it had in the days of Purcell, and the result is that the form of its expression must remain the same, if justice be done to its natural capabilities."

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37 While we do not intend to dispute Rendall's claim, it should be remembered that Parry's *OHM* volume on *The Seventeenth Century* was forthcoming. To what extent Parry had studied Purcell by 1894 is difficult to answer, yet he did produce a substantial article in connection with the Purcell bicentennial the following year. His *Invocation to Music* produced at Leeds during that same year was written in homage to Purcell.

Rendall provided evidence for his case by comparing parallel passages from the lamentations of Job by the two composers. With the exception of Purcell's characteristic mannerisms, Rendall states: "I believe there is no phrase which might not have appeared in Dr. Parry's work without being perfectly suited to the rest."

The result is a musical sound unfamiliar to the ears of English audiences who have grown accustomed to "German and Italian phrases set to English words, so twisted as to suit them." Yet it is precisely in this regard that Parry has shown himself to be of pivotal importance to the future course of national music. To Rendall, an English style was indissolubly welded to the English language. Consequently, a national style would necessarily be a vocal style, revealing itself in cantatas, oratorios, and song literature.

In his article Rendall distinguished early works such as Prometheus, which he considered Wagnerian, from Parry's more recent works in which one finds "a far truer expression of what is essentially English." The years between 1883 and 1894 mark a highly productive period in Parry's career. During this time he composed a substantial number of festival choral pieces and orchestral pieces, which included three symphonies and incidental music for Aristophanes's Birds and Frogs. Among the more important choral works are two from the heart of the period, Blest Pair of Sirens (1887) and Judith (1888).

Blest Pair of Sirens, based upon Milton's "Ode to a Solemn Music," was frequently mentioned as one of Parry's most representatively English and individually characteristic works. Stanford saw in it the influence of Samuel Sebastian Wesley, though he stated that

\[39\] He had earlier in the article compared musical settings of parallel verse by Purcell and Handel, demonstrating the latter's insensitivity to the language.

\[40\] Rendall, "English Music," 595.

\[41\] Ibid.
it clearly outdistanced the model.\textsuperscript{42} Vaughan Williams, seventy years after the work's premiere, stated: "I fully believe--and keeping the achievements of Byrd, Purcell, and Elgar firmly before my eyes,--\textit{Blest Pair of Sirens} is the finest musical work that has come out of these islands."\textsuperscript{43} Hadow saw the work as stylistically important within Parry's own output, establishing the time when he "began to show his power of building up great epic masses of sound."\textsuperscript{44} Finally, Fuller Maitland asserted: "\textit{Blest Pair of Sirens}'... is unsurpassed as a wedding of perfect music unto noble words; musically, its splendidly ordered design, leading us from climax to climax, is a model for the student."\textsuperscript{45}

The oratorio \textit{Judith} appeared at the Birmingham festival during the following year. While the work attracted considerable critical attention, one evaluation stands preeminent, notably that of Parry's RCM colleague, Charles Stanford. From the outset Stanford points his barrels directly at the critical press.

\begin{quote}
A strong feeling for national music, which has come to a head during recent years, might have been expected to produce at all events one good result, the encouragement of those native composers who endeavour to work on the highest lines and to place this country in the running with the more earnest Continental schools. Unfortunately this is not the case. Any writer who is bold enough to take a higher flight than the royalty ballad and the comic opera finds that an utter lack of appreciation, to use the mildest term, is the only recompense of his laudable endeavour; and unless he be strong-minded enough to rate criticism at its proper value, not only in theory but in practice, discouragement and failure are the inevitable result.\textsuperscript{46}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{42}Charles Villiers Stanford, "Mr. Hubert Parry's 'Judith,'" \textit{Fortnightly Review}, n.s., 44 (1 October 1888): 539.
\textsuperscript{44}Sir W. H. Hadow, "Sir Hubert Parry," \textit{PRMA} 45 (1918-19): 140.
\textsuperscript{45}J. A. Fuller Maitland, "Hubert Parry," \textit{MQ} 5 (July 1919): 302.
\textsuperscript{46}Stanford, "Sir Hubert Parry's 'Judith,'" 537.
\end{footnotes}
In turning his attention to the work at hand Stanford recounts Parry's solid acquaintance with past composers of all nationalities, which gives his assessment of this oratorio a particularly strong ring.

Not the least remarkable feature in the work is its distinctly English, national atmosphere, which gives it a value to this country far greater than the present generation need be expected to admit. It is easy to see the legitimate influence... of Boyce... and of S. S. Wesley... Having reaped the fruits, then, of his experience in the best schools of English and foreign work, Mr. Parry now presents us with an example of the highest form of musical composition.47

Stanford's evaluation of Judith is notable as it draws a line of historic continuity not only from Purcell, as many writers had done, but from eighteenth and nineteenth century figures as well. While Parry clearly outshines both earlier composers in Stanford's view,48 the line of continuity of English music is important.

Other writers would offer Parry's song literature as particularly representative of his Englishness. In fact, R. O. Morris cited Parry's ability as a song writer to be one area where Parry needed no apology. Morris wrote: “Even if his larger works continue to slumber on the shelf, there is no reason why the ten volumes of ‘English Lyrics’ (now all published) should not keep his memory green.”49

While it was generally recognized that it was in his choral works that Parry's reputation stands or falls, his instrumental works were nevertheless respected, if unenthusiastically so. We might suggest a few reasons. With few exceptions most critics saw the symphonies of Parry as somewhat pale reflections of Brahms. Thus, they were not considered to be Parry's best vehicle for advancing an English idiom, as was the case with his vocal music. Secondly, there were questions as to his ability to handle an

47Ibid., 539.

48Stanford was on record as calling Parry the "greatest English composer since Purcell." See Hadow's PRMA article.

orchestra. Even in the works written for chorus with orchestra, the criticism of Parry's orchestration was an everpresent one. Finally, Parry's works for orchestra were eclipsed by the formidable appearance of Elgar, who established himself as the chief instrumental composer in England with the 1899 premiere of the "Enigma" Variations. Yet Parry's works, particularly his music for The Birds, the symphonies in F and C (subtitled "Cambridge" and "English," respectively), and his Theme and Variations in E minor, had their enthusiastic advocates. As one undaunted writer observed:

The Symphony in F has a special interest as showing how far an English composer can accept the results of German music without being overpowered by its methods. The slow movement embodies that form of Romanticism which we usually associate with the name of Schumann; but it is written from the standpoint of England, not from Germany. There is the same elaborate polyphony, the same treatment of free imitation and dialogue, yet the whole spirit of the music is English throughout.\(^5^0\)

A significant turning point in Parry's career came in 1894 when he was offered, and accepted the directorship of the RCM. Parry's association with the RCM as a teacher of composition had begun at that institution's founding in 1883. Yet many considered the elevation to the directorship to be one having devastating effects not only upon Parry's compositional life, but also upon the cause of English national music.\(^5^1\) Ultimately his contact with students—an aspect he most prized—was lost due to administrative responsibilities, as Vaughan Williams reminisced:

They are the most fortunate who knew Parry in the earlier days [before he became Director of RCM], when The Glories of our blood and State and Blest Pair of Syrens [sic] were new, the years which saw De Profundis and Job: those who came under his

\(^5^0\)"Dr. Parry and the English School," 325.

\(^5^1\)At the time Parry resigned the Oxford Professorship, due to ill health, one writer observed: "in England we have a fatal way of taking a man who shows marked ability in some particular line, and overworking him, generally in other lines; and this is more especially true in music. . . . Yet when a man has, with Blest Pair of Sirens, created the possibility of a new epoch in English music, we say, 'Come, let us overwork him in other lines, so that composition will henceforth be for his spare half hours.'" "Sir Hubert Parry and the Oxford Professorship," MH, no. 721 (1 April 1908): 105.
influence in those times it is who can realise most fully all that Parry did for English music.\footnote{Ralph Vaughan Williams, "Sir Hubert Parry," \textit{MusStud} 11 (November 1918): 79.}

Virtually every obituary notice and general assessment of Parry's influence shortly after his death, despite varying views regarding the quality of Parry's compositional legacy, were united in their criticism of the decision. As Robin Legge wrote:

A great blow was delivered against English music, when Parry was appointed to succeed Sir George Grove, as director of the R. C. M. . . . Parry was half-paralysed from the beginning of his directorate by its multifarious duties, and that half-ruined his opportunity for being of greatest significance to British music. Parry, in spite of all that he achieved, died a Might-Have-Been!\footnote{Robin H. Legge, "Charles Hubert Hastings Parry," \textit{MT} 59 (1 November 1918): 491.}

R. O. Morris, who subsequently taught composition at the same institution, remarked: "His acceptance of the post was a very grievous error of judgment, . . . he would have done far greater service, both to his country and to music in general, by declining it."\footnote{R. O. Morris, "Hubert Parry," 101.} Despite such denunciations of time wasted and lamentations of what might have been, Parry managed to make a formidable impact of the national music of England.

Parry's national style, as a composer, is seen in six areas: text declamation, historical continuity, diatonicism, the absence of a folk element, the connection of music with life, and the general character of the music. Parry's skill in his musical treatment of the English language has already been noted. As one surveys the criticism this ability easily ranks as the most appreciated attribute of Parry as a composer, and seemingly difficult to account for. As Fuller Maitland wrote:

One cannot guess from which, if any, of his teachers, Parry acquired that wonderful skill in accentuation, or as it sometimes called, "declamation," in which he is unrivalled among his countrymen. . . . [Even in his early works] every syllable seems to bear its
"just note and accent" . . . and the vocal inflections throughout are such as are suggested by the poet's phrases.\(^{55}\)

Perhaps Fuller Maitland was looking to his recent teachers Hugo Pierson or George Macfarren, when in reality Parry had learned the skill from English composers of the past. The factor of historic continuity with past English composers was pointed out by Stanford and numerous others, particularly in respect to Purcell. Colles puts Parry squarely in a line of continuity running through Gibbons, Purcell, and Wesley, in that he "stakes everything upon the contour of a vocal phrase and his musical phraseology is the exact counterpart of English poetry or prose which he sets."\(^{56}\) Colles continues, stating the impact of this observation upon a national style.

When you can take three centuries of composers and can show that they gravitate naturally towards the same methods of expression, plus of course a certain contribution from individuality and environment, you have there a national type. That is English or British music. You may find other lines through which the national temperament may equally be traced, but in these phases of choral music is found one of the strongest, because the longest one.\(^{57}\)

A trait particularly representative of Parry's personal, as well as national style, was this feature wedded to a strongly diatonic melody. Morris had observed: "His melody . . . follows both the sense and the accentuation of the words with a fidelity that no English writer before him had ever approached."\(^{58}\) Writing of the humorous cantata *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, Elgar's great advocate, A. J. Jaeger stated enthusiastically that the work:

is built upon a number of tuneful and straightforward diatonic subjects, such as Sir Hubert loves to write. In fact, the whole cantata might be put forward as a protest against modern chromaticism and over-elaboration; as a diatonic antiseptic to counteract

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\(^{55}\) Fuller Maitland, "Hubert Parry," 301. For another appreciation of Parry in this regard see F. Gilbert Webb, "The Words of Sir Hubert Parry," *MT* 59 (1 November 1918): 492-94.


\(^{57}\) Ibid.

\(^{58}\) Morris, "Hubert Parry," 97.
what thoughtful judges of contemporary music may well consider a tendency to
decay.\

Parry's melodic style, with its allegiance to broad diatonicism, was one not directly
(or consciously) inspired by the folk idiom. Yet the English quality of his music,
undeniable to many, necessitated an expanded view as to what constituted national musical
expression. Vaughan Williams would make the assessment:

Neither Parry nor Elgar, so far as I know ever used an actual English folk-song in their
work. But we do feel that the same circumstances which produced our beautiful
English folk-songs also produced their music, founded as it should be on our own
history, our own customs, our own incomparable landscape, even perhaps our
undependable weather and our abominable food.

Parry's national idiom--one not based on mere folk music, but on the totality of
English life--suggests another attribute of his nationality, namely the connection of music
with life. As we have noted previously in chapters two and three, Vaughan Williams in
particular deplored the English tendency to divorce music from life. That music could exist
and even thrive in a country as an exotic import was a great detriment to national music.
He argued that a national music must be vitally connected to the life of a nation--it must
proceed from it and be constantly stimulated by it. The following tribute suggests that
Vaughan Williams's concept might well have been formulated under the tutelage of Parry.

Parry taught music as a part of life. Was it necessary for life that every part should
form an organic whole: so it must be in music; there must be no mere filling up, every
part must have its relation to the whole, so that the whole may live. Can we trace in life
a process of evolution from the germ to the complete organism? So must we read the

59 A. J. Jaeger, "Sir Hubert Parry's 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin,'" MT 46 (1 November 1905):
726.

60 Hadow, in his lecture before the Royal Musical Association, maintained that Parry had steered
between the extremes of the "two erroneous schools of criticism" that had obscured the real issue of national
style. One school believed that nationality in music was only achieved by the use of folk song. The
opposite school asserted that nationalism had no place in art, whatsoever. Claiming that every great artist
was a child of his time and country, Hadow remarked: "He will use the style and idiom which come most
naturally to his hand: he will express through them the thoughts and feelings which he shares, though more
fully and deeply, with the rest of his countrymen. And this is exactly what Parry has done." Hadow, "Sir
Hubert Parry," 144.

story of music. Is a nation given over to frivolity and insincere vulgarity? We shall surely see it reflected in the music of that nation. There was no distinction for him between a moral and an artistic problem. To him it was morally wrong to use musical colour for its own sake, or to cover up weak material with harmonic device. This is what Parry taught, and this is what he practised; later composers have followed after strange gods: they have gathered new sounds from Germany, bizarre rhythms from Russia, and subtle harmonies from France. Into these paths Parry has not followed, not because he could not, but because he would not; he remained staunchly himself, and amidst all the outpouring of modern English music the work of Parry remains supreme.62

This observation leads to a deeper evaluation of Parry's contribution to English musical life. Whether Parry was a great composer or not was a frequent topic of debate, however there was no controversy over his greatness as a man, and it is there that his contribution to English music is ultimately found. In the estimation of his colleagues and students, all that Parry did for English music was rooted in the sort of man he was. “It was because he was a great man that Parry was a great teacher and a great composer.”63

In fact, they would further argue that Parry's music was an outgrowth of his personality to such a degree that any appraisal of his music outside of that context was limited.64 Perhaps here is the ultimate identity of Parry's Englishness. Although analyses of national musical style which hinge on diatonicism, text/music relationships might be helpful, they are at bottom superficial. Parry's stylistic identity is inseparable from his personal identity. As Robin Legge observed: “Maybe he was potentially a greater man than musician. At least he was a man first, a very real man, and a very true Briton.”65 He was the very model of an English gentleman, and as such composed music that could be considered as nothing else but English.

62 Vaughan Williams, "Sir Hubert Parry," 79.

63 Ibid.

64 Legge wrote: “I am still, after well over a third of a century, as firmly convinced as ever that had this world known more of Parry the man, Parry the musician would, as such, have occupied a larger place in their esteem.” Robin Legge, "Charles Hubert Hastings Parry," 490.

65 Legge, "Parry," 491.
In his well-developed appreciation of Parry, W. H. Hadow ably summarized England's debt toward him.

He represents in music the essential sanity of the English genius: its mixture of strength and tenderness, its breadth, its humour, its entire freedom from vanity and affectation.

As is the man, so has been his influence. I do not speak only of the pupils who have passed under his hand, of the friends who have been privileged to know him, of the struggling musicians whom he has helped and encouraged: there is no side of our musical life in England which is not the better and the nobler because he has lived. . . . Through him we have learned to speak in our own tongue, to deliver our own message, to bind once more the broken thread, to recall the forgotten tradition.  

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Edward Elgar occupied a central position among English composers during the decades of this study, if for no other reason that he established an international reputation for English music as no one else had. We might say that his English reputation was made on the rebound, only after he had received substantial endorsement from important continental musical figures. Yet an analysis of the press notices and articles dealing with the composer reveals that many reasons combine to thrust Elgar to the forefront in the English musical scene, not the least of which was the growing nationality of his music.

As one surveys Elgar's compositional output, one is struck by a career that more or less divides itself into periods according to genre. After initially attracting attention in 1890 with his Froissart overture, performed at the Worcester Festival, Elgar continue to provide works for the provincial choral festivals, usually in the form of cantatas or oratorios. The full impact of his significance to English music, however, occurred at the turn of the century with the successive appearance of "Enigma" Variations and The Dream of

66 Hadow, "Sir Hubert Parry," 144-45.

67 For example, The Black Knight (Worcester, 1893), The Light of Life (Worcester, 1896), King Olaf (North Staffordshire, 1896), Caractacus (Leeds, 1898).
Gerontius. Other works from this period of maturity include Sea Pictures, Cockaigne overture, and two oratorios, The Apostles and The Kingdom. Thus, the seven-year period (1899-1906) is a distinctive one in Elgar's career in that it finds him dividing his attention somewhat equally between vocal and instrumental works.

During the years that followed, Elgar increasingly concentrated on instrumental works. The time prior to the war saw the appearance of the two symphonies, violin concerto, and Falstaff. During the war years Elgar produced his most consciously national works, Sospiri, Carillon, and The Spirit of England. Except for the cello concerto, attention to chamber music marked the years following the war with his violin sonata, string quartet, and piano quintet.

As his contemporary critics assessed Elgar's output they were struck by two apparently contradictory aspects of his creative personality. Although Elgar's style was distinctly individual and easily recognizable there, nevertheless, seemed to be two Elgars. These two Elgars would be described in different ways, yet the resultant picture remained fairly consistent. One Elgar, it was said, dwelt in the sunshine, the other in religious sentimentality. Another critic noted the difference between the popular Elgar and the meditative Elgar. Still another critic associated the twin aspects of Elgar's compositional personality with genre output, seeing one dimension revealed in the cantatas, oratorios, and church music, and another evident in his instrumental works. Another version of the genre distinction was articulated in the differences evident between the first and second symphonies. As Ernest Newman suggested, the first symphony seemed to be troubled by the "darker problems with the soul," while the second "sings and dances in sheer delight with life."^68

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This twofold dynamic of Elgar's personality is also clearly demonstrated in the two works that catapulted him to a position of priority among English composers. The place occupied by the "Enigma" Variations and The Dream of Gerontius, not only within Elgar's output, but also in the history of English music cannot be easily overestimated. The "Enigma" Variations, in addition to revealing the whimsical side of the composer's character, demonstrated a threefold competence which effectively extinguished the memory of all recent English instrumental works. In it Elgar revealed his skill in handling the variation form, presented a work that was convincingly instrumental in idiom, and demonstrated unrivalled ability to write for the orchestra.

The Dream of Gerontius, as we have noted in earlier chapters, elevated the stereotypical English oratorio to new heights. Its importance as a milestone in English music was also recognized on the continent. According to Danziger Zeitung: "The Dream of Gerontius' gives Elgar the rank of one of the first, if not the first English composer of importance in the history of music."69

The remarkable aspect of all the criticism surrounding Gerontius is the universal admiration for a work that, at first flush, is so parochial and limited in its appeal. In spite of the obvious obstacles to positive reception—a work based upon a poem of questionable merit by Cardinal Newman, unabashedly religious and personal in its orientation, rooted in Roman Catholic theology in an overwhelmingly Protestant country—Gerontius was regarded as a triumph from every corner.

Edward A. Baughan, writing of the work's premiere, stated:

"The Dream of Gerontius" stands forth as the most complete example of the modern British school. It owes nothing to pedantic formation; it is no imitation of Bach or Brahms or Wagner; and from first bar to last it is MUSIC. If it has a weakness it is that

69Quoted in MT 44 (1 April 1903): 235.
a note of mysticism which somehow lies behind Newman's realistic and verbally clumsy poem is not quite realized.\textsuperscript{70}

Baughan, in a review for another journal, would find the work's strength and appeal to be rooted in its clear and genuine expression of the composer's own soul.\textsuperscript{71} In fact, in later articles dealing with Elgar, Baughan would find the appeal of \textit{Gerontius} to be its distinctly human and dramatic quality which transcended superficial differences in religious orientation—an accomplishment not achieved in his other sacred works.

Frankly, I have but little sympathy with Sir Edward Elgar's attitude towards religion. It is too mediæval; too much of the Church of Rome. In \textit{The Dream of Gerontius} there was an expression of the same attitude of mind, but in that work the music has such a personal note that it is affecting and interesting as a psychological drama. . . . In Elgar's music I detect the hysterical prostration of the confessional. It is too much a repentance of nerves.\textsuperscript{72}

Even in blatantly unenthusiastic reviews, such as those by J. H. G. Baughan, the work was nevertheless regarded as "one of the best oratorios (if not the best oratorio) that an Englishman has penned."\textsuperscript{73}

The spiritual dimension of Elgar's personality, recognized initially in \textit{The Dream of Gerontius}, and developed in later works, was the subject of frequent observation. Some critics who tolerated the religious language of \textit{Gerontius}, because of its dramatically human quality, were not so generous in their appraisal of the later oratorios, \textit{The Apostles} and \textit{The
Kingdom. Edward Baughan's criticism of the mediæval character of Elgar's religion has already been noted. In his response to The Apostles, Baughan noted the aspect of Elgar that dwelt "in an atmosphere of religious sentimentality and highly coloured mysticism," stating his own preference for the Elgar as revealed in the instrumental music due to its "greater vitality and originality." The premiere of The Kingdom did little to lessen the impression of some that Elgar's creed was stifling rather than inspiring his creativity. One writer having noted favorably Elgar's commitment in dedicating his "powers to nobler conceptions of art than the 'purely sensuous' or the purely pedantic'"--a trait he considered to be religion in the best and most powerful sense--quickly pointed out the negative power of the creed in Elgar's case. "Elgar is choking his art and his soul—he is binding about him ever more tightly the fetters of mere Romanism."

Yet later works demonstrated that Elgar's spirituality possessed considerably more breadth than the standard biblically-based festival oratorios. In fact, the case could be made that the manifestation of Elgar's spirituality after 1906 gradually acquired a national focus. Perhaps no critic developed this more effectively than Herbert Antcliffe. While Antcliffe would more fully explore the national spirituality of Elgar in 1911, he wedded the concepts of nationality and spirituality a few years before. Writing of Elgar and Edward MacDowell, Antcliffe suggested that the music of both composers revealed not only their respective national characteristics, but also a profound mystical sense.

Elgar... although a Catholic in a Protestant country; has all the Selbständigkeit of the typical Englishman, with most of his reticence and his restraint. All his works show the same spirit and intuition of the English inventor in that, while they are quite original and often daring, they are based on the work which others have successfully accomplished in the past.

76Herbert Antcliffe, "Elgar and MacDowell," MO 31 (September 1908): 897.
A key component of Elgar's national/spiritual quality was the bond that existed between his music and its appeal to the heart of his listeners. Elgar's first symphony, it may be argued, was the most eagerly awaited English musical event of its decade, and its reception aptly demonstrates this point. The picture that emerges from the criticism of the work is that of a London public gone wild over the composition of a self-taught provincial musician who grips their hearts with an unprecedented force, leaving the academically-minded musical establishment in a state of complete bewilderment. Yet it should not be assumed therefore that the work received a negative critical reception. In fact, the reception was overwhelmingly positive though not without reservations. As J. H. G. Baughan observed:

Certain portions of the work do not exactly please us, but that is an unimportant objection; for the total impression of the symphony is so extremely satisfactory. Indeed . . . it is the best modern orchestral composition yet put forward by living Britshers, and it seems highly doubtful whether any other living British composer has it in him to produce a composition of equal significance and mastery.

Nearly a decade after the symphony's premiere, in the midst of war, M. C. Urch continued to see this connection between spiritual sense and popular appeal in virtually all of Elgar's works.

Elgar's appeal in all his greatest works is always to the spirit of his listeners. Before all else, he is, in his music, a mystic and a visionary, searching tirelessly for those beauties which lie beyond the ken of ordinary folk, touching everything with the strange light of that Otherworldliness so far removed from the lives of most of us.

In addition to the recognition of the spiritual dimension in Elgar's music on the part of critics, one meets frequently the descriptive terms "modern" and "individualistic" in

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those same discussions. We have already noted the apparent paradox between the notion of the two Elgars and the distinctive character of Elgar's style that marks every work. Newman stated: "Any two consecutive pages of his have a stamp that enable us at once to name their author."  

Among his contemporaries, Elgar was regarded as a modernist. When Elgar is classed as a modern, a critic is usually referring to any one of four areas, all of which were derived from German models: his use of chromatic harmony particularly evident in his choral works from the 1890s; the prominent place given to representative themes in those same works and developed more fully in *Gerontius, The Apostles,* and *The Kingdom,* his technique of choral writing in the latter works, and his unrivalled abilities as an orchestrator among his English peers.

As important as these attributes are to a complete understanding of Elgar's achievement for English music, the national quality of his music takes a dominant role in discussions of his music from 1900 before reaching its height in his music composed during World War I. Elgar's identity as an English composer might be said to begin with "Enigma" and *Gerontius,* the two works that grabbed international attention. As critics, throughout Elgar's career, assessed his contribution on behalf of English music these works were commonly regarded as providing that initiation, demonstrating that, at last, an English composer had written music that could take its place beside the latest works from the continent. Elgar was described as the "English genius," and as the "greatest English composer since Purcell." Therefore, the earliest observations made in connection with

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80 Quoted in Review of *Elgar,* by Ernest Newman, *MT* 47 (1 July 1906): 472. Newman developed this more fully in his review of Elgar's Violin Concerto where he wrote: "The present Concerto could not possibly be attributed to anyone else. It is signed 'Edward Elgar' in a thousand places—one might almost say in every bar." Yet, as Newman hastily points out, the similarity which exists between the concerto and the first symphony, for example, is a similarity of idiom, but no repetition of musical ideas. Ernest Newman, "Elgar's Violin Concerto," *MT* 51 (1 October 1910): 631.
Elgar's Englishness focused upon the nationality of the composer rather than the nationality of his music.

The next stage of Elgar's "nationalization," as was noted above, was the popularity of the composer with his audience, a popularity achieved both at the provincial choral festival, and in the London concert hall. Gerald Cumberland in an article for the American Etude summarized the breadth and significance of Elgar's national and international reputation as of 1906—a reputation as attributable to his personality as to his music. He wrote:

Sir Edward Elgar is the greatest composer that England has produced for two hundred years; not since the days of Purcell has any Englishman put into his music so much of the authentic spirit of freedom and strength, humour and buoyancy as Elgar has poured into his compositions. That his works have touched the hearts and minds of the people is evident wherever they are performed; crowds throng to hear and applaud, both in England, France, Germany—in Germany where so few English composers are taken seriously! Students delve into his scores and discuss them with eagerness: the critics vie with the general public in praise of his work, and his fellow composers willingly acknowledge him as the head and leader of the new English school.

That he has taken so strong a hold on the English mind, and imagination is due almost as much to his remarkable personality as to his compositions. Elgar is no long-haired maniac, full of whims and fancies; he assumes no pose and has no prejudices; he has no pet fad which he thrusts into the face of the public, and he does not advertise the private details of his home-life.

From this point forward, however, there are increased efforts on the part of critics to discuss Elgar's Englishness in reference to the nationality of the music itself, rather than exclusively from the perspective of his achievement for English music and his popularity. Confronted with the undeniable spiritual quality of his music, some saw his religion as being typically English in approach. The "vague solemnity which floats throughout the

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81 See the reviews of the premieres of The Kingdom and the Symphony, no. 1 in A-flat, in MS, ill.s., 26 (13 October 1906): 229-30 and MS, ill.s., 30 (26 December 1908): 408-09.

whole of 'The Dream of Gerontius,' makes its primary appeal neither to the purely musical mind nor to the purely religious mind, but to the "typically English mind which is tinged, not penetrated, by religion and which likes its music on Sundays or of a Sunday kind."83

Elgar was considered to be England's most representative composer, particularly in his musical manifestation of the English temperament, as one that was proud, noble, stalwart, dignified, perhaps even arrogant. Yet Elgar's music contained other qualities--considerably more emotional, some would even suggest neurotic--that could not so easily be explained as stereotypically English in nature. Cumberland, in fact, would suggest that Elgar's music revealed qualities never before seen in English music. Elgar's uniqueness as a composer was rooted in the unusual fusion which characterized his personality. "Never before were the qualities of neuroticism (for neuroticism has qualities as well as defects) so exquisitely blended with health of soul and vigour of mind as they are in Elgar's music."84

Richard Capell, following the same track two years later, found the Englishness of Elgar's music so powerfully convincing that it challenged stereotypical views of the English temperament. Of the violin concerto which followed on the heels of the first symphony Capell wrote:

After this concerto and the Elgar symphony--which it resembles in being a riot of unbridled emotionalism--the legend of the Englishman's phlegmatism and morgue must surely, at least as far as music is concerned, be for ever abandoned. The spirit of voluptuous self-abandonment in this music cannot be paralleled by anything else in western European art."85


After dismissing the possibility of a parallel between French, Italian, or German temperaments with that of Elgar, Capell states:

> It is to the neurotic Russians one must go to find a spirit affinitive with the English Elgar's—the Russians and particularly the feverish Tchaikovsky, rather than the Petersburg group whose atmosphere was cooler, more open-air, more naive. Elgar with his passion for splendid colour and his self-abandonment to the devastation of the emotions is more akin to Tchaikovsky than any other musician, and in this he is very English, for the adoration of Tchaikovsky is one of the truest passions of the English musical public.\(^{86}\)

Of course, as Capell suggests, there is no attempt to claim a strong analogy or derive an influence since “Elgar has a personality as individual as any in modern music.” Yet the critic, nevertheless, finds an “intense emotionalism”—rooted in religious mysticism—to be the very essence of the two works.\(^{87}\)

Elgar's second symphony provided an effective counterweight to the emotional intensity of the first. Newman's remarks concerning the differing character of the second symphony were quoted above. Yet Newman saw the symphony as being more than a mere departure from the first, he saw in the mood of the second symphony the essence of English music. He writes:

> Somewhere in the “Oxford History of Music” Professor Wooldridge speaks of “jocundity and sweetness” as being the characteristics of the best English music from the earliest times. “Jocundity and sweetness”—no two words could better describe the main qualities of this second Symphony of Elgar's.\(^{88}\)

During the years prior to World War I there exists no better argument for the English attribute of Elgar's music than the picture provided by Herbert Antcliffe. In Antcliffe's estimation Elgar stands as the quintessence of English music, “the culmination of all the influences which have directed British Music from the days of Purcell and earlier

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\(^{86}\)Ibid.

\(^{87}\)Ibid.

to our own days." Although Elgar had not utilized folk tunes in his music, Antcliffe considered his achievement to be greater in that he "assimilated and expressed the spirit that evokes the folk-song, that is the spirit of the people at its best." Furthermore, in his oratorios Elgar developed the English fondness for "large choralism" that had begun in the eighteenth century. Elgar's music also shows a tuneful quality, further marked by a character of "restrained obviousness," that was a feature of every truly British composer throughout history. As Antcliffe remarks: "We see both these characteristics in our folk-songs, and in the compositions of Purcell, Arne, Bishop, the Wesleys, Sterndale Bennett and scores of others."

Although Elgar's music accurately reflected the spirit of England's musical past, Antcliffe considered the modern cast of his music to be of far greater significance in his assessment of Elgar's nationalism and his ultimate importance. He writes:

The way in which Elgar has assimilated and expressed the spirit of the present age and of the British people appears in every one of his works, or he is not so great or so distinctly British a composer as we like to think he is. The spirit finds its expression in all the details of his work and in its general character, but it is most distinctly traceable in certain features.

Antcliffe concluded his article by suggesting four periods of Elgar's compositional activity, yet the period in which Elgar was at his most national was still to come. During the years of the First World War Elgar wrote works which seemed to express the heart and soul of the English people, which provided a focus for all of their patriotic energies. Of Carillon Ernest Newman wrote:


90 Ibid.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid. Among other works, Antcliffe cites the Cockaigne overture of which he writes: "Every one of the tunes in this delightful work has the same kind of feeling as we find in the old folk-tunes, only it is expressed in a modern idiom."
Elgar gave expression to the best that is in us at this time of trial. It was not mere war-music; it was music that transcended the shouting and the trampling, the blood and murk of war. We gladly leave the writing of Hymns of Hate to the race that has shown us in too many other respects also how near its instincts are to those of the barbarian. An older and a better civilization looks to its leading artists for something different from the German froth and foam, bellowing and swagger. We are not “too proud to fight,” but we are too proud to abase our emotions about the war to the level of those of our bestial foe; to do that would be disloyalty to the memory of our holy dead.\(^\text{93}\)

Newman found Elgar’s work no less inspirational as he focused his comments upon the composer’s setting of two poems of a projected three by Laurence Binyon that together comprise *The Spirit of England*.\(^\text{94}\) The review is an enthusiastic one as Newman considered the work impressive from both an emotional and musical point of view. Commenting upon the conclusion of the last poem “For the Fallen,” Newman asserts:

> The music attains its emotional climax in a piece of writing that is one of the most thrilling things the composer has ever given us. Here in truth is the very voice of England, moved to the centre of her being in this War as she has probably never been moved before in all her history. The glory of our pride in our fallen swells and then subsides: in the last quiet bars the composer wisely sounds the note not of vociferous rapture, but of resignation and chastening.\(^\text{95}\)

Elgar’s completion of the work during the following year provided Newman with another occasion to articulate the composer’s aesthetic contribution to the national temperament during wartime. Newman cited the three previously-mentioned works of Elgar as being the chief works that had strengthened and consoled him during these “last three desolate years.” Newman then expanded his purview to include all of England. “He has been so helpful to us because he has voiced the best that is in us,—a best that, under the


\(^\text{94}\)The work would include “The Fourth of August,” “To Women,” and “For the Fallen.” Although the latter two had been set musically in the spring of 1915, the first would not be completed until 1917. The occasion of Newman’s article was the premiere of the second and third poems scheduled for 3 May at Leeds.

moral provocations we have had to endure, has sometimes had difficulty in finding a voice at all."

Except for the cello concerto Elgar's large works were completed by the end of the war. The years following the war would find Elgar moving into new directions, specifically into the intimate area of chamber music, while his critical admirers would continue to gush in their appreciation for what he had accomplished for English music. The genuinely English ring to all of the music he had composed would dominate much of this attention. As critics sought to provide a rationale for his achievement they stressed the part played by his self-training and provincial upbringing.

Many believed that the English quality of Elgar's music was in no small way attributable to his distance from London academic musical life. Simply put, his background had ensured the natural growth and development of his English musical temperament, fostered his originality and self-expression, and preserved his rural innocence from spoilage at the hands of the London musical establishment. Thus, as Eaglefield Hull wrote in 1920, his genius "blossomed in a perfectly natural state, and no composer sings with a sweeter, purer English voice than does Elgar." As Elgar's self-expression was hewn from the fact of his circumstances, so his rugged originality served as a model for his countrymen. "To Elgar, the complete emancipation of the British composers is due. We are no longer copyists or imitators. He has encouraged us all to fearlessly express ourselves in music—split infinitives, consecutive fifths, or no!"

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To some, such as George Sampson, the provincial Elgar stands as a remarkable parallel to Shakespeare, an example of the pure and unmitigated Englishness that achieved its most genuine expression in the English countryside.

There is the smell of English earth, the touch of English weather, the breadth of English humour, the soul of English character in all that he wrote. . . . Elgar's music has an unmistakably English quality. There is nothing of his that could have been written by anyone not English . . . Even when he drops into a sentimental piece like Salut d'Amour or a popular tune like the Pomp and Circumstance (or Land of Hope and Glory) refrain, it is English sentiment, English commonness that he achieves.

In his response to the self-imposed question of how Elgar was especially English, Sampson provided a list of qualities that effectively summarizes the temperamental aspects that had been used to describe Elgar for the previous two decades.

Well, he is strong, sincere, wholesome, reserved, a little self-conscious, humourous without being witty, learned without being pedantic, original without being eccentric, emotional and sentimental without losing restraint and a care for the decencies of life. He puts all of a reverent heart into his work, but he never parades it as a spectacle. He is never showy or bedizened, neither is he ever dowdy or sordid. You might call his music moral, and, in the best sense, it is respectable. It is the music of a country in which conduct is (or was) three parts of life.

\textit{Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)}

Throughout the twentieth century the name of Ralph Vaughan Williams has been at the forefront in all discussions of English nationalist music. Indeed, in this study he has figured prominently as a writer, lecturer, and folk-song collector, and thus his ideas regarding national music and its cultivation are not new to the reader. Yet it is to his expression of those ideas as a composer that we now turn.

Vaughan Williams as a composer developed somewhat slowly and deliberately. In fact, although he was forty-eight years of age at the point at which the study ends, Vaughan

\footnote{Hull had termed him the "true bard of the people."}

\footnote{George Sampson, "Elgar and Strauss," \textit{The Bookman} (March 1921); reprinted in \textit{An Elgar Companion}, ed. Christopher Redwood (Ashland: Derbyshire: Moorland Publishing Co., Ltd., 1982), 205.}
Williams's compositional career was just beginning to hit its stride. Consequently, the picture of Vaughan Williams the composer during this period, while certainly substantial, is far from complete.

Prior to the appearance of *A Sea Symphony* at the 1910 Leeds Festival, Vaughan Williams had occupied himself chiefly in the areas of song literature and smaller works for orchestra and/or chorus. Remarkable in the critical response to these works (as well as to those that follow) is the tendency to place Vaughan Williams as a composer of eclectic proclivities. Of course, the diversity of his training lent strong credence to this evaluation, as his teachers included not only Parry and Stanford, but also Max Bruch and Maurice Ravel. This reality, particularly when seen in relationship to his work as a folk-song collector and his attraction to the poetry of Walt Whitman, produced a rather composite picture of the composer.

In his assessment of *Toward the Unknown Region* Rutland Boughton, while generous in his praise, maintained that Vaughan Williams had yet to settle on an individual style, an attribute Boughton considered to be somewhat typical among other young British composers.

Of all the published choral works I know of the young British School this is the strongest, noblest and purest. . . .

The path of the young British School is very beautiful, but we don't quite know where we are going, and are accordingly in the greater hurry to get somewhere. So it happens that Restlessness is stamped upon nearly every work produced by us.

As the decade progressed Vaughan Williams's activities as a folk-song collector and *English Hymnal* editor had an increasingly dominant affect in his compositions. Beginning

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101 Works from this period include *Songs of Travel, On Wenlock Edge, the Norfolk Rhapsodies, In the Fen Country*, and *Toward the Unknown Region*.

with the second Norfolk Rhapsody of 1906 a later critic noted that there had emerged “a new and forceful personality” in his music, a personality which, more than any other English composer had, “penetrated the musical psychology of English folk-tune,” yet was still not devoid of continental influence. The same writer also noted the later influence of French impression and mysticism on Vaughan Williams’s music.

One of Vaughan Williams's first achievements after his three-month period of study with Ravel was On Wenlock Edge, based on Housman’s A Shropshire Lad. Although this song cycle was a frequently-cited witness to this blend of English and French attributes, later assessments came to regard it as distinctly English in character. As one anonymous writer stated:

[The On Wenlock Edge songs] are probably the best that England as England can or will ever produce. . . . The fifth song, On Bredon Hill, is the composer’s supreme achievement. As there is a highest atom to any mountain, so there is a topmost moment in a man’s work. That topmost moment is reached here, and On Bredon Hill therefore is a supreme justification of the long line of effort that went towards its upbuilding. It rounds off Vaughan Williams' distinctively English work.

Although the above writer in no sense considered the work to be modern, the song cycle grew in importance as the years passed as it, together with Five Mystical Songs, was regarded as a practical demonstration that a “breath of fresh air” had come into Vaughan Williams's style as a result of his folk-song collecting. Edwin Evans was no less

103 A. Eaglefield Hull, "Vaughan-Williams and his Music," MO 42 (October 1918): 30. Other works mentioned by Hull include the third Norfolk Rhapsody and the Two Orchestral Impressions (Harnham Down and Boldrewood) all unpublished.

104 Hull had seen the beginnings in Willow-Wood (1903), but an obvious example would be the G minor String Quartet.

105 “Dr. R. Vaughan Williams,” MH, no. 781 (1 April 1913): 102.

enthusiastic in his regard for the song cycle, not only for its English character but also for the sheer quality in a genre too long at a low ebb in English music.

[On Wenlock Edge] is one of the most outstanding works in modern British music, in a form in which English music happened to have more leeway to catch up than in any other. Whilst our orchestral and chamber music was rapidly making up for lost time, the problem of writing English song made very slow progress towards a solution which even now is not yet attained to the satisfaction of the more fastidious critic.\(^{107}\)

In 1910 at the Leeds Festival Vaughan Williams's first symphony, *A Sea Symphony*, was premiered. This work, seven years in the making, ably encapsulates the composer's eclecticism as perceived by his contemporaries, combining Whitman's poetry, utilization of folk materials, melodies reminiscent of Parry, the strong influence of Elgar's *Gerontius*,\(^{108}\) and the chromaticism that had marked his earlier works. Furthermore, it was in its very conception a composite, being a fusion of the oratorio and symphonic genres. Prior to its premiere Sydney Grew, on the basis of vocal score analysis, claimed:

> The music [of the fourth movement] builds up to a most joyous climax; the harmonies are of grand conception, the eye of the reader meeting noble pictures of choral movement, shifting colours and great variety of depth and shade; and, unless performance reveals defects not readily visible in the vocal score, "Sea Symphony" should stand out as the great work of the year. It is eminently sane and natural, yet often daring in its means of expression . . . The advent of music of this class is one further sign of the immanence of the British musical genius and a still further sign of the great variety of idea existent among us,—on which quality alone can a wide and permanent art be erected. Dr. Williams is a child of his day in the way that Elgar and Bantock are; and (to dare a false prophecy) one would venture, on the authority of this


\(^{108}\)Vaughan Williams later stated: "I am astonished . . . to find on looking back on my own earlier works how much I cribbed from him, probably when I thought I was being most original." "What have we learnt from Elgar?," *ML* (January 1935), reprinted in *National Music and Other Essays*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987): 248-55. Vaughan Williams was more specific fifteen years later. "But though Elgar would not teach me personally he could not help teaching me through his music. I spent several hours at the British Museum studying the full scores of the Variations and *Gerontius*. The results are obvious in the opening pages of the finale of my Sea Symphony." "A Musical Autobiography" (1950) in *National Music and Other Essays*, 177-94.
work, to indicate him as one the five great composers of contemporary musical England.109

Following the Sea Symphony Vaughan Williams strengthened and deepened the nationalist impulses suggested in his earlier works. In particular, the early orchestral works and song literature provided the strongest indication of Vaughan Williams's future course. The eventual triumph of Vaughan Williams's English voice, however, should not be seen as a conscious and militant rejection of rival impulses, but as the gradual emergence of the music he felt to be most authentically his own. Of the works that surfaced in the years prior to the war those most important are the Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis, Fantasy on Christmas Carols,110 and Five Mystical Songs. The importance of the latter work, as had been the case with On Wenlock Edge, was its testimony to the extent Vaughan Williams had imbibed the idiom of the songs he had been collecting during the previous years. Where the Norfolk Rhapsodies were presentations of the actual folk songs themselves,111 the two song sets bore witness to Vaughan Williams's complete absorption of the folk song style and spirit.

Vaughan Williams, taking five "mystical" songs from George Herbert, has set them out finely. "Let all the world in every corner sing" is full of breadth, vigour, solidity, and English whole-heartedness. . . . But it is "I got me flowers" that stands the most exquisite of the group. This is a completely beautiful song, not unlike a developed folk-melody.112


110Another "fantasy," the Fantasia on English Folk-Song: Studies for an English Ballad Opera, was premiered on 1 September 1910, but was never published.

111The three Norfolk Rhapsodies were written in 1906, based upon tunes collected by Vaughan Williams in King's Lynn, Tilney All Saints and Lynn Union during January 1905. According to Edwin Evans, it appears that these three works were originally intended to comprise a symphony but as of 1920 the composer had already chosen to withdraw the third. Eventually the second would suffer a similar fate. See Edwin Evans, "Modern British Composers. X.—Ralph Vaughan Williams," MT 61(1 May 1920): 305.

112"Dr. R. Vaughan Williams," 101.
Yet despite recognizing the strongly English orientation of these works the above writer, nevertheless, considered Vaughan Williams's style as of 1913 to be essentially cosmopolitan.

His present-day development is concerned with an amalgamation of the English ideals of the 'eighties and the French ideals of the 20th century; which ideals in their turn have to be fused with the further ideals—different, but equally simple—of primitive folk-thought and Walt Whitmanesque elaborations.\(^{113}\)

The same writer considered any effort to categorize Vaughan Williams's style to be futile, as the composer had yet to chart a consistent course.

Vaughan Williams is far too young a creative artist, and far too complex and varied in his sympathies, for us to attempt to place him at present, especially since his work to date has already ranged from a narrow parochialism to a truly courageous "pioning." It is the inevitable conflict of those two forces—the one a strong tendency towards a settled English conservatism, the other a distinct touch of the adventuring spirit.\(^{114}\)

The *London Symphony* appeared during the same year which saw the outbreak of World War I, its London premiere occurring in March 1914.\(^{115}\) Press notices of the symphony reveal that critics observed in this work the fulfillment of the promise suggested in all of the composer's works up to that time. Included in their assessment of the work was the belief that Vaughan Williams had at last found his personal style.

Edwin Evans, writing after the premiere, found the work to be significant also in its revelation of Vaughan Williams's maturing national voice. Of the symphony Evans wrote: "That remarkable work is the expression not of London, but of a Londoner."\(^{116}\)

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\(^{113}\)"Dr. R. Vaughan Williams," 99.

\(^{114}\)Ibid., 102.

\(^{115}\)The score of this premiere was mislaid and consequently never published. The reconstructed score, first performed in Bournemouth the following year, was subjected to three revisions first performed in 1918, 1920, 1934, respectively.

\(^{116}\)Evans's review appeared in *The Outlook* (4 April 1914). In his series of articles on Vaughan Williams from 1920 he quotes a substantial portion of that earlier review. See Edwin Evans, "Modern British Composers. IX.—Ralph Vaughan Williams," *MT* 61 (June 1920): 371-72. Of course, this was also the composer's view of the work as expressed in program notes he wrote in 1920: "The title *A London
importance of the statement should not be overlooked, as it marks a new perspective in Vaughan Williams's music, not the voice of a poet or of communally-produced folk songs but the voice of Vaughan Williams as an Englishman. Evans continues, carefully articulating what the composer accomplished in the *London Symphony*.

Its reflective side, which is overwhelmingly predominant, owes its most beautiful moments to its detachment from all that the title might imply on the material side. . . . the frequent references to the bustling scene in which this inner reflective life has its being are handled with a sympathy so sincere that even occasional vulgarities are touched up with affection. Add to that a certain diffident reserve that almost brings the flow of musical communicativeness to a premature stop, and you have the Englishman who feels deeply, but is embarrassed when he suddenly discovers that he has been showing it.\(^{117}\)

Thus, *London Symphony* is significantly more than a representational work written in appreciation of a bustling metropolis. The picture of London given there is not objective, but subjective, not so much the portrayal of a city, but the disclosure of the place London holds in the heart of an Englishman. With that work, Vaughan Williams's idiom becomes English because it more closely reflects his identity as an Englishman.\(^{118}\)

The next London performance of the symphony would not be given until February 1918 at which time it appeared in the Boult Concerts.\(^{119}\) The work had not lost any of its significance to the national movement, as Walter Wearenear-Yeomans's testimony demonstrates.

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*Symphony* may suggest to some hearers a descriptive piece, but this is not the intention of the composer. A better title would perhaps be 'Symphony by a Londoner,' that is to say, the life of London (including, possibly, its various sights and sounds) has suggested to the composer an attempt at musical expression; but it would be no help to the hearer to describe these in words. The music is intended to be self-expressive, and must stand or fall as 'absolute' music." Quoted in Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964): 467.


\(^{118}\) This would be the connection between art and life so advocated by Vaughan Williams. See A. Eaglefield Hull, "Elgar, Vaughan-Williams, and Strauss," *MMR* 50 (1 May 1920): 101-02.

\(^{119}\) The performance was given by the London Symphony Orchestra on 18 February at Queen's Hall.
The symphony is the finest English work that has been written since the Tudor era. It is a work of massive proportions, displaying the English idiom to its best advantage. The exciting whirl of the first movement is skilfully contrasted by the placid mood of the *Lento* section which follows. The spontaneous joy of the third movement enhances the reflective and pensive atmosphere of the colossal fourth movement. There is no "programme" (so the composer says), but it is evident that Vaughan Williams has caught the spirit of London—the bustle of everyday life, the stillness of early morning, the pleasure of recreation so limited with a dweller and a worker in the metropolis, and the dissatisfaction of a town existence which has such a curious fascination for the Londoner that he cannot leave it for long; all this is told us in the symphony in a wonderfully pictorial way that Cockneydom may be said to have been faithfully mirrored in music.120

The same writer would find another occasion to write of the work, as it was repeated the following month at another Boult concert.121 This time, however, the notice provides opportunity for the critic to take arms against W. J. Turner who had published a very negative review of the work in the *New Statesmen*. Turner claimed to have found actual folk songs in the work, a view with which Wearenear-Yeomans strongly disagreed. "There is certainly a folk-song atmosphere in the work, which we prefer to call the English idiom, but there are no folk-tunes." He further denounced Turner's anti-British orientation, stating: "Mr. Turner scoffs at the symphony because it is British. He scorns nationality in music when it appears in British compositions, but when it appears in Brahms (whose music is strongly national), or any foreign work he applauds it enthusiastically."122

Turner's article, Wearenear-Yeomans complained, was not an isolated perspective but represented a considerable body of anti-British opinion on the part of many critics, who


121In this performance the first revised version was given with "cuts" in the second and fourth movements.

“sneer” at the glories of modern British music as well as the quality of the Tudor music on which much of it is based.

Vaughan Williams’s “London Symphony” is, in construction, a modern development of the Elizabethan style, tinged with a slight French influence in technique (he studied for a time under Ravel), and in form it is “classic,” following very close the Beethoven and Brahms method. The ingredients are quite ordinary, but they are made up into a work that is British in vigour, British in outlook, and, in fact, British in every way. So why condemn it?123

The most valuable material in assessing Vaughan Williams’s place as a composer within the national movement during the years of this study are the post-war analyses that survey his work up to that date. Eaglefield Hull contributed a series of articles to *Musical Opinion* that appeared in the closing months of 1918. The writer stated: “in many ways his music is the most distinctly English of any of our composers; his personality, too, is one of the most engaging in the fine group of modern European musicians.”124 The combination of music and personality was vital in Hull’s assessment as he, more than anyone else, focused upon the connection between art and daily life that was exhibited in Vaughan Williams’s music. He wrote:

On all sides there was being felt the necessity of bringing art more and more closely into touch with the temper of the age, and this connection between art and daily life was the goal to which Vaughan-Williams had slowly to win his way. He recognised the composer as the voice of a nation speaking through his art the things after which the ordinary man could only dimly grope; and with him sincerity was the touchstone of all music.125

123Ibid.


125Ibid. Two years later, Hull continued to develop this aspect of Vaughan Williams’s music. “Vaughan-Williams, in his *Symphony of London*, as in all his other music, aims at a close connection between art and life, and tackles the subject in its most difficult phase—that of reconciling the rush and turmoil of a great metropolis, even in its squalor and coarseness, with the slow and sure fulfilment of some mighty purpose, and bond of love and beauty uniting all for the one great end. It abounds in touches of realism, as well as in those fine swinging tunes which only ‘V.-W.’ can write.” A. Eaglefield Hull, “Elgar Vaughan-Williams, and Strauss,” *MMR* 50 (1 May 1920): 101.
Hull's post-war analysis of Vaughan Williams reveals another point which is not limited to that writer. As Vaughan Williams's musical expression attained a more pronounced English character, later critics—with the clarity hindsight provides—tended to see those features as dominant in his earlier works. For instance, *A Sea Symphony*, at its premiere considered to be eclectic, was later regarded to be characteristically English, and, in fact, a hymn of victory to the triumph of the allied nations.

Where are we to look for the English co-parallel to Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise?" Brahms's "Requiem" may be bracketed with Walford Davies's "Everyman" for solemn services; but where are our great pæans of victory, apart from Parry selections? There is, at any rate, one work which will fill the gap, and this is the "Sea Symphony." How British it is, and how appropriate for the present time is the conjunction with the great American poet is patent to all.126

A. H. Fox Strangways, writing as editor in the newly-founded *Music and Letters*, also would suggest a parallel between Vaughan Williams and Parry. He asked: "Whose music is there of modern Englishmen, after Parry's, that we want to use on the great occasions of life, except this?"127 The writer cites works from the composer's output, demonstrating that Vaughan Williams has shown a "hard, deep-seated Englishry" for more than a decade.

There is something in that noble climax of *Toward the Unknown Region*, in that basic rock over which the scum and froth of a great city float on the first movement of the *London Symphony*, in the surge of melodies in the first movement of the *Sea Symphony*, in the steadfast purpose of the many songs . . . in the joyous serenity of the *Five Mystical Songs*, especially the first and last of them, in the singleheated glee of the *Christmas Carols*, most of all in *Wenlock Edge*—hard, deep-seated Englishry, honest without gush, sensitive without lyrical rapture—there is in these something that, like a course of Browning, corrects the Tennyson in us, and learned or unlearned, invigorates us all.128


Two other qualities of Vaughan Williams's music that make it particularly attractive to the English mind are its positive nature and directness of expression. Of the first Norfolk Rhapsody he observed: "It is not the tunes so much as the atmosphere of breezy good-fellowship they spread round them that carries us away; they are not set, like jewels, nor arranged, like flowers, but used, like common everyday things." Fox Strangways wrote further:

The real claim of Vaughan Williams's music to a warm place in our hearts and, indeed, to a high place in our judgment is that it seldom turns aside for long from those contemplations and reflections which do us credit. He has set no words but fine words, and behind the words no thoughts or situations which have not something fine about them.

The particular appeal of the folk song to Vaughan Williams was due to its quality of simple and direct expression. This quality was readily assimilated into his personal compositional style. As Fox Strangways remarked: "His own way of putting it is that when he heard 'Bushes and Briars' for the first time he said to himself that that was the music for him. His mind has a natural affinity with those who express themselves directly."

The simplicity and directness of expression characteristic of the music of Vaughan Williams was an idea also developed by Edwin Evans in his discussion of the composer that appeared as a part of his series on English composers written for the Musical Times. For Evans the impact of Vaughan Williams's music was not due solely to its simplicity of expression, but also to the effectiveness of that communication.

If the measure of all music is its expressive power, then the music of Vaughan Williams must be accounted great, for it is a perfect expression of the man even in its occasional

failure to find polished expression for what is in his mind—which be no means results in failure to make himself understood.\textsuperscript{132}

Of course this simplicity of expression is readily seen in the folk-like character of his melodies, but was also a result of harmonic austerity. Evans observed that Vaughan Williams, in contrast to those “composers whose voices sound as if they sang in a thickly carpeted room with plush hangings,” even at his best always sounded “as if he were, harmonically speaking, singing in a barn.”\textsuperscript{133}

Evans had earlier suggested that the key to the English quality of Vaughan Williams's music was found in the composer's typically English nature. Believing that music was essentially the “expression of an individual,” and thus could only be national insofar as the composer was himself typical of the national temperament.” Evans continued:

Vaughan Williams expresses the Englishman within him. There is no screen of convention between him and his music. . . . I distinctly feel in Vaughan Williams's music a type of personality which I believe to be so frequent in these islands as to be rightly considered national. It is a personality that is intellectually aristocratic—not to say fastidious—and biologically, if that word expresses my meaning, democratic. Using the word “caste” in a purely intellectual—and not a social—sense, it is a temperament that without compromising caste and, above all, without conscious condescension, can be sincerely and whole-heartedly of and with the people. Now that is a combination that I believe to be peculiarly English. The intellectual democrat of the Continent either condescends or becomes a vulgarian.\textsuperscript{134}

In her assessment of Vaughan Williams, Katherine Eggar, the last of the post-war evaluations treated here, suggested that the two anchor points of his career to that point


\textsuperscript{133} \textit{Ibid}., 234. The above cited article by Fox Strangways suggested a very similar analogy, that the composer's "harmony is so plain that the protest has been made that to listen to Vaughan Williams is like talking with somebody in an unfurnished room." Fox Strangways, "Vaughan-Williams," 83.

\textsuperscript{134} Quoted by the author from his article that had appeared in \textit{The Outlook} (4 April 1914) in Edwin Evans, "Modern British Composers. IX. Ralph Vaughan Williams," \textit{MT} 61 (June 1920): 370-72. It is interesting in this regard to recall Vaughan Williams's quotation of Parry's council: "Write choral music as befits an Englishman and a democrat." “Vaughan Williams's Talk on Parry and Stanford, 1957,” in \textit{Heirs and Rebels}, 96.
were *On Wenlock Edge* and the *London Symphony*. She maintained that poet and composer were both successful and in step with one another in their respective aims and achievements. As Housman had "assimilated the idiom of Folk feeling, expressing the "point of view of the Folk in language which is no mere parochial or country lingo, but the very roots and branches of English speech," so also had Vaughan Williams accomplished in his music. Furthermore, where Housman had not needed to resort to the use of superficial devices to produce local colour, so it was not necessary for Vaughan Williams to employ actual folk tunes in his attempt to establish the musical dialect. Yet despite its success *On Wenlock Edge*, according to Eggar, represents but an "early stage of self-expression in this manner."  

As had other writers Eggar found the *London Symphony* to bear the undeniable testimony that the composer had at last found himself. "Perfect command of the resource seems to have been reached in the *London Symphony*, which, as a contribution to British music, appears to me to have gone further than any work I know: if ever there were a chance of estimating a contemporary work, justly, here it is." Of its inspiration she stated:

He went to the Country Folk and studied human nature and music from them; and then, being a reflective person, he must have realised that he had perhaps, just as much to learn from town folk and *their* music. And the *London Symphony*, which is the result of all his study, is truly Folk music of a new kind.

Although later generations, Eggar continued, would undoubtedly identify weaknesses in the work that were hidden to her contemporaries, she saw, nevertheless, a

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135 Eggar specified the use of apostrophes and phonetic spelling.


striking parallel between Vaughan Williams's "recognition and assimilation of Folk music" and other aspects of modern English life. Thus, the London Symphony is significant in its successful fusion of the past and the present, of the antiquated and the up-to-date. She writes:

Vaughan Williams seems to have faced musical facts as we had to face social and economical facts over the war, and to have learnt to let superfluities go, to stop waste, and to grip essentials in music, as the better part of the nation did in the things of daily life. The new attitude to humanity is clearly reflected in his writing. In listening to the London Symphony one is conscious of the same purpose of goodwill, the same honesty of intention, the same tolerance, humour, sincerity, the same point of view, that one finds in the best writing and thinking on all subjects to-day. His attitude to "London," which is, of course, the type (for his purpose) of Humanity, is that of the Older Soul to the Younger, of the Montessorian Grown-up to the Child. Freed by conscious will from tyrannies himself, he exerts no tyranny on other minds.\footnote{Ibid.}

We noted previously that the picture of Vaughan Williams as an English composer which emerges during these years is not complete, as he would continue in an active capacity for nearly four more decades. Yet by 1920 the shaping influences and essential traits of his music were largely in place.

Katharine Eggar wrote: "You can't get the best out of this man's music unless you know what he really thinks about Folk music."\footnote{Ibid., 516.} To assert that folk music played a vital role in the national voice of Vaughan Williams is to state no profound mystery. Yet folk music must always be seen in its proper perspective, as contributing first to the evolution of his personal style as a composer, and only secondly as a source for a national music. In Vaughan Williams's rhetoric, as well as in his music, folk song is not set forth with the direct purpose of achieving a national style. Folk music, as we have seen in chapter five, is presented as a revelation of innate musical expression, as a touchstone indicating how the English composer could develop along lines most in accordance with his/her character.
This is precisely the part played by folk music in Vaughan Williams's development. It was most valuable in the evolution of his personal style—a personal style that by extension became associated with a national style. This achievement of an individual style informed by the folk idiom is what makes works such as *On Wenlock Edge* and the *London Symphony* to be of much greater significance than the first *Norfolk Rhapsody*.

Other perceived national characteristics of Vaughan Williams's music may be attributed to the genuineness and honesty of his style also brought about through his contact with folk music. It has been stated that he “penetrated the psychology of English folk song,” but such an evaluation is far too analytical and makes the connection between Vaughan Williams and folk music too deliberate and contrived. It is far closer to the mark to assert that his was the psychology of English folk song. The principal characteristics of folk song—its simplicity, directness of expression, honesty, sincerity—all were endemic to the composer's personality, and therefore naturally and convincingly revealed in his musical idiom. Edwin Evans summarized:

> It is the language of the plain-spoken man, who abhors subterfuge, and endeavours, not always with complete success, to state neither more nor less than what is in his mind. Men of that stamp have not been of frequent appearance in the history of music. So far as we can gauge the mentality of the past, the 16th century would appear to have been the most conducive to the deployment of such character is music. Probity then still retained much of the glamour that it had acquired in the Middle Ages, and the best musical works of that period have the quality of cathedrals. It is perhaps relevant to note that where we find the same love of "honest building" we can generally also detect the same constructional methods, or at least derivatives from the same principles; and there are few modern composers in whom they can be so readily traced as in Vaughan Williams.¹⁴¹

The analogy of the sixteenth century is not without significance as Vaughan Williams himself had stated that a principal feature of music during the Tudor age had been the strong connection between art and life, an aspect that regretfully had been gradually lost.

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since that time. Perhaps Vaughan Williams's greatest contribution as an English composer was his role in sealing the connection between music and English life, and in this respect he ranks as a worthy heir to the previous three composers of this chapter. While the contribution of each was distinctive and individual, together they fashioned enduring links between English music and English life: the establishment of an audience for an English composer, a new sensitivity toward the musical treatment of the English language, the demonstration of modern English spirituality and its expression during a time of global war, and the connection between the composer and all aspects of the English life and heritage, her countryside and seascape, great capital city, national church, and musical history. All were stable foundations upon which later generations would build.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

English music at the close of the nineteenth century was marked not only by a rise in the standard of musical composition but also by a remarkable intellectual life that sought to reestablish England as a potent musical force. The topic of nationality provides a fascinating picture of the vibrancy of that intellectual life; indeed, it so dominated the English musical scene during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that any serious study of the period must consider its significance and implications. By tracking the evolution and content of the national-music discussion, we gain substantial insight into the intellectual and aesthetic context in which some of England's greatest composers worked.

In this study we have examined the discussion from three vantage points: fundamental aesthetic questions, issues in the cultivation of a national music, and the contribution of critical reception to the discussion. The resultant picture has shown that discussion to be characterized by differing views toward musical nationality; views that provoked controversy at virtually every turn.

While some maintained that the universality of the elements of music prohibited it from ever being national, others contended with equal vigor that music--because it always passed through a human vessel--would also bear the imprint of the composer's nationality. In the question of the cultivation of a national style, opinion was divided even among the nationalists themselves. While many argued for a purely English style based upon the historical precedent of folk music or art music, others contended that a national music truly reflective of contemporary England must be cosmopolitan, modernist, or even orientalist. Thus, there was considerable diversity of opinion as to who could be considered a national composer and what would constitute a national idiom. Another aspect of the national-
music discussion, unique to England—in fact, occasioned by both the historical and current musical context there—was the question of the entire nation's inherent musicality. Could a country that had not produced a composer of international importance for two centuries claim any innate musicality, or even begin to hope for a national music?

A review of the present study reveals the recurrence of three fundamental tensions, present in virtually every aspect of the discussion. A primary tension was the problem of native idiom vs. national style. Can one's music be English without being nationalistic? Ernest Newman would argue that music might be truly English, but could never be truly national. According to Newman, a national musical style would have to speak equally to all people within the nation, transcending the accidents of time and region. He would ask: What commonality is shared between a medieval cleric and a Lancashire mill worker of the late nineteenth century, between an eighteenth-century London-based essayist and a rural peasant of the sixteenth century? What national traits do they hold in common? Is there a single musical style—a "national style"—that could successfully reflect the diversity of their experiences? An English musical idiom, on the other hand, would necessarily be local and time-bound, and thus reflect particular rather than universal traits of the people of England. But Newman's was not the only view. Other writers argued that there are common and fundamental roots that bind the people of a nation together, regardless of century, region, or education, and that these roots are revealed in their innate musical expression. An authentic national idiom would reflect the common essence, the "collective unconscious" that unites people as being English, and result in a music that resonates deep within the heart of every individual of the nation.

Another basic tension was the relationship between composer output and audience reception. Is musical nationality to be found in a composer's music or in the taste of a nation's people? We have seen that the music of both Sullivan and Elgar was heartily
embraced by the English people, and enthusiastically endorsed by some critics as being characteristically English. Frequently, the basis of this evaluation was not so much the national content of their music—both stood essentially outside of the national-music movement—but rather the popularity of their music with English audiences. Hence the question: Is the fundamental criterion of musical nationality the acceptance of that music by the nation's people, or is it located in sources and composer intent? Conversely, could a music based upon all the "right" sources be truly national if it had no appeal with the people of the nation? It will be remembered that Glinka, in desiring to write a music that would speak to the hearts of his countrymen, placed a high value upon audience response as a valid indicator that the composer had achieved a national idiom.

A third issue manifest in this debate is the tension between unconscious and intentional cultivation of a national idiom. Must a composer be "nationalist" in a deliberate sense in order to be truly English? Paraphrasing Polonius, Saturday Review critic John F. Runciman maintained that as a composer was true to him or herself, an English identity would follow as the dawn follows the night. Thus, the achievement of an English idiom was not the result of a deliberate and labored process, but was accomplished when the composer honestly and sincerely expressed himself. Vaughan Williams essentially paralleled this view when he suggested that the problem with English music was not the lack of talent, but the lack of sincerity and authenticity on the part of the English composer. Yet others, Geoffrey Shaw for example, contended that the achievement of an English idiom was a conscious undertaking. The national composer must consciously identify and reject foreign influences, and deliberately embrace a style considered to be historically English, rooted in such devices as false relations and distinctive chord progressions.

The questions raised in this debate were not settled then, nor are their answers obvious to us a century later. Yet they are still relevant. The combination of national and
universal qualities in music still appears to be its "supreme paradox." The determining factors of national musical expression are as elusive today as when A. E. Keeton wrote of the "indefinable spirit" in connection with the music of Glinka. The dichotomy between English music and music by English composers, made by Shaw and Arnold during the First World War, finds its modern counterpart in Michael Kennedy's question: "Can we really speak of English music or only music by English composers?" Furthermore, the issues pertaining to the cultivation of a national music—the tensions of historical vs. modernist orientation, urban vs. rural sources, folk song vs. national song, borrowed vs. indigenous method, still resist simple solution.

The concern of this conclusion is not to declare a winner in the debate over nationality in music and its proper cultivation. Any attempt to do so would not only underestimate the difficulties of the issues, but more importantly would fail to do justice to the true significance of the debate within English musical history. It could well be argued that in the case of England the correctness of the answers was not nearly as important as the intensity with which those answers were pursued. The national-music debate played an important role in the English musical renaissance of 1880-1920 because of the rejuvenating impact the controversy had upon English musical life—an impact that brought a number of significant effects.

The universal nature of the national-music discussion revitalized the interest of the nation in its music. The debate, as we have seen, attracted professional and amateur, composer and critic, performer and conductor. Virtually no lover of music could resist its lure. Throughout the four decades of this study the controversy escalated from its somewhat humble beginnings in the 1880s to its full intensity during the years of the First

1 Kennedy, however, would be on the opposite side of the issue. Where Shaw and Arnold had written that English composers were not English enough, Kennedy argued that English music, as such, did not exist, only music by English composers. See his Forward in Ralph Vaughan Williams, National Music and Other Essays (2d ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), vii-viii
World War. The trends of folk-song collecting, historical scholarship and revival, and acquaintance with other national movements gave substantial impulse to the cause in England. As the impact of the war spread throughout the nation, so also did interest in national music. Even in the nation’s churches there was discussion as to whether or not German hymn tunes ought to be banned. Consequently, the plight of English music became an issue of patriotism with broad-based support. The inevitable result was that English composers, critics, and audiences--irrespective of their stance on nationality in music as an aesthetic concern--were driven to focus their gaze upon the national cause of music in England.

Another effect of the national-music discussion was the reestablishment of the connection between English music and English life. The pursuit of a national idiom drove composers to write music that consciously reflected national life. As we have seen, Vaughan Williams and others considered the connection between music and life to be a feature strongly characteristic of the Tudor period, but one that had been lost during the intervening centuries. In their conscious attention to English themes--the portrayal of English landscape and seascape, their sensitivity to the language in musical settings, their occasional music, and their respect for English tradition--composers successfully healed the breach between music and national life. In the previous chapter we suggested that this aspect, more than any other, united the perception of Englishness in the music of Sullivan, Parry, Elgar, and Vaughan Williams.

A third effect of the national-music discussion was its impact upon individual composers as interest in national music became a stimulus to the creative impulse. Some found a voice, others an identity, still others a focus. The folk songs of England were a vital part of Vaughan Williams's musical language not because he set out to formulate a national style, but because in them he discovered his source of innate creativity. The
interest of many was directed toward Glastonbury as Rutland Boughton attempted to build a national music-drama festival there. Boughton's model was clearly Wagnerian, yet his Arthurian trilogy was conceived with the intent of advancing the cause of English national opera.

The ultimate value of the intellectual and musical life of this, or any, period is best seen in its legacy, and it is here that the importance of the national-music movement in England is most profoundly felt. The revitalization of English music, which began during the years 1880-1920, has not diminished throughout the century. Its continuing impact is clearly seen in Benjamin Britten's description of his own national awakening that occurred in Los Angeles upon his discovery of George Crabbe's poem, *Peter Grimes*.

I suddenly realised where I belonged and what I lacked. I had become without roots, and when I got back to England six months later I was ready to put them down. I have lived since then in the same small corner of East Anglia, near where I was born. And I find as I get older that working becomes more and more difficult away from that home... I like making new friends, meeting new audiences, hearing new music. But I belong at home--there--in Aldeburgh. I have tried to bring music to it in the shape of our local Festival; and all the music I write comes from it. I believe in roots, in associations, in backgrounds, in personal relationships. I want my music to be of use to people, to please them, to "enhance their lives"... I write music, now, in Aldeburgh, for a people living there, and further afield, indeed for anyone who cares to play it or listen to it. But my music now has its roots, in where I live and work.²

Britten's personal discovery in essence paralleled the experience of an entire generation of composers, a generation for whom the national-music movement provided an identity, a sense of place and roots, that had not been experienced by English composers for two centuries. In 1914 Vaughan Williams wrote: "The history of English music has been one continual struggle between the natural musical proclivities of the English people..."

²Benjamin Britten, *On receiving the first Aspen Award* (London: Faber & Faber Ltd. 1964), 21-22.
and the social and artistic conditions which have prevented the national tendencies from pursuing their natural course.\textsuperscript{3} It was the great triumph of the English musical renaissance to resolve that struggle. Fuller Maitland described well the changing institutional conditions that provided a social context for the renaissance, yet it was the vibrancy of the intellectual life--most evident in the national-music debate--that fully revealed those "natural musical proclivities" and "national tendencies." Some post-World War I composers would be more attracted to the idea of national music than others, yet none could escape the benefits forged during those previous generations.

\textsuperscript{3} Vaughan Williams, "British Music of the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries," 64.
APPENDIX

LIST OF NAMES, WITH BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

[Howard] Orsmond Anderton (1861-1934): conductor, composer, author; studied at RAM; teacher. MidInst (1908-); wrote Granville Bantock (1915), Early English Music (1920)


W. F. Arnold: writer; contributor, MO [biographical data could not be located]

Algernon [Bennet Langton] Ashton (1859-1937): composer; studied in Leipzig and Frankfort o/M; prof of piano, RCM (1885-1910), LCM (1913-); wrote Truth, Wit & Wisdom (1905), More Truth, Wit & Wisdom (1908), and over 1,000 letters to the press

Sir Ivor [Algernon] Atkins (1869-1953): composer, conductor; asst org, TruroC (1885-90), HereC (1890-93); org, Ludlow parish (1893-); org/master of choristers, WorcC (1897-1950); key figure in reestablishing Three Choirs Fests after WWI; editor, St. Matthew Passion (w/Elgar,1911), St. John Passion; wrote preface to Early Worcester Harmony

Frank Vincent Atwater (1861-1935): editor, London Musical Courier (for 40 years)

William Frank Austin (1846-1891): organist, composer, lecturer and writer on English opera; wrote A National School of Opera for England (Mar1882--paper read before the Licentiates of Trinity College)

Edgar Leslie Bainton (1880-1956): composer; studied at RAM; prof of piano, later principal, Conservatory at Newcastle-on-Tyne (1901, 1912); POW during WWI; conducted two concerts of British music in Holland (Dec 1918); hon DMus, Durham (1934); moved to Australia (1934)

Sir Edward Cuthbert Bairstow (1874-1946): organist, scholar, composer; studied at Durham; dir, numerous choral societies; org, YkM (1913-46); prof, Durham Univ (1929-); joint-editor, The English Psalter (1925)
Henry Charles Banister (1831-1897): composer; studied at RAM; prof of harmony, RAM (1853-), GSM (1880-); wrote Musical Art and Study (1888), Life of Sir George Macfarren (1892), Interludes: Seven Lectures [delivered 1891-97] (1898)

Joshua Yorke Bannard: writer; contributor, MS and MMR [biographical data could not be located]

Sir Granville Bantock (1868-1946): composer; studied at TCM and RAM; editor, The New Quarterly Musical Review (1893-1896); gave early all-English concert (15 Dec 1896) of works in manuscript; principal, MidInst (1900-); occupied Peyton Chair at Univ of Birmingham (1907-34)

David Baptie (1822-1906): Scottish writer, editor; wrote Handbook of Musical Biography (1883), Sketches of English Glee Composers (1896)

Cecil Barber: writer; contributor, MS [biographical data could not be located]

Sir Joseph Barndy (1838-1896): organist, composer, conductor; studied at RAM; held a number of organ appts; cond, London Musical Soc (1878-86); precentor, Eton (1875-92); principal, GSM (1892-95)

John Francis Barnett (1837-1916): composer, teacher, nephew of above; studied at RAM and Leipzig; teacher, RCM and GSM; wrote Musical Reminiscences and Impressions (1906)

Ethel Barns (1880-1948): violinist, composer; studied at RAM; debut at Crystal Palace (1896)

William Alexander Barrett (1834-1891): singer, educator, critic; studied at Oxford; Asst Inspector of Music in Govt Training-Colleges (1881-1891), critic, The Morning Post (1867-91), editor, MMR (1876-85), MT (1887-89); wrote for Whitehall Review and Globe (1874-75); joint-editor with Stainer of Dictionary of Musical Terms (1875); wrote English Glee and Madrigal Composers (1877), Balfe (1882), English Church Composers (1882), English Glees and Part-Songs (1886); edited vol. on English Folksongs (1890) that stimulated revival

Charles Ainslie Barry (1830-1915): writer, composer; studied at Cambridge, Cologne, Leipzig, and Dresden; critic, The Manchester Guardian (1863-79); editor, MMR (1874-76); contributor, MusW, Athenaeum; program notes for Royal Phil and Richter Concerts

Hubert Bath (1883-1945): composer, conductor; studied at RAM

Edward Algernon Baughan (?): editor, MS (1892-1902); critic, Daily News (1902-); wrote articles in MMR (1897-1905); wrote Music and Musicians (1906); Paderewski (1908)

J. H. G. Baughan (?-1927): writer, brother of above; critic, Daily Mail; editor, MS (1902-)

Sir Arnold Edward Trevor Bax (1883-1953): composer; wrote Farewell my Youth (1943)
Herbert Bedford (1867-1945): composer, author, husband of Liza Lehmann (1894); studied at GSM

Sir Thomas Beecham (1879-1961): conductor; studied at Oxford; first appearance, 1906; important services for the cause of British music, particularly Smyth and Delius; wrote *A Mingled Chime: Leaves from an Autobiography* (1944)

William Henry Bell (1873-1946): composer, conductor, teacher; studied at RAM; prof of harmony, RAM (1903-12); moved to Capetown (1912) to become Principal of the South African College of Music; appt to Chair of Music, Capetown Univ (1919-35)

Sir Julius Benedict (1804-1885): composer, conductor, teacher; studied in Stuttgart, Weimar and Dresden (w/Weber); moved to England from Germany (1835); conductor at Her Majesty's Theatre and Drury Lane (1852-), also the Harmonic Union; cond, NorfEst (1845-78) and Liverpool Phil Soc (1876-80); chiefly known as composer for theater; wrote lives of Mendelssohn (1853), Weber (5th ed/1899)


Sir William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875): pianist, conductor, composer, teacher; in Mendelssohn circle in Leipzig (1837); taught RAM (1838-); founder, Bach Society (1849); cond, Philharmonic Soc (1856-66); prof of music, Cambridge (1856-); principal, RAM (1866-)

Francesco Berger (1834-1933): pianist, composer; studied in Leipzig; prof of piano, RAM (1885-) and GSM; wrote articles for *MMR* (1914-); wrote *Reminiscences* (1913)

Ernest Bergholt: editor, *MS* (1888-792) [biographical data could not be located]

Lord Berners [Gerald Hugh Tyrwhitt-Wilson] (1883-1950): composer, author, painter; largely self-taught but received advice from Stravinsky and Casella; most important works postdate this period


Vernon Blackburn (c.1868 -1907): critic, writer; critic, *Pall Mall Gazette* (1894-1907); wrote *The Fringe of an Art* (1898), *Bayreuth and Munich*; travelling record of *German operatic art* (1899), and *Mendelssohn* (1904)

Sir Arthur Bliss (1891-1975): composer; studied at Cambridge and RCM; served in France during WWI, wounded on the Somme (1916), gassed at Cambrai (1918); prof of comp, RCM (1921-)


F. H. Bond: Birmingham-based writer; contributor, MS [biographical data could not be located]

Rutland Boughton (1878-1960): composer; studied at RCM; taught at MidInst (1904-11); organized Glastonbury Fest (1914-27); wrote Bach (1907), The Music Drama of the Future (1911, w/Buckley), The Self-advertisement of Rutland Boughton (1911), Death and Resurrection of the Music Festival (1913), The Reality of Music (1934)

York Bowen (1884-1961): pianist, violist, horn player, composer; studied at RAM; teacher there (1905-)

Ethel Mary Boyce (1863-1936): composer, teacher; studied at RAM

Eustace John Breakspeare (1854-?): writer, composer, aesthetician; contributor, MS

Sir [Alfred] Herbert Brewer (1865-1938): organist, conductor, composer; studied at Gloucester and Oxford; org/chrmaster, GlouC (1896-)

[William] Havergal Brian (1876-1972): composer; studied in Dresden; special critic for the Halle concerts (Manchester); MusW (1905)

Frank Bridge (1879-1941): composer, conductor, violist; studied at RCM; cond, Savoy (1910-11); frequently conducted principal orchs

Sir John Frederick Bridge (1844-1924): organist, conductor, composer; studied at Oxford; org, WestAb (1875-1918); conductor, Royal Choral Soc (1896-1922); wrote A Westminster Pilgrim (1918), Twelve Good Musicians (1920)

Joseph Cox Bridge (1853-1929): organist, composer, brother of above; studied at Oxford; org, ChesC (1877-); revived Chester Festival (1879) after 50 year lapse, conductor there (1879-1900); cond, Bradford Fest Choral Soc (1887-90); prof, Durham Univ (1908-)

Dora Estella Bright (1862-1951): pianist, composer; studied at RAM; first woman to receive the Lucas prize for composition; first woman to be invited to compose a work for Phil Soc, first woman to give a recital entirely of English music

John Broadhouse (?): organist, writer; editor, MS (1876/78-80; 1886-88), London Musical Review (1882-83); wrote Musical Acoustics (1881)

Lucy Broadwood (1858-1929): folk-song collector; niece of John Broadwood; noted traditional melodies in Surrey, Sussex, other parts of southern England, and Scottish Highlands and Ireland; influential in the founding of the Folk-song Society, hon secretary (1904-08); publ English County Songs (w/Fuller Maitland,1893), English Traditional Songs and Carols (1908)

James Duff Brown (1862-1914): Scottish bibliographer and librarian; important works: Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (1886), Guide to the Formation of a Music Library (1893), British Musical Biography (1897)
William Charles Denis Browne (1888-1915): composer, critic, organist; close friend of Dent at Cambridge; org, Clare College (1910-); asst mus master, Repton; died Dardanelles; contributor, London Times (1913-14), New Statesman (1914)

James Alexander Browne (1838-1914): editor, writer; began to write for music and service journals (early 1880s); founder, Surrey Music Journal (1885), editor, Orchestral Times (1901-06); contributor, MMR

Tom Browne: writer; contributor, MO [biographical data could not be located]

Kathleen Bruckshaw (1877-1921): pianist, composer; studied in Germany, later with Busoni

Sir Percy [Carter] Buck (1871-1947): scholar, organist, educator; studied at RCM and Oxford; org, Worcester Coll, Oxford (1891-94), WellsC (1896-99), BristC (1899-1901); mus master, Harrow (1901-27); prof, Dublin Univ (1910-20); King Edward Prof of Music, Univ of London (1925-36); wrote The Scope of Music (1924)

Robert J. Buckley (?): Birmingham-based writer; wrote Sir Edward Elgar (1905, 2d ed.1912) [biographical data could not be located]

John Skelton Bumpus (1861-1913): ecclesiastical and cathedral historian; wrote A History of English Cathedral Music, 1549-1889 (1908)

Herbert Bunning (1863-1937): conductor, composer; studied in England, France, Italy; musical director of London's Lyric Theatre (1892), conducted at the Prince of Wales Theatre (1894-96)

George Sainton Kaye Butterworth (1885-1916): composer, English folk-song collector; student of Thomas Dunhill at Eton (1899-1904), entered Trinity College, Oxford where he met RVW, Boult, Sharp; contributor, London Times (1908); entered RCM (1910-11)

Alfred James Caldicott (1842-1897): organist, educator, composer; studied in Leipzig and Cambridge; prof, RCM (1883-); principal, educational dept, LCM (1892-); cond, Albert Palace, Battersea (1885-89)

Michel Dimitri Calvocoressi (1877-1944): critic and writer; born in Marseilles of Greek parentage; studied in Paris; Paris correspondent, Morning Post; contributor, MMR (1905-), MT (1911-); moved to England (1914-); specialist, Russian and French music; wrote Liszt (1906), Moussorgsky (1908), Glinka (1911), Musorgsky, the Russian musical nationalist (trans. Eaglefield Hull, 1919), Principles and Methods of Musical Criticism (1923)

Richard Capell (1885-1954): writer; critic, The Daily Mail (1911-1933, except 1914-19); chief music critic and music editor, The Daily Telegraph (1933-54); proprietor, second editor, ML (1937-50-); wrote Schubert's Songs (1928), Opera (1930)

Neville Cardus (1889-1975): writer; critic, Daily Citizen (1913-), Manchester Guardian (1917-27), chief music critic, Manchester Guardian (1927-39, 1951-70); wrote

[Frank] Osmond Carr (1858-1916): composer; studied at Cambridge; best known as composer of light dramatic works

J. Comyns Carr: writer; librettist for Sullivan's King Arthur, The Beauty Stone; and Norman O'Neill's The Lonely Queen [biographical data could not be located]

Adam von Ahn Carse (1878-1958): composer, teacher, writer; studied at RAM; teacher, RAM (1902-); wrote on the history of instruments

Vivian Carter: critic; contributor, MS [biographical data could not be located]

William Henry Caunt: Manchester-based writer; contributor, MS [biographical data could not be located]

Alfred Cellier (1844-1891): organist, conductor, composer; musical theater conductor in Manchester (1871-75), London (1877-79), joint conductor with Sullivan of the Promenade Concerts, Covent Garden (1878,79)

François Cellier (c.1849-1914): conductor, writer; longtime association as conductor of Savoy Theatre; wrote Gilbert, Sullivan & D'Oyly Carte Reminiscences (1914), Gilbert and Sullivan and Their Operas (1914)

William Chappell (1809-1888): projected the Musical Antiquarian Society (1840); edited Dowland's songs and published a Collection of National English Airs (1838-40); expanded into his Popular Music of the Olden Time (2 vols., 1855-59), this book was later recast and published under the editorship of H. E. Wooldridge (1893)

John Chelsey: contributor, MMR [biographical data could not be located]

Henry Fothergill Chorley (1808-1872): journalist, art critic; first wrote for Athenaeum (1830) shortly thereafter joined the staff as music critic until 1868; wrote Thirty Years' Musical Recollections (1862; ed Newman, 1926), National Music of the World (publ posthum 1880)

Frederick Cliffe (1857-1931): pianist, organist, composer; studied at NTSM; prof of piano, RCM (1883-1931), organist of Bach Choir (1888-94)

George H. Clutsam (1866-1951): Australian-born pianist, critic and composer; critic, The Observer (1908-18); contributor, MT; wrote Schubert (1912)


Walter Wilson Cobbett (1847-1937): amateur violinist, patron, lexicographer; editor, Chamber Music supplements to MuStud (1913-16) from which arose the Cyclopedia of Chamber Music (2 vols., 1929)
Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912): composer; studied at RCM

Henry Cope Colles (1879-1943): critic, author; studied at RCM and Oxford; critic, Academy (1905), asst critic, London Times (1905-11), chief critic (1911-1943); much of his writing was anonymous; teacher, RCM (1919-), prof (1923-); guest critic; New York Times (1923-24); edited Grove 3 (1927) and Grove 4 (1940); important books: Brahms (1908), The Growth of Music (1912-16), Voice and Verse: A Study in English Song (1928), Symphony and Drama 1850-1900, in OHM (1934)

Frederick Corder (1852-1932): conductor, composer, author, teacher; studied in Cologne; translator of Wagner libretto; prof of comp, RAM (1888-); editor, Overture (1890-); wrote The Orchestra and How to Write for it (1895), Modern Musical Composition (1909), books on Beethoven (1912, 1922), Wagner (1912, 1922), and Liszt (1925)

Paul Corder (1879-1942): composer; studied and later taught at RAM

Sir Frederick Hymen Cowen (1852-1935): conductor, composer, writer; studied in Leipzig; conductor, Phil Soc (1888-92; 1900-07), Halle orch (1896-99), Liverpool Phil (1896-1913); wrote books on Haydn, Rossini, Mendelssohn, Mozart (all 1912), My Art and My Friends (1913), Music as She is Wrote (1915)

John Crowdy (1834-1883): writer; editor, MS (1873-76)

Wallace L. Crowdy (c.1862-1915): writer, editor, son of above; editor, The Artist, MS

Frederick J Crowest (1850-1927): writer, editor; joined editorial staff of Cassell, Petter & Galpin (1886) and held many other editorial posts; became general manager and editor of the Walter Scott Publ Co, Ltd. (1901); wrote The Great Tone Poets (1881), Phases of Musical England (1881), Dictionary of British Musicians (1895), studies of Cherubini (1890), Verdi (1897), Beethoven (1901)

Gerald Cumberland: see entry under C. Fred Kenyon

William Hayman Cummings (1831-1915): vocalist, organist, scholar, composer; prof of singing, RAM (1879-96), chorus master and later cond, Sacred Harm Soc (1882-), principal, GSM (1896-1911), a founder of Purcell Soc, edited three volumes; wrote Purcell (1881), Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (1898), God Save the King (1902), Dr. Arne (1910), Dr. Arne and "Rule Britannia" (1912)

John Spencer Curwen (1847-1916): educator; studied at RAM; continued father's work as principal of Tonic Sol-Fa College; editor, Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter (1881) [The Musical Herald and Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter (1882-), The Musical Herald (1891-)]; started competition festival movement in England with Stratford (East London) Festival (1882); wrote Studies in Worship Music (1880, 1885, 1901); Talks about Musicians (1892)

Sir William George Cusins (1833-1893): organist, composer, conductor; studied in Brussels with Fetsis, later at RAM; asst prof, later prof, RAM (1851-), cond, Philharmonic Soc (1867-1883); prof, GSM (1885-).
Benjamin James Dale (1885-1943): composer; studied at RAM, taught there (1909-); interned during WWI

Ernest W. Dann: writer; contributor, *MO* [biographical data could not be located]


Francis William Davenport (1847-1925): composer, teacher, student, son-in-law of Macfarren; studied at Oxford; prof, RAM (1879-), GSM (1882-); wrote *Elements of Music* (1884), *Elements of Harmony* (1886)

Henry Davey (1853-1929): musicologist, pianist; studied in Leipzig; teacher and journalist in Brighton (1877-), for many years was librarian, Brighton and Sussex Historical Society; in preparing catalogue of RAM library (1901) discovered the original theater manuscript of Purcell's "Fairy Queen"; wrote *The Student's Musical History* (1891), *History of English Music* (1895, 2/1921), two books on Handel; contributor, *DNB*

Sir [Henry] Walford Davies (1869-1941): organist, composer; prof of counterpoint, RCM (1895-1903); org/choir dir, Temple Church (1898-); cond. Bach Choir (1903-07); mus dir, Royal Air Force (1917-); prof of music, Univ of Wales (1919-26); Gresham Prof of Music (1924-); organist, St. George's Chapel, Windsor (1927-32); advisor to BBC (1927-39); Master of the King's Music (1934-); wrote *Music and Worship* (1935)


Isidore de Lara [born Cohen] (1858-1935): singer, composer; studied in Milan and Paris; during WWI gave many orchestral and chamber concerts of British music in London, at which numerous works were Premiered; worked to promote the establishment of a permanent opera in London, but without success

Frederick Delius (1862-1934): composer; studied in Leipzig; moved to France (1890)

Edward Joseph Dent (1876-1957): musicologist, teacher, composer; studied at Eton and Cambridge; taught music history, Cambridge (1902-), prof of music (1926-1941); critic, *Athenaeum* (1919-); active in formation of British Music Society; important in the re-establishment of artistic relations between countries following WWI; wrote *Alessandro Scarlatti* (1905), *Mozart's Operas* (1913), *Foundations of English Opera* (1928), *Ferruccio Busoni* (1933); translator of Mozart librettos; arranger and producer of several old English operatic works, esp Purcell, at Cambridge, Old Vic, and Glastonbury
Bernard van Dieren (1884-1936): Dutch composer; moved to London (1909); correspondent for various continental papers; wrote *Down among the Dead Men* (1935)

Douglas Donaldson (1885-1918): critic, poet; contributor, *MusOp*; wrote under pen names of “Ripieno” and “Capriccio”


Thomas Frederick Dunhill (1877-1946): composer, teacher, lecturer; studied at RCM; asst music master, Eton (1899-1908, 1939-45), same time teacher and examiner, RCM; estab concert series to revive laid aside works by young British composers (1907-); wrote *The Evolution of Melody* (1908), *Chamber Music* (1913), *Sullivan’s Comic Operas* (1928), *Sir Edward Elgar* (1938)

Sir George Dyson (1883-1964): composer; studied at RCM and Oxford; head mus master at Osborne (1908-), Marlborough (1911-), and Rugby (1914-); org/head mus master, Wellington College (1921-); staff, RCM; Winchester College (1924-37); director, RCM (1938-52); wrote series of essays on modern composers for ML, publ as *The New Music* (1924); wrote *The Progress of Music* (1934);


Henry John Edwards (1854-1933): organist, conductor, composer; studied at RAM and Oxford; org, Barnstaple (1886-); cond, Barnstaple Mus Fest Soc, Exeter Oratorio Soc (1896-)

[Henry] Sutherland Edwards (1829-1906): music historian; spent much time abroad as special correspondent; critic, *St. James Gazette* (for many years); wrote *The Russians at Home* (1861), *History of the Opera... from Monteverdi to Verdi* (2 vols., 1862), two books on Rossini (1869; 1881), *The Lyric Drama* (2 vols, 1881), *Famous First Representations* (1887)

Katherine Emily Eggar (1874-?): composer, writer; studied in Brussels and London; one of the founder-members of the Society of Women Musicians, chairman of its council (1948-); has written for various musical periodicals, lectured to RMA, and contributed to *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey*


Rosalind Frances Ellicott (1857-1924): composer; studied RAM under Wingham

Carl Engel (1818-1882): German writer; moved to England (1845); connected with Victoria and Albert Museum’s rare instrument collection (late 60s); wrote Music of the Most Ancient Nations (1864), An Introduction to the Study of National Music (1866), Musical Myths and Facts (1876), articles for MT from: which Literature of National Music (1879) is a reprint; valuable writings on history and description of musical instruments

Edwin Evans, Sr. (1844-1923): organist, writer; wrote 4-vol. work on Brahms (1912-), Beethoven’s Nine Symphonies (2 vols., 1923-24)

Edwin Evans, Jr. (1874-1945): writer; music critic, Pall Mall Gazette (1912-23), Liverpool Post; wrote important series of articles in MT on modern British composers (1919-20); contributor, Grove 2 and onwards; contributor, The Daily Mail during WWI, critic (1933-); wrote Tchaikovsky (1906), The Margin of Music (1924)

Harry Evans (1873-1914): Welsh conductor, composer; self-taught; regarded as one of the chief figures in the British choral renascence being very active in the competition movement; conductor, Liverpool Welsh Choral Union (1902-), University Choral Soc, and Philharmonic (1906-); with the Welsh Choral Union he performed many modern works (e.g. Elgar, Bantock)


Harry Farjeon (1878-1948): composer; prof of comp, RAM (1903-); contributor, MT, Daily Telegraph

Herman Finck (1872-1939): conductor, composer; studied at GSM; asst conductor, Palace Theatre (1888-), conductor (1900-); Queen’s Theatre (1919-); Theatre Royal, Drury Lane (1922-31); memoirs publ (1937)

B. W. Findon (1859-?): wrote Sir Arthur Sullivan, his life story, letters, etc. (1899), Sir Arthur Sullivan (1904), Sir Arthur Sullivan and his operas (1908)

Percy Eastman Fletcher (1879-1932): composer, conductor; mus dir of several London theaters (Prince of Wales, Savoy, Drury Lane); His Majesty’s (1915-1932)

Ernest A. Clair Ford (1858-1919): conductor, composer; conducted the premiere of Sullivan’s (with whom he studied) Ivanhoe (1891); conductor at the Trafalgar and Empire Theatres; conductor, Royal Amateur Orch Soc (1897-); composed ballets, operas, operettas; wrote chapter in Wyndham’s Arthur Sullivan (1903), A Short History of English Music (1912); contributor, MMR (1917-19)

James Aikman Forsyth (?): music critic, *News Chronicle* and *Star*; for some years secretary, Halle Concerts; after WWI moved to London from Manchester, asst to Alfred Kalisch

Myles Birket Foster (1851-1922): organist, composer, writer; studied at RAM; wrote *Anthems and Anthem Composers* (1901), *History of the Philharmonic Society of London, 1813-1912* (1912)

John Herbert Foulds (1880-1939): composer, conductor; member, Halle orch (1900-10); conducted stage music under Richter's direction; composed much stage music; during WWI gave weekly concerts for the forces; mus dir, London Central YMCA (1918-); cond, Univ of London Mus Soc (1921-)

Ernest Fowles (1864-1932): educator, concert promoter; studied at NTSM and RAM; organized a series of chamber concerts of British music; first London concert programme devoted to Brahms (1894); adjudicator, competitive festivals


Henry Frederic Frost (1848-1901): organist, pianist, critic, early Wagner champion; org, Chapel Royal (1865-91); teacher, GSM (1880-88); critic, *Weekly Dispatch* (1874-?; still there as of 1891); *Academy* (1877-), *Athenaeum* (1890-98), *Standard* (1888-1901) wrote *Schubert* (1881) [MT obit lists *Athen* dates as 1880-98]


Henry Gadsby (1842-1907): organist, composer; prof, GSM (1880-); writer of musical treatises and handbooks

William Johnson Galloway (?-1931): writer, publisher, dir, Great Eastern Railway, member of Parliament; founder, Great Eastern Railway Musical Soc (1906); as MP influential in bringing about Music Copyright Act (c.1906); wrote *The Operatic Problem* (1902), *Musical England* (1910)

Henry Balfour Gardiner (1877-1950): composer; studied at Oxford and Frankfort o/M; promoted important orch concerts of contemporary English music (1912-13)
Nicholas [Comyn] Gatty (1874-1946): composer, critic; studied at RCM and Cambridge; critic, *Pall Mall Gazette* (1907-14), *Times* (more than 20 years); asst editor of two editions of *Grove*

Sir Edward German [Edw German Jones] (1862-1936): composer; studied at RAM; mus dir, Globe Theatre (1888-); composed inci'dent music for Shakespeare plays

Anne Geddes Gilchrist (c.1864-1954): writer; joined editorial committee, Folk-song Society (1906); contributed many articles to folk song journals

 Margaret Glyn (1865-1946): musicologist, specialist in Tudor keyboard music; studied in London; edited virginal music of Byrd, Gibbons, and Bull; wrote *The Rhythmic Conception of Music* (1907), *About Elizabethan Virginal Music and Its Composers* (1924; 2d ed., 1934)


Scott Goddard (c.1895-1965): singer, teacher, critic; wrote for *The Observer*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Morning Post*, *News Chronicle* (1938-55)

Sir Daniel [Eyers] Godfrey (1868-1939): conductor; studied at RCM; conductor, military bands (1890-), opera in South Africa (1891-2), orch at Bournemouth (1892-); founded and conducted the Symphony Concerts (1894-1934); wrote *Memories and Music* (1924)

Eugène Goossens [I] (1845-1906): Belgian conductor; pupil of Fétis at Brussels; conducted opera in England (1873-); cond, Carl Rosa Op Co (1882-92); founder, Goossens Male-Voice Choir (1894); organist, choirmaster, St Anne's RC Church, Liverpool (1894-1906)


Eugène Goossens [III] (1893-1962): conductor, composer; studied in Bruges, Liverpool, RCM; asst conductor under Beecham, Queen's Hall orchestra (1915-20); formed his own orchestra (1921); conductor, orchs of Rochester (1923-31) and Cincinnati (1931-46), Sydney Symphony and director, New South Wales Conservatory (1947-56); prolific composer; wrote *Overture and Beginners* (1951)

Harvey Grace (1874-1944): organist, critic; studied in London; contributor, *MO* (1910-22, "Autolycus"); editor, *MT* (1918-44); wrote under the pseudonyms "Festa" and "Ad libitum" in that journal; org, ChicC (1931-38); wrote widely on organ and church music; also *A Musician at Large* (1928)
Percy Aldridge Grainger [George Percy Grainger] (1882-1961): Australian (naturalized American, 1919) pianist, composer; studied in Frankfort (1894-1900); moved to US (1915); publ collection of 27 Brit folk tunes in May 1908 issue of *Journal of the British Folksong Society*; Lincolnshire folk songs figure prominently in works.

Alfred Perceval Graves (1846-1931): Irish author; school inspector (1875-1910); a founder of Folk-song Society; wrote large number of English lyrics (Father O'Flynn); collaborated with Stanford in *Songs of Old Ireland* and *Songs of Erin*, Charles Wood in *Irish Folksongs* and Arthur Somervell in *Welsh Melodies*, lyrics set to original music by Parry, etc.


Alan Gray (1855-1935): organist, composer; studied in York and Cambridge; mus dir, Wellington College (1883-92); org. Trinity College, Cambridge (1892-1930); cond, Cambridge Univ Mus Soc (1892-1912); one of the editors for Purcell Soc


Joseph Green: writer; contributor, *MT* [biographical data could not be located]

Sydney Grew (1879-1946): writer; studied at Midland Inst; wrote program notes for Birm Phil Soc; editor, *The British Musician* (1926-38); wrote *Our Favorite Musicians* (2 vols, 1922), *Makers of Music* (1924), *Masters of Music* (1926); wife, Eva Mary Grew, also writes on music (and literary works).

Robin Grey: editor, *Studies in Music, by various authors* (1901) [biographical data could not be located]

Sir George Grove (1820-1900): writer; trained as civil engineer; Secretary, Crystal Palace (1851-73); wrote analytical programs for Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts for about 40 years; first dir, RCM (1882-); wrote *Beethoven and His Nine Symphonies* (1896).

Musicians (1909) Favorite Operas (1910), Composers in Love and Marriage (1912), Modern Musicians (1913) [MO obit lists 1859 as year of birth]

F. A. Hadland: writer; contributor to MMR [biographical data could not be located]

Sir William Henry Hadow (1859-1937): writer, composer, educator; studied in Darmstadt and Oxford; Fellow and tutor, Worcester College, Oxford (1888-); lectured on music (1890-99); Univ Examiner (1899-1901); received honorary MusD (1909); gen ed, OHM; principal, Armstrong College, Newcastle-on-Tyne (1909-1919); vice-chancellor, Sheffield Univ (1919-); wrote Studies in Modern Music (two series, 1892, 1894; new ed 1926), A Croatian Composer (1897), The Viennese Period in OHM (1904); Beethoven (1917), Music (1924); Collected Essays (1928), English Music (1931)

G. W. L. Marshall Hall (1862-1915): composer, writer; studied at RCM, Germany, Switz; prof of music, Melbourne Univ (1891-1900); founded conservatory and symphony orch there; contributor, MMR

Sir Charles Halle (1819-1895): pianist, conductor; studied in Darmstadt, Paris; friend of Chopin, Liszt, Thalberg; moved to Manchester (1848), cond, Gentlemen's Concerts (1850-), St. Cecilia Soc (1852-), opera (1854-55), Halle orch (1857-); conducted in London and Edinburgh (1860s); cond, BristFest (1873-93); conducted Sacred Harmonic Soc (1882-85); cond, Liverpool Phil (1883-); first principal, RMCM, (1893-); wrote Pianoforte School (1873), Musical Library (1876)

Oscar Hammerstein (1846-1919): impresario; born in Germany, moved to American after some time spent in England; built Harlem Opera House (1888), the Olympia Music Hall (1895), and Manhattan Opera House (1906); moved to England (1911) and built the London Opera House; returned to America after one season.

Sir Augustus Henry Glossop Harris (1852-1896): impresario; orig an actor; managed perfs Carl Rosa Op Co, Drury Lane (1883-87); formed own opera co (1887); manager, Covent Garden (1888-); presented operas in orig languages; did much to make Wagner's operas known in England; knighted (1891) also becoming Sheriff of City of London

Clement Antrobus Harris (1862-?) organist, teacher, writer, choral conductor; studied in York; moved to Australia (1921); wrote Chronometrical Chart of Musical History (1909), Story of British Music (1919)

Julius [Allen Greenway] Harrison (1885-1963) conductor, composer; studied at MidInst; became one of the conductors of Beecham Opera Co, later of the Brit Natl Opera Co; cond, Handel Soc (1925-)

Sir Hamilton Harty (1879-1941): conductor, composer; settled in London (1900); cond, Halle Orchestra (1920-33); wrote Early Memories (repr1979?)

Basil Harwood (1859-1949): organist, composer; studied in Leipzig; org, Ely (1887-92) and Christ Church, Oxford (1892-1907); conductor, Oxford Bach Choir (1896-1900); Choragus, Oxford Univ (1900-09); edited Oxford Hymn Book
Rev. Hugh Reginald Haweis (1838-1901): clergyman, critic, writer; studied at Cambridge; critic, Poll Mall Gazette, Truth, Echo (-1894); editor, Cassell's Magazine (1868-); contributor, London Times, Daily Chronicle; wrote Music and Morals (1871), My Musical Life (1884), Old Violins (1898), Memories of a Musical Life (1909)

Charles Swinnerton Heap (1847-1900): composer, pianist, conductor; studied in York and Leipzig; cond, Birm Phil Union (1870-86), Birm Fest Choral Soc (1895-)

Thomas Henderson (?-1940): lecturer, organist, critic; critic, The Northern Echo, Darlington (over 50 years); cond, Darlington Choral Soc (1893-1914)

Leigh Vaughan Henry (1889-1958): composer, critic; studied in Liverpool; worked mainly in Italy and Germany; creator and editor, Fanfare (1921-)

Sir George [Isidor Georg] Henshel (1850-1934): German-Brit baritone, composer, conductor; studied in Leipzig and Berlin; cond, Boston Sym Orch (1881-84); prof of singing, RCM (1886-88); founded and conducted the London Symphony Concerts (1886-96); cond, Scottish Orch, Glasgow (1893-95); wrote Recollections of Johannes Brahms (1907), Musings and Memories of a Musician (1918)

S. A. Herbert: correspondent, Times [biographical data could not be located]

Henry Hersee (1820-1896): teacher, critic, librettist; founder, first president, Blackheath Conservatory; secretary, Phil Soc (1880-); critic, Globe, Observer (-1894); wrote libretto for Cowen's Pauline (1876), and translated many operas into English

Arthur Hervey (1855-1922): composer, author, critic; critic, Vanity Fair (1889-1892), The Morning Post (1892-1908); wrote Masters of French Music (1894), French Music in the Nineteenth Century (1904); biographies of Bruneau (1907), Liszt (1911), Meyerbeer (1913), Rubinstein (1913), and Saint-Saëns (1921)

Philip [Arnold] Heseltine [Peter Warlock] (1894-1930): writer, composer, close friend of Delius; studied at Eton and Oxford; founder, The Sackbut (1920); editor, English Ayres, 1598-1612; transcribed works of Jones, Locke, Purcell, Avison; wrote Delius (1923), Gesualdo (1926), The English Ayre (1926)

Henry Hiles (1826-1904): organist, composer, writer; lecturer in harmony and composition, Owens College (1876-), at Victoria University, Manchester (1879-); editor and proprietor, Quarterly Musical Review (1885-88); prof, RCM (1893-); a founder of Natl Soc of Prof Musicians (1882); conducted various choral societies in Lancashire and Yorkshire; wrote Grammar of Music (2 vols., 1879), Harmony of Sounds (1871,1872,1878), PartWriting (1884), Harmony of Counterpoint (1889)

Granville Archer Hill (c.1878-1953): writer; contributor, Manchester Guardian; deputy critic there under Neville Cardus (1927-40), principal music critic there, (1940-51)

Josef Holbrooke (1878-1958): composer, writer, pianist; studied at RAM; frequent contributor to many journals; wrote Contemporary British Composers (1925)
Henry Holmes (1839-1905): violinist, composer; prof of violin, RCM (1883-94); moved to San Francisco after enforced resignation

Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934): composer; dropped the "von" from name during WWI; studied at RCM; first trombone with Carl Rosa Co, played for many years in Scottish and other orchs; mus master Alleyn School, Dulwich (1903-19), St. Paul’s Girls’ School (1905-34); musical director, Passmore Edwards Settlement (1904-7), Morley College (1907-34); taught composition, Reading College (1919-23), RCM (1919-); wrote "Henry Purcell" in Foss, *Heritage of Music*, vol I (1927), articles in *MusStud, MH, The Quest, Heirs and Rebels* (1959)

George Hopper: writer; contributor, *MO* [biographical data could not be located]

Elsie Horne: lecturer [biographical data could not be located]

Dorothy Howell (1898-1982): pianist, teacher, composer; studied RAM; taught there (1924-70)

Herbert Howells (1892-1983): composer; studied in Gloucester and RCM; contributor, *The Athenaeum* (1916-17); taught composition, RCM (1920-); succeeded Holst as Director, St. Paul’s Girls School (1936-62); prof of music, Univ of London (1954-64)

Frank Stewart Howes (1891-1974): writer; studied at Oxford; taught at RCM (1938-70); critic, *Times* (1925-43), chief music critic there (1943-60); Cramb Lecturer, Univ of Glasgow (1947-52)


Herbert Hughes (1882-1937): music critic, *Daily Telegraph* (for several years); arranger of Irish folk songs

Arthur Eaglefield Hull (1876-1928): organist, writer, teacher, composer; studied at Oxford; founder, Huddersfield Chamber Music Society (1900) and College of Music (1908); editor, *MMR* (1912/13-); a founder, honorary director of Brit Mus Soc (1918-21), editor of its bulletin (1919-23); editor, *Dict of Modern Music and Musicians* (1924); wrote *Modern Harmony* (1914), monographs on Scott (1914) and Scriabin (1916)

Rev [Henry George] Bonavia Hunt (1847-1917): writer, music historian; founder, professor, warden, Trinity College, London (1872-92); taught music history at Univ of London (1900-07); editor, *Cassell’s* (1874-96); wrote *Concise History of Music from the Christian Era to the Present Time* (1878; 7th ed,1884)

William Yeates Hurlstone (1876-1906): pianist, composer; studied at RCM; appointed prof of music there (1905)
John Ireland (1879-1962): composer; studied at RCM; prof there (1923-39)

Edgar Frederick Jacques (1850-1906): critic, lecturer, organist; settled in London (from Manchester, 1869); entered musical journalism (1885); contributor, MMR (1880s); wrote analytical programs for Queen's Hall concerts; sub-editor, The Meister; editor, MusW (1888-91), MT (1892-March 1897); critic, The Observer (1894-), The Sunday Times

August Johannes Jaeger (1860-1909): German-born musician, settled in England (1878); worked for Novello (1890-); for many years was regarded as the unofficial musical advisor of the firm; played important part in advancing Elgar's early reputation

Georges Jean-Aubry (1882-1949): French writer, lived in London (1915-30); editor, The Chesterian (2nd series, 1919-); wrote La Musique Francaise d'Aujourd'hui (1915; Eng 1919), La Musique et les Nations (1922, Eng 1923)

Arthur W. Johnstone (1861-1904): critic; studied at Oxford and Cologne; critic, Manchester Guardian (1896-1904); Manchester correspondent for MT (1903-04); wrote Musical Criticisms (a collection of Guardian articles--1905)

J. Alfred Johnstone (1861-?): Irish pianist, writer; studied in Dublin; in Australia was dir. Music School of the Athenaeum; wrote many piano technique books, and Modern Tendencies and Old Standards in Musical Art (1911)

Canon John Julian (1839-1913): clergyman, hymnologist; canon, YkM; wrote Concerning Hymns (1874), Dictionary of Hymnology (1892, rev 1915), Carols, Ancient and Modern (1900)

Alfred Kalisch (1863-1933): critic, librettist; educated as barrister, Balliol, Oxford; began career as music journalist (1894); was critic at various times for the Star, the World (1899-1915), the Morning Leader (from 1902?-following "Sforzando"); articles were signed "Crescendo"; translated operas by Strauss and Mascagni; wrote libretto for Colson's She Stoops to Conquer (1923)

Annette E. Keeton (c. 1864-1954): writer, lecturer, critic; studied at Schwerin; gave lectures on Russian folk song after visiting Russia; critic, The Morning Post; contributor, Contemporary Review, Chamber's Journal, The Music Teacher, MO

Frederick Septimus Kelly (188 -1916): Australian-born pianist, composer; studied at Eton and Oxford; advisor, Classical Concert Soc; composed several piano and pieces in smaller forms; killed in action in France; [memorial concert given May 2, 1919]

Marjory Kennedy-Fraser (1857-1930): Scottish singer, folksong collector, editor; studied in Milan and Paris; first visited the Outer Hebrides (1905); editor, From the Hebrides (1925), More Songs of the Hebrides (1929); librettist and sang title role, Bantock's The Seal Woman (1924); wrote David Kennedy, the Scottish singer (1887); A Life of Song (1928)


Frederick Kitchener: writer; contributor, *MS* and *MO* [biographical data could not be located]

Charles Herbert Kitson (1874-1944): organist, theorist, teacher; studied at Oxford; organist, Christ Church, Dublin (1913-20), prof, Univ College, Dublin (1915-20); prof, Trinity College, Dublin and prof, RCM (1920-); wrote thirteen theory texts including *The Art of Counterpoint* (1907), *The Evolution of Harmony* (1914)


Ernest Kuhe (1870-1936): son of Wilhelm Kuhe, critic; well known in London as a critic on the staff of *The Daily Telegraph* (1892-1932)

Wilhelm Kuhe (1823-1912): Czech pianist, composer; lived in England (1847-); held annual festival in Brighton (1870-81) in which he encouraged native talent; gave annual London concert; prof, RAM (1886-1904); wrote *My Musical Recollections* (1896)

Frederick Lamond (1868-1948): Scottish pianist, composer; studied in Frankfort, Weimar, Rome; mainly lived in Germany; toured throughout Europe and US; lived in England during and after WWII

Samuel Langford (c. 1865?-1927): writer; studied in Leipzig; followed Newman as music critic, *Manchester Guardian* (1906-27)

George Langley (1854-1915): contributor, *MMR* and others; lecture on Stemdale Bennett combats comparison with Mendelssohn (*MMR* Dec 1892)

Telegraph (1906-), music editor there (1908-31); according to Colles "he swept away the repressive style of dogmatic criticism to which Bennett [whom he succeeded] had clung."

Liza Lehmann [Elizabeth Nina Mary Frederika] (1862-1918): soprano, composer; studied in Rome, Wiesbaden, London; a leading vocalist (1885-94); first president of the Society of Women Musicians (1911-12); wrote The Life of Liza Lehmann, by Herself (1919)

James Thomas Lightwood (1856-1944): writer; Hymn-tunes and Their Story (1906), Charles Dickens and Music (1912), Methodist Music in the 18th Century (1927)

Henry John Lincoln (1814-1901): organist, critic, lecturer; secretary, The Daily News (1846-66), critic there (1866-86)

Charles Harford Lloyd (1849-1919): organist, composer; studied at Oxford; first president, Oxford Univ Mus Club; org, GlouC (1876-82); conducted GlouFest (1877,1880); org, Christ Church, Oxford and conductor, Oxford Choral Soc (1882-86); taught organ and comp, RCM (1887-92); precentor, musical instructor, Eton (1892-14); org, Chapel Royal (1914-)

George Lowe: writer; contributor, MO, MS, MMR and MT; wrote Josef Holbrooke (1920) [biographical data could not be located]

Bertram Luard-Selby (1853-1918): organist, composer; studied in Leipzig; org, SalisC (1881-3), RochC (1900-16)

Henry Charles Lunn (1817-1894): teacher, writer; studied at RAM, later teacher and director there; editor, MT (1863-87)

Hamish MacCunn (1868-1916): Scottish composer, conductor; studied at RCM (Parry); prof of harmony, RAM (1888-94); conductor, Carl Rosa Op Co (1898-), Savoy Theatre (1900-)

Herbert McCullagh: writer; contributor, MO [biographical data could not be located]

Sir John Blackwood McEwen (1868-1948): Scottish composer, teacher; studied in Glasgow and RAM; prof of harm/comp, RAM (1898-36), principal (1924-36); a founder, Soc of Brit Composers (1905); prolific composer; wrote The Thought in Music (1912), Foundations of Musical Aesthetics (1917)

Sir George Alexander Macfarren (1813-1887): composer, educator; studied at RAM; prof, RAM (1834-); sec, Handel Soc (1843); prof, Cambridge (1875-); principal, RAM (1876-); edited Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, some of Handel's oratorios, and collections of English, Scottish, and Irish songs; wrote theory texts, Addresses and Lectures (1888)

Walter Cecil Macfarren (1826-1905): composer, pianist; studied at RAM; prof of piano, RAM (1846-1903), conductor of RAM concerts (1873-80); editor, Mozart's piano music, Beethoven's piano sonatas; wrote Memories (1905)
Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie (1847-1935): composer, violinist, teacher; studied in Edinburgh, Sondershausen, RAM; lived in Edinburgh (1865-79), Florence (1879-88); principal, RAM (1888-); cond. Phil Soc (1892-99); Gen Pres, International Musikgesellschaft (1908-12); wrote A Musician's Narrative (1927), studies of Liszt and Verdi (both 1913)

Charles Donald Maclean (1843-1916): composer, organist; studied in Cologne; mus dir, Eton (1871-75); civil servant in India (22 years); English editor, International Musikgesellschaft (1899), gen sec (1908-); wrote "History of English Music" for Paris Encyclopédie de la Musique (1914, pt 1, vol 3)

William Gray McNaught (1849-1918): educator, editor; studied at RAM (leaving business career); choral cond, later mus dir, Bow and Bromley Inst (1876-); editor, School Music Review (publ through which many folk songs, natl songs and new comps were made available for school use, 1892-); editor, MT (1909-18)

William McNaught (1883-1953): critic, author, editor, son of above; studied at Oxford; asst ed, MT, editor (1944-53); wrote Modern Music and Musicians (1937); considered to be unsurpassed as writer of programme notes and gramophone reviews

[Charles] Stewart Macpherson (1865-1941): educator, composer; studied at RAM; cond, Westminster Orch Soc (1885-1902); cond, Streatham Choral Soc (1886-1904); prof of comp, RAM (1887-1931); examiner for RAM and RCM (1900-); prof of comp, Royal Normal College for the Blind (1903-); member, Bd of Mus Studies, Univ of London; founder and chair, Music Teachers' Assoc (1908-23); Dean, Fac of Music, Univ of London (1925-27); wrote many text books, published first British book on music appreciation (1910)

Basil Stephen Maine (1894-1972): author, critic, actor, rector; studied Norwich and Cambridge; asst org, DurC; asst mus critic, Daily Telegraph (1921-), Morning Post (1926-); editor, Music Bulletin (1925-29); broadcasting critic, The Sunday Times (1935-); contributor, The Spectator and others; wrote Behold These Daniels (1928); Reflected Music (1930), Elgar, his Life and Works (2 vols., 1933), works on Chopin and Paderewski, and The Glory of English Music (1937); The Best of Me (1937), Twang with Our Music (1957)

Arthur Mann (1850-1929); organist, writer; studied at Oxford; organist, choirmaster, King's College, Cambridge (1876-); choirmaster, NorFest (1902-); contributor, MS

Charles Manners [Southcote Mansergh] (1857-1935): Irish bass, operatic manager; married soprano Fanny Moody (1890) with whom he established the Moody-Manners Opera Company; toured the provinces actively promoting new British operas

Maud Matras: writer, contributor, MMR [biographical data could not be located]

Gian Andrea Mazzucato (?-1900): Italian-born critic; prof of musical aesthetics, Milan Conservatory (1877-80); moved to London (1880); frequent contributor to journals

Rev Joseph Powell Metcalfe (1824-1876): studied at Cambridge; wrote Rounds, Catches and Glees of England (1873; repr1976), Rounds, Catches, and Glees (1898)
Philip Napier Miles (1865-1935): music patron, amat composer; studied in Dresden and RCM; formed the Shirehampton Choral Soc; pres, Bristol Madrigal Soc; supporter of Boughton's Glastonbury enterprise

Warren Monk: writer; contributor, *MS* [biographical data could not be located]

Montagu Montagu-Nathan (1877-1958): writer, lecturer; studied in Birmingham, Frankfurt; teacher, Leeds Municipal School of Music; critic, Yorkshire Observer; contributor to many music journals; wrote extensively on Russian music; *A History of Russian Music* (1914, 2d ed. 1918), *An Introduction to Russian Music* (1916), *Contemporary Russian Composers* (1917)

Reginald Owen Morris (1886-1948): composer, teacher; studied at RCM; taught there (1920-26; 1928-48)


Edward Woodall Naylor (1867-1934): organist, composer, writer; studied at RCM and Cambridge; lecturer, Emmanuel Coll, Cambridge (1902-); org (1908-); essays in *MusAnt* and *PRMA*; wrote *Shakespeare and Music* (1896, rev. 1931), and *An Elizabethan Virginal Book* (1905)


Frederick Niecks (1845-1924): German violinist, writer; studied in Leipzig; moved to Scotland (1868); staff, *MMR* (1875-), articles (1879-1923); contributor, *MT* (1879-1910); Reid Prof, Edinburgh Univ (1891-1914); founder, Musical Education Soc (1901); wrote *Dictionary of Musical Terms* (1884), *Frederick Chopin* (1888), *A History of Programme Music* (1907); *Robert Schumann* (1925)

Henry Cotter Nixon (18421908): organist, composer; studied RAM and Cambridge

John Northcott (?-1905): critic; music and drama critic, *The Daily Chronicle*; [according to *MT* obit at the time of death was "formerly"]
Richard Northcott (c.1871-1931): bibliographer, opera historian, son of above; studied at King's College and Heidelberg; succeeded father as critic, The Daily Daily Chronicle, Records of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, 1888-1921, wrote Life of Sir Henry R. Bishop (1920), Covent Garden and The Royal Opera (1924)

Mary Victoria Novello [Mrs. Cowden-Clarke] (1809-1898); writer, scholar; eldest daughter of Vincent; compiled Complete Concordance to Shakespeare (1844-45); wrote Life and Labours of Vincent Novello (1862), translated theory texts by Cherubini, Berlioz and Catel (1854); editor, MT (1853-56), contributed series of articles; My Long Life (1896)

Joseph Alfred Novello (1810-1896): singer, publisher; eldest son of Vincent; inaugurated journals MusW (1836), MT (1844); retired (1856)

Sir Herbert Stanley Oakeley (1830-1903): organist, composer, educator; studied at Leipzig and Dresden; critic, The Guardian (1858-66); Reid prof, Edinburgh Univ (1865-91), prof emeritus there (1892-); Queen's Composer in Scotland (1876-)

Thomas Power O'Connor (1848-?): journalist; wrote In the Days of My Youth (1901) seems to have been primarily a literary/journalistic figure -- founder and editor of the Star (liberal halfpenny paper, 1888-90), founder, editor The Sun (1893-)

Norman Houstoun O'Neill (1875-1934): composer; studied in London and Frankfort; close friend of Delius; mus dir, Haymarket Theatre (1908-19), St. James Theatre (1919-20), returned to Haymarket (1920-); treasurer, Royal Phil Soc (1919-); teacher, RAM (1924-)

Douglas Charles Parker (1885-?): Scottish writer, critic; contributed to MT, MS, MH and MMR; wrote Some Aspects of Gipsy Music (1913), Grainger (1918), Bizet (1926)

Claude W. Parnell: writer; articles for MMR [biographical data could not be located]

Sir Walter Parratt (1841-1924): organist, teacher, composer; various organ appts (1854-72); org, Magdalen, Oxford (1872-82); involved with many choral groups there; org/choir dir, St. George's Chapel, Windsor (1882-1924); prof of organ, RCM (1883-1923); Master of the Queen's Musick (1893-); hon DMus, Oxford (1894), Cambridge (1910); prof of music, Oxford (1908-18); dean of music, London Univ (1916-); wrote music chapter in Ward's Reign of Queen Victoria (1887)

Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918): composer, scholar, teacher; studied at Eton and Oxford; a founder of the Oxford Univ Mus Club; Chorigus, Oxford (1883-); taught at RCM (1883-), director (1894-1918); mus examiner, Univ of Lon (1891-); prof of music, Oxford (1900-08); wrote Studies of the Great Composers (1887), The Art of Music (1893, expanded to The Evolution of..., 1896), Summary of the History and Development of Mediaeval and Modern European Music (1893), The Music of the Seventeenth Century in OHM (1902), J. S. Bach, the Development of a Great Personality (1909), Style in Musical Art (1911), College Addresses (ed, H. C. Colles 1921)
Joseph Parry (1841-1903): Welsh composer; studied at RAM and Cambridge; prof of music, Univ College, Aberystwyth (1871-80); lecturer, Univ College, South Wales (1888-); edited large collection of Welsh songs, *Cambrian Minstrelsie* (6 vols, 1893)

Annie Wilson Patterson (1868-1934): Irish organist, folk music advocate, musicologist; first woman to receive DMus degree (1889, Royal Univ of Ireland); founder, Irish natl music festival, the Feis Ceoil (1897); examiner, RUI (1892-95); prof of Irish music, Univ College, Cork (1924-); wrote *Schumann* (1903), *The Music of Ireland*

Percy Pitt (1870-1932): composer, conductor, organist; studied in Paris, Leipzig and Munich; chorus-master, Mottl Concerts, London (1895-); org. Queen's Hail (1896-1902); artistic advisor, Covent Garden (1902-); asst cond (1906), cond (1907-); cond, Beecham Op Co (1915-18); art dir, Brit Natl Op Co (1920-24); mus dir, BBC (1922-); mus dir, Covent Garden (1924-)

Arthur Poyser: writer; contributor, *MS* [biographical data could not be located]

Oliveria Prescott (1842-1919): composer, teacher, writer; contributor, *MusN*; wrote *About Music* (1903)

Ebenezer Prout (1835-1909): composer, organist, theorist, teacher; practically self-taught; taught piano, Crystal Palace School of Art (1861-85); theory teacher, NTSM (1876-), RAM (1879-), GSM (1884-); cond, Hackney Chor Assn (1876-90); prof, Dublin Univ (1894-); hon DMus (Dublin, Edinburgh, 1895); editor, *MMR* (1871-74); critic, *The Academy* (1874-79), *The Athenaeum* (1879-89); wrote many theoretical texts


Roger Quilter (1877-1953): composer; studied at Eton and Frankfurt o/M; songs are most important, esp, Shakespeare settings

Alberto Randegger (1832-1911): Italian singing teacher, conductor, composer; settled in London (1855); prof of singing, RAM (1868-), and RCM; cond. St. James's Theatre (1857-), Carl Rosa Op Co (1879-85), Drury Lane and Covent Garden (1887-98); conductor, NorFests (1881-1905)

[Robert] Clarence Raybould (1886-1972): pianist, conductor, composer; studied in Birmingham; staff, MidInst (1912-); Boughton's asst cond, Glastonbury (pre1914); served in WWI; cond, Beecham Op Co (1919-26); chief asst cond, BBC (1939-45); founder, cond, Natl Youth Orch of Wales (1945-66)

Edith Margaret Gellibrand Reed (c. 1885-1933): editor, *Youth and Music*, and its successor *Music and Youth*; asst editor, *MuStud*

William Henry Reed (1876-1942): violinist, composer; leader, LSO (1912-); taught at RCM; intimate friend of Elgar; wrote *Elgar as I Knew Him* (1936), *Elgar (Master Musicians series*, 1939)

Leonard Rees (c. 1856-1932): music critic, later editor, *Sunday Times*
A. Seymour Reeves: writer; contributor, MS [biographical data could not be located]

Edward Davey Rendall (?-1920) writer, composer, teacher; studied in Berlin and at Cambridge; music master, Dulwich College; contributor to MMR and MT

George Riseley (1845-1932): organist, conductor, writer; org, BristC (1876-98); estab fortnightly orch concerts (1877); cond, Bristol Orpheus Soc (1878-); estab Bristol Chor Soc (1889); cond, Alexandra Palace orch, Queen's Hall Chor Soc (1898-); cond, BristFests (1896-1911); ISM lectures on provincial orchestras

William Smyth Rockstro (1823-1895): author, composer, early music scholar; friend of Mendelssohn; studied in Leipzig; accompanist, London Wednesday Concerts (1846-); lived in Torquay (early60s-91); lecturer, RAM and RCM (1891-); publ Festival Psalter, adapted to the Gregorian Tones (w/Ravenshaw, 1863), and Accompanying Harmonies to the Ferial Psalter (1869) wrote studies of Handel (1883), Mendelssohn (1884), Jenny Lind (1891); General History of Music (1886)

John Arthur Rodgers (1866-1920): studied in Sheffield; writer, organist, conductor; critic, Sheffield Daily Telegraph (1896-); cond, Sheffield Glee and Madrigal Soc; wrote The New Choralism, Dr. Henry Coward-A Biography (1911)

Joseph Leopold Roeckel (1838-1923): pianist, teacher, composer; studied in Wurzburg and Weimar; settled in Clifton; well-known as teacher and song composer

Sir Landon Ronald [real name Russell] (1873-1938): conductor, composer; son of Henry Russell; studied at RCM; acc/coach, Covent Garden (1891-); cond, Engl opera at Drury Lane, Covent Garden (1895-), mus comedy, Lyric Theatre, Lon (1898-1902); guest cond, LSO (1904-07), several cont and Engl orchs (1908); cond, Birm Proms (1908-), New Sym Orch (1909-14), Scottish orch (1916-20); principal, GSM (1910-38); critic, The Artist, The Onlooker; mus ed (various times) The Tatler, Musical News, News-Chronicle; wrote Variations on a Personal Theme (1922), Myself and Others (1931)

Cyril Bradley Rootham (1875-1938): organist, composer; studied RCM and Cambridge; org/mus dir, St. John's College, Cambridge (1901-38); cond, Univ Mus Soc (1912-); Univ lecturer (1913-); many comps postdate period


John F Runciman (1866-1916): critic, musicologist; critic, The Saturday Review (1894-1916); editor, The Chord and The Musician's Library; correspondent, The Musical Record, Boston; attacks on several composers led to libel suits; wrote Old Scores and New Readings (1899), Wagner (1905), Purcell (1909), Richard Wagner, Composer of Operas (1913)

Henry Saint-George (1866-1917): violinist, stringed inst expert; editor, The Strad (four years); wrote The Bow: Its History, Manufacture and Use (1895), The Place of
Science in Music (1905), Fiddles: Their Selection, Preservation and Betterment (1910); editor, The Music Student (1899-1902?)

Charles Kensington Salaman (1814-1901): pianist, conductor, teacher, writer; studied at RAM and in Paris; founder, amateur choral society, London (1849); co-founder, Mus Soc of London (1858); one of the founders of the RMA (1874)

Arthur Salmon: writer; contributor to MT [biographical data could not be located]

George Sampson (1861-1949): organist, conductor, writer; moved to Australia (1898)

Sir Charles Santley (1834-1922): baritone, composer; studied in Milan and London; equally popular in opera, concert and oratorio venues; appeared regularly in Three Choirs Fests (Birm1861-1906); Albert Hall jubilee of artistic career (May1,1907); wrote Student and Singer (1892), The Singing-Master (1900), The Art of Singing (1908), Reminiscences (1909)

William Saunders (May22,1877-?): Scottish musicologist; studied at Edinburgh Univ; influenced by Niecks and Tovey; established and edited The Scottish Musical Magazine (1918-?); wrote Weber (1940), The Music Lover's book of great composers (1947)

Frank Joseph Sawyer (1857-1908): organist, composer, writer, lecturer; studied at Leipzig and Oxford; asst org to Frederick Bridge (WestAb); org/choirmaster, St. Patrick's, Hove (c.1878-1908); cond, Brighton and Hove Choral and Orch Assn (-1896); prof of sight-singing, RCM (1896-1908); wrote A Course in Harmony (w/Bridge,1899)

Frederick Ernest Sawyer: folk-song collector, lecturer [biographical data could not be located]

W. Berwick Sayers (1881-?): writer; wrote Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1915, rev1927)

Kathleen Schlesinger (1862-1953): Irish musicologist; studied in Switzerland; lived in London; wrote The Instruments of the Modern Orchestra (1910), The Greek Aulos (1939), a volume dealing with ancient Grk insts and an original (and controversial) theory of Grk mode origins

Adolph Schloesser (1830-1913): German-born pianist, writer; taught at RAM (until 1903); contributor, MMR.

Percy Alfred Scholes (1877-1958): writer, editor; established and edited MuStud (Leeds, 1908-21); critic, The Evening Standard (1913-20), The Observer (1920-25); extension lecturer, Ox, Camb, London univs; critic, BBC; editor, The Radio Times (1925-28); hon DMus, Oxford (1943); lived in Switzerland (1928-40, 57-58); wrote Everyman and His Music (1917), An Introduction to British Music (1918), The Puritans and Music (1934), The Oxford Companion to Music (1938), The Mirror of Music, 1844-1944 (1947), The Great Dr. Burney (1948)

Charles Kennedy Scott (1876-1965): choral conductor, organist, song composer; studied in Brussels; lived in London (1898-); advocate of old and new English choral music; took part in natl mus movement by assisting Balfour Gardiner concerts and
Glastonbury project; established Oriana Madrigal Soc (1904), Philharmonic Choir (1919), Euterpe String Players (1922); publ editions of old carols and 16th century choral music; wrote Word and Tone (2vols, 1933)

Cyril Meir Scott (1879-1970): composer, writer, poet, pianist; studied at Frankfurt o/M and Liverpool; wrote Philosophy of Modernism (1917), My Years of Indiscretion (1924), The Influence of Music on History and Morals: a Vindication of Plato (1929); Music, its Secret Influence throughout the Ages (1933), An Outline of Modern Occultism (1935)

Paul Seer: critic; contributor, MS [biographical data could not be located]

William Shakespeare (1849-1931): voice teacher, pianist, composer; studied in London (RAM), Leipzig, Milan; concert/orat singer, London (1875-), taught RAM (1878-); cond, RAM concerts (1880-86), Strolling Players' Concerts (1901-05)

Cecil James Sharp (1859-1924): music folklorist, conductor, teacher; studied at Cambridge; originally in Australia as lawyer and organist; mus master, Ludgrove Prep School (1892-96); principal, Hampstead Cons (1896-1905); founder, English Folk-Dance Soc (1911); editions: Folk Songs from Somerset (1904-09), Songs of the West (w/others 1905), The Morris Book (w/others 1907-13), Morris Dance Tunes (w/Butterworth 1907-24), The Country Dance Book (w/others 1909-22), English Folk-carols (1911), English Folk-chanteys (1914), English Folk-songs (1920); wrote English Folk-song: some Conclusions (1907)

Geoffrey Turton Shaw (1879-1943): composer, organist, educator; studied at Cambridge; mus master, Gresham's School, Holt (1902-10); H.M.'s Staff Inspector of Music, Bd of Education (1928-)

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950): critic, dramatist; as "Corno di Bassetto" wrote for The Star (1888-89); critic, The World (1890-94); wrote The Perfect Wagnerite (1898)

Martin Fallas Shaw (1875-1958): organist, composer, writer, brother of Geoffrey Shaw; studied at RCM; founder, Purcell Operatic Soc (1900); strongly identified with natl revival mvt; editor, Songs of Britain (w/Kidson, 1913), English Carol Book (w/Deamer, 1913-19), Songs of Praise, Oxford Book of Carols (w/RVW, 1925, 1928); wrote The Principles of English Church Music Composition (1921), Up to Now (1929)

John South Shedlock (1843-1919): critic, musicologist; studied in London and Paris; critic, The Academy (1879-), The Athenaeum (1898-1916); editor, MMR (1902-13); taught piano and mus history, RAM (1901-05); wrote series of articles on Beethoven's sketchbooks (MT92); wrote The Pianoforte Sonata (1895), Bach article in Grey, Studies in Music (1901) and Beethoven (1905)

A. J. Sheldon (1874-1931): music critic, Manchester Courier (1913-16) Birmingham Post (1919-); program annotator for City of Birmingham orchestra

Frank Henry Shera (1882-1956): educator, writer; studied at RCM; director of music, Malvern College (1916-); contributor, Sheffield Telegraph; first occupant, chair of
music, Sheffield University (1927-50); wrote *Debussy and Ravel* (1927), *Elgar's Instrumental Works* (1931)

Constance Smedley: writer; contributor, *Daily Chronicle* [biographical data could not be located]

Alice Mary Smith [Mrs. Meadows White] (1839-1884): composer; studied at RAM; first attracted attention with her piano quartet in 1861; elected an Associate of the Philharmonic Society (1867).


Sir Arthur Somervell (1863-1937): composer, educator; studied at Cambridge, Berlin, and RCM; taught RCM (1894-1901); inspector of music, Bd of Educ (1901-28)

Thomas Lea Southgate (1836-1917): amateur musician, organist, writer; studied privately it seems; staff, Bank of England; co-founder, *MS* (w/W Hammond, 1862), contributor (1871-91) editor (1871-73); co-editor with Turpin, *Musical News* (1891-95)

Leonard Spaulding: writer; contributor, *MS* [biographical data could not be located]

Herbert Spencer (18201903): philosopher; influential writings on music particulary as related to evolutionary thought; wrote *Facts and Comments* (1902)


[Henry] Heathcote Statham (1839-1924): organist, writer; famous recitals on the newly-opened Albert Hall organ; contributor, FortRev; wrote My Thoughts on Music and Musicians (1892), The Organ (1909), What is Music? (1913)

Reginald Steggall (1867-1938): organist, composer; studied at RAM; prof there (1895-)

Charles Edward Stephens (1821-1892): pianist, teacher, organist, composer; held numerous organ appts

Sir Robert Prescott Stewart (1825-1894): Irish composer, teacher; org, Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin (1844-); prof, Univ of Dublin (1861-); prof, Royal Irish Acad of Music (1872-), cond, Dublin Phil (1873-); editor, Irish Church Hymnal; noted glee writer; wrote Memoirs (1899)

Stephen Samuel Stratton (1840-1906): critic, organist, teacher; studied in London; moved to Birmingham (1866); critic, Birmingham Daily Post (1877-1906); contributor, MMR and MT; wrote British Musical Biography (w/Brown, 1897), Mendelssohn (1901), Paganini (1907)

Richard Alexander Streatfeild (1866-1919): writer; studied at Cambridge; asst, Dept of Printed Bks, Brit Mus (1889-1919); literary executor of Samuel Butler; critic, London Daily Graphic (1898-1912); wrote Masters of Italian Music (1895), The Opera (1897, 2d ed. 1907), Modern Music and Musicians (1906), Handel (1909), Life Stories of Great Composers (1910), Musiciens anglais contemporains (1913)

Christina Struthers: [later Niecks] writer; articles for MMR [biographical data could not be located]

Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan (1842-1900): composer, organist, conductor; Mendelssohn scholarship (1856); studied at RAM and Leipzig; organist, Covent Garden (1864-); prof, RAM (1866-); editor, Church Hymns and Tunes (1872); dir, NTSM (1876-81); hon DMus, Cambridge, Oxford (1876, 1879); knighted (1883); cond, Philharmonic Soc (1885-); lecture: "About Music" given Oct 29, 1888]

Sir Richard Runciman Terry (1865-1938): organist, scholar; mus master, Elstow (1890-); org/chrmaster, St. John's Cathedral, Antiqua, W.I. (1892-), Downside Abbey, Somerset (1896-); mus dir, Westminster Cathedral (1901-24); hon DMus, Durham (1911); editor, Downside Masses, Downside Masses and Motets, Ancient and Modern, Westminster Hymnal (1912); editor, Musical News (1924-25); lectured before the RMA on Byzantine music (1908-9), Sea Songs and Chanties (1914-5), and John Merbecke (1918-9)

Arthur Goring Thomas (1850-1892): composer; studied in Paris and at RAM

Lewis William Thomas (1826-1896): bass singer, critic; associated with WorC, St. Paul's and Temple Church (London); Gentleman, Chapel Royal (1857-87); critic, MusW, Daily Telegraph; editor, The Lute (1888-)

Herbert Thompson (1856-1945): critic; studied at Cambridge; honDLitt, Leeds (1926); wrote notes for Leeds Fests; critic, Yorkshire Post (1886-1936); contributor, Grove
John Hugh Thomson (1840-1910): critic, *The Queen* for over 30 years

Walter Handel Thorley (1823-1910): bass singer, double bassist, composer from north of England

A. F. Tindall; correspondent, *MO* [biographical data could not be located]

Sir Donald Francis Tovey (1875-1940): scholar, teacher, pianist, composer; studied at Oxford; series of chamber concerts featuring his own works (1900-01); Reid prof, Edinburgh Univ (1914-); estab Reid Orch Concerts (1917); wrote studies of Schubert (1927), Gluck (1934) and Beethoven (1944), *Essays in Musical Analysis* (6vols, 1935-38), *A Musician Talks* (1941), 40 articles for *EncyBr*


Edward Geoffrey Toye (1889-1942): conductor, composer, brother of above; studied at RCM; conducted first perf of RVW's *A London Symphony* (1914); cond, Beecham Op Co and Royal Phil Orch (1918-19); cond, D'Oyly Carte (two seasons); manager, Sadler's Wells (1931-34), Covent Garden (1934-36)

Claude Trevor: writer; contributor, *MMR* [biographical data could not be located]

Thomas Henry Yorke Trotter (1854-1934): music educator; principal, London Academy of Music; contributor, *MS*


Edmund Hart Turpin (1835-1907): organist, composer, writer; studied in London; warden, TCM (1892-1907); editor, *MS* (various times between 1880-91), *MusW*; joint editor, *MusN* (1891-)

M. C. Urch: writer; contributor, *MS* [biographical data could not be located]

Joseph Verey: writer; contributor, *MMR* [biographical data could not be located]

Albert Anthony Visetti (1846-1928): vocal teacher, conductor; studied in Milan; moved to London (1870); prof, RCM, GSM; dir, vocal dept, NTSM; cond, Bath Phil Soc (1878-90); wrote Verdi (1905), contributor, *MMR*

Ernest Walker (1870-1949): composer, scholar; studied at Oxford; dir of music, Balliol and of Sunday chamber mus concerts (1900-25); Choragus, Oxford (1918-22); editor, *Musical Gazette* (1899-1902); prolific composer (see Grove5), wrote Beethoven (1905), *A History of Music in England* (1907, 2d ed. 1927); contributor, Grove and *Recent Developments in European Thought* (1920)

William Wallace (1860-1940): composer, writer; originally an ophthalmologist (Glasgow, Vienna); studied at RAM; contributor, Quarterly Musical Review, The Musician, National Review, MS; wrote The Threshold of Music (1908), The Musical Faculty (1914), Richard Wagner as he lived (1925), Liszt, Wagner and the Princess (1928)

Richard Henry Walthew (1872-1951): composer; studied at GSM and RCM; dir, Passmore Edwards Settlement (1900-4); dir, opera class, GSM (1905-); prof, Queen's College (1907-); cond, South Place Orch (1909-); wrote The Development of Chamber Music (1909)

Harry Waldo Warner (1874-1945): violist, composer; studied at GSM; prof there (-1920)

A. Watson: writer; contributor, Illustrated London News and MusN [biographical data could not be located]

Harold E Watts: organist, writer; contributor MS and MMR [biographical data could not be located]

Walter Wearenear-Yeomans: writer: contributor, MS [biographical data could not be located]

F. Gilbert Webb (c.1853-1941): organist, composer, writer; chief music critic, Standard (1903-); crituc, Daily Telegraph (1905-); wrote regularly for The Referee under pseudonym “Lancelot”

W. Wells-Harrison: writer; contributor, MS [biographical data could not be located]

Harry Wharton-Wells (?-1942): writer, organist; org/chrmaster, Putney Parish Church (for 53 years); wrote Handbook on Music and Musicians (1930)

Felix Harold White (Apr27,1884-Jan31,1945) composer; self-taught; prolific composer; mus staff, Covent Garden (1933-35); wrote Dict of Musical Terms (1935)

Maude Valerie White (1855-1937): song composer; studied at RAM and Vienna; wrote Friends and Memories (1914), My Indian Summer (1932)

Charles Willeby: writer; Masters of English Music (1896) [biographical data could not be located]
Charles Lee Williams (1853-1935): organist, composer, writer; studied at Oxford; asst org, Winchester (1865-70); org, LlanC (1876-82), GloucC (1882-97); cond, GlouFests (-1898): org, WorcFests and HereFests; wrote Origin and Progress of the Meeting of the Three Choirs (1895)

Christopher à Becket Williams (1890-1956): composer, writer; studied at Oxford; after serving in WWI, traveled extensively; wrote novels and travel books; contributed to a number of periodicals, specifically, MOf for six years under the name “Sinjon Wood”

Thomas Wingham (1846-1893): organist, composer; studied at LAM and RAM; prof of piano, RAM (1871-) and GSM; mus dir, Brompton Oratory (1882-93)

Charles Wood (1866-1926): Irish composer, teacher; studied at RCM and Cambridge; taught harmony, RCM (1888-); cond, Cambridge Mus Soc (1888-94); lecturer, Cambridge (1897-), prof (1924-)

Sir Henry Joseph Wood (1869-1944): organist, conductor; studied at RAM; supervised rehearsals of Ivanhoe (1890); asst cond, Savoy; cond of opera, Crystal Palace; cond, Proms (1895-), Saturday afternoon concerts (1897-); conductor a host of festivals (1900-); taught at RAM (1923-); wrote My Life in Music (1938)

Harry Ellis Wooldridge (1845-1917): musicologist; studied at Oxford; taught there as Slade Prof of Fine Arts; wrote The Polyphonic Period in OHM (2 vols., 1901-05); edited Early English Harmony (2 vols., 1897, 1913)

Hugh E. Wortham (c.1884-1959); writer; leader writer for Morning Post; asst music critic Daily Telegraph (until his death)

Mary Wurm (1860-1938): pianist, teacher; studied in Stuttgart; estab women’s orch, Berlin (1898)

Mrs. F. Wyatt-Smith (?-1922): critic, MS (under Crowdy); staff, MusN (1906-); obit calls her of the “old order of critics”

Henry Saxe Wyndham (?-1940): secretary, GSM (1901-34); wrote Arthur Sullivan (1903), Annals of Covent Garden, 1732-1897 (1906), August Manns and the Saturday Concerts (1909), Who’s Who in Music (1913)

Filson [Alexander Bell] Young (1876-?): Irish composer, writer; critic, Manchester Guardian, Saturday Review; wrote Mastersingers (1902) and More Mastersingers (1911)
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