Edward Elgar occupies a pivotal place in the British cultural imagination. His music has been heard as emblematic of Empire and the English landscape but is also the product of a private, introverted sensibility. The recent success of Anthony Payne’s elaboration of the sketches for Elgar’s Third Symphony has prompted a critical revaluation of his music. This Companion provides an accessible and vivid account of Elgar’s work in its historical and cultural context. Established authorities on British music and scholars new in the field examine Elgar’s music from a range of critical perspectives, including nationalism, post-colonialism, decadence, reception, and musical influences. There are also chapters on interpretation, including his own (Elgar was the first major composer to commit a representative quantity of his own work to record), and on Elgar’s relationships with the BBC and with his publishers. The book includes much new material, drawing on original research, as well as providing a comprehensive introduction to Elgar’s major musical achievements.
The Cambridge Companion to
ELGAR

EDITED BY
Daniel M. Grimley and Julian Rushton
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Notes on the contributors

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Robert Anderson was born in India and educated at Harrow and Cambridge. Director of Music at Gordonstoun School, he was also an associate editor of the Musical Times and has broadcast frequently. A professional Egyptologist, he has written the Elgar volume for the Master Musicians series (Dent, 1993); his Elgar in Manuscript was published in 1990 by the British Library, and his Elgar and Chivalry in 2002 by the Elgar Edition. He has also contributed to Edward Elgar: Music and Literature (Scolar, 1993), and was coordinating editor of the Elgar Complete Edition and Elgar Society Edition until 2004.

John Butt is Gardiner Professor of Music at the University of Glasgow, having previously held positions at the University of Cambridge and the University of California, Berkeley. He has published widely as a musicologist, particularly in the fields of Bach, the German Baroque, and the culture of historical performance. He is also active as a performer and has recorded the complete organ works of Elgar for Harmonia Mundi (France). He was the recipient of the 2003 Dent Medal of the Royal Musical Association.

Timothy Day is a music curator in the Sound Archive of the British Library. His publications include A Century of Recorded Music: Listening to Musical History (Yale, 2000) and a chapter on ‘English cathedral music in the twentieth century’ in The Cambridge Companion to Singing (2000). In 1999 he established the British Library’s Saul Seminar series, Studies in Recorded Music, and in the same year inaugurated the Edison Fellowship scheme, to assist scholars who wish to carry out intensive work on the Library’s collections of recordings of western art music.

Jeremy Dibble is Professor of Music at the University of Durham. His specialist interests in the Victorian, Edwardian, and Georgian eras are reflected in the two major books he has published on Hubert Parry and Charles Villiers Stanford and in his recent volume of Parry’s violin sonatas for the Musica Britannica Trust. He has written on a wide range of topics including historiography, opera, and church
music in Britain, and he has a keen interest in the work of Edward Dannreuther, Vaughan Williams, and Frederick Delius. He is currently working on a study of the life and music of John Stainer and a volume of Parry's piano trios for Musica Britannica.

**Jenny Doctor's** extensive work on the history of BBC music broadcasting has contributed to two books: *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922–36: Shaping a Nation's Tastes* (Cambridge, 1999) and Humphrey Carpenter's *The Envy of the World: Fifty Years of the BBC Third Programme and Radio 3* (1996). She is currently working with the BBC Proms office on the preparation of a comprehensive database of works performed at the London Promenade Concerts for more than a century, and is a Research Fellow at Trinity College of Music.

**Daniel M. Grimley** wrote his doctoral dissertation on the music of Carl Nielsen at King's College, Cambridge (1998). After a research fellowship at Selwyn College, he taught at the University of Surrey before being appointed to a Lectureship in Music at the University of Nottingham in 2002. A specialist in Nordic music, he has recently edited *The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius*. Current projects include books on Grieg and on Landscape in Nordic Music, 1890–1930. He convened an Elgar conference with Christopher Mark at the University of Surrey in April 2002.

**J. P. E. Harper-Scott** completed a D.Phil. thesis on Elgar, Heidegger, Schenker, and meaning in music at Magdalen College, Oxford, under the supervision of Nicholas Marston and Suzannah Clark. Along with a special interest in the music of Elgar and Walton, his research focuses on musical analysis and hermeneutics.

**Robin Holloway** is a composer whose distinguished output over many years has gained him a firm place in the recent development of British music. His works include the opera *Clarissa*, three Concertos for Orchestra, a symphony commissioned for the Promenade Concerts in 2000, the dramatic ballad *Brand*, and a choral work based on Peer Gynt. His extensive writings on music include the influential study *Debussy and Wagner* (1978), contributions to Cambridge Studies on Haydn and Janáček, and a large selection of shorter pieces published in 2003, *Robin Holloway on Music: Essays and Diversions* (Claridge Press).

**Christopher Kent**, antiquarian, author, teacher, organist, and organ adviser, was born in 1949. He completed a Ph.D. on Elgar's sketches at King's College, London and subsequently joined the Department of Music at the University of Reading where he established an influential postgraduate course in Organ Historiography. He retired from this post in 2002 to devote more time to research, writing, and organ playing. He has published widely in relation to his interests in Elgar (*A Guide to Research*, 1993) and organography. A founder member of the editorial committee of the Elgar Complete Edition, he has also served as secretary of the British Institute of Organ Studies.

**Charles Edward McGuire** is Assistant Professor of Musicology at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, and has contributed articles to 19th-Century Music, *Vaughan Williams Studies*, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (second edition) and *The Elgar Society Journal*. He is the author of Elgar's *Oratorios: The Creation of an Epic Narrative* (2002). Besides Elgar and the oratorio, his research interests include the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams, film music, and...


Christopher Mark is senior lecturer in music at the University of Surrey and co-founder and editor-in-chief of the journal Twentieth-Century Music (Cambridge). His research has centred on twentieth-century English composers, especially Britten, Tippett, and Roger Smalley. He is currently planning a large-scale study of melancholy in English music from Elgar to Birtwistle.

Julian Rushton retired as West Riding Professor of Music at the University of Leeds in 2002. Previously he taught at the University of East Anglia and the University of Cambridge. He is the author of The Musical Language of Berlioz, Classical Music: A Concise History, and Cambridge Handbooks on Mozart (Don Giovanni and Idomeneo), Berlioz: Roméo et Juliette, and Elgar: Enigma Variations. His The Music of Berlioz was published by Oxford University Press in 2001. He has edited four volumes of The New Berlioz Edition including La Damnation de Faust, and for Musica Britannica, Cipriani Potter’s Symphony in G minor (2001). He has written several articles and chapters on Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, Berlioz, and Elgar, and contributed to the New Grove, the New Grove Dictionary of Opera, and other works of reference. He was President of the Royal Musical Association, 1994–9, and is Chairman of the Editorial Committee of Musica Britannica and a trustee of the Elgar Society Edition.

Aidan Thomson was appointed Lecturer in Music at Queen’s University, Belfast in 2003, having previously taught at the Universities of Leeds and Oxford. In addition to Elgar, his current research interests include the Internationale Musikgesellschaft before 1914, and the idea of the urban in early twentieth-century orchestral music.
Acknowledgements

The editors wish to thank all their contributors, including each other, for their work in this volume. Our thanks are also due to the Elgar Birthplace and the British Library for permission to consult their collections of Elgar manuscripts; to Robert Montgomery of the Elgar Will Trust, for his kind and prompt assistance with the cover illustration; to Charles McGuire; and to J. P. E. Harper-Scott for preparing the index. The Elgar Conference at the University of Surrey in April 2002, organised by Daniel M. Grimley and Christopher Mark, brought the editors into direct contact with several contributors. To Penny Souster of Cambridge University Press, for her kindly encouragement throughout the preparation of this volume, our especial thanks and best wishes in her retirement.

Daniel M. Grimley
University of Nottingham

Julian Rushton
University of Leeds
October 2003
### Bibliographical abbreviations

**Elgar’s works and writings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Form</th>
<th>Full Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy, Portrait</td>
<td>Kennedy, M., <em>Portrait of Elgar</em>. Page references unless otherwise specified are to the first/third editions (1968/1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>The Musical Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young, Elgar</td>
<td>Young, P. M., <em>Elgar OM</em> (1955)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chronology

Note: if a place and/or date is given, then a performance is alluded to; when a work is mentioned without these details, it refers to the period of composition. Premieres without an ascribed conductor were conducted by Elgar. London: CP, Crystal Palace; SJH, St James’s Hall; QH, Queen’s Hall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Elgar’s life</th>
<th>Contemporary events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>Edward William Elgar born Broadheath (2 June). Baptised 11 June in St George’s (RC), Worcester.</td>
<td>Wagner begins <em>Tristan und Isolde</em> (perf. 1865); Berlioz working on <em>Les Troyens</em> (perf. 1863)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Family removes to Worcester.</td>
<td>Spohr dies. Darwin publishes <em>Origin of Species</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864–9</td>
<td>School; begins piano lessons (1864); first datable compositions (1867); begins violin lessons and studies composition theory (1869).</td>
<td>Verdi <em>Don Carlos</em>. 1868, Rossini dies, Brahms Requiem, Wagner <em>Die Meistersinger</em>. 1869, Berlioz dies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870–2</td>
<td>1872, plays organ at Mass in St George’s. Apprentice to a solicitor (to 1873).</td>
<td>1870, Franco-Prussian War; fall of Napoleon III; Papal infallibility. 1871, Paris Commune; Verdi, <em>Aida</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873–5</td>
<td>1873, Credo on Beethoven symphony themes.</td>
<td>1874, Musorgsky <em>Boris Godunov</em>. Verdi Requiem. 1875 Bizet <em>Carmen</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fuller chronologies, including many details of works in which Elgar played, and many details of unfinished works, are in Stewart R. Craggs, *Edward Elgar, a Source Book*, and Anderson, *Elgar*. 

[xi]
Chronology


1886–7 1886, teaches Alice Roberts; 1887, ladies’ orchestral classes. 1886, Liszt dies (Bayreuth, July). 1887, Verdi Otello (Milan).

1888 Suite in D perf. (Birmingham); Suite for strings perf. (Worcester), cond. Elgar. Composes Salut d’amour (July); pub. 1889 (Schott). Engagement to Alice Roberts (Sept.). Franck Symphony in D minor. Parry Judith. Tchaikovsky Fifth Symphony. Wilhelm II Emperor of Germany.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Froissart perf. (Birmingham, Feb.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Removes to Malvern (Forli).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaches at Rosa Burley’s Mount School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>Serenade for Strings; The Black Knight (pub. Novello). Bayreuth,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hears Parsifal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>The Black Knight perf. (18 April, Worcester Choral Society).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gounod dies (Oct.). Tchaikovsky Sixth Symphony; dies (Nov.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dvořák Ninth Symphony. Verdi Falstaff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Begins King Olaf. Alice received into RC church. Bavarian holiday;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wagner performances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands. Organ Sonata (8 July, Blair,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Bavarian Highlands perf. (21 April, Worcester Festival Chorus).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completes King Olaf (perf. 30 Oct., N. Staffordshire Festival, Hanley)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and composes The Light of Life (perf. 8 Sept., Worcester: Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choirs Festival).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>Composes The Banner of St George, Imperial March (both perf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April–May, London) and Te Deum and Benedictus for Hereford.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foundation of Worcestershire Philharmonic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Caractacus (perf. 5 Oct., Leeds Festival), Begins Variations on an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Original Theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Variations (cond. Richter, 21 June, London); The Light of Life revived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Hon. Mus.D. (Cambridge, 22 Nov.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Elgar later collected honorary doctorates from Durham (1904), Oxford (1905), Yale (1905), Aberdeen (1906).


1904 In the South first perf. at Elgar Festival (London, Covent Garden, 14–16 March). Knighthood (June). Elgars move to Hereford (Plas Gwyn). Holiday in Europe with Frank Schuster.


1906 The Kingdom comp., reduced from original plan, which is eventually abandoned. 2nd visit to USA. Kingdom perf. (3 Oct., Birmingham Festival). Lectures in Birmingham. Holiday in Naples (Dec.–Feb.).
Chronology

1907 3rd visit to USA. *Pomp and Circumstance* No. 4; *Wand of Youth* suites. String quartet and symphony sketches.


1911 4th visit to USA (March). Second Symphony (24 May, London/QH). Appointed to Order of Merit (June).


1914 Jan., first recording for The Gramophone Company (Carissima). *Carillon* (7 Dec.).


Grieg dies (Sept.).

Mahler Seventh Symphony.


Mahler dies. Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. The Indian capital transferred from Calcutta to Delhi. Sibelius's *Fourth Symphony*.

Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire*. Shaw's *Pygmalion*.

Sibelius Fifth Symphony (first version). Strauss's *Alpine Symphony*.

1917 The Sanguine Fan (20 March); *Le drapeau belge* (14 April); *The Fringes of the Fleet* (11 June); *The Spirit of England* (24 Nov.). USA enters the war. Battle of Paschendaele. Russian revolution; Lenin withdraws Russia from the war.

1918 Moves to Brinkwells, Sussex. Chamber music; completes Violin Sonata (Sept.) and String Quartet (Dec.). Debussy dies (March); Parry dies (Oct.). Puccini *Il trittico*. Armistice; end of war with Austria and Germany (Nov.).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td><em>Severn Suite</em> (perf. 27 Sept., brass bands); <em>Pomp and Circumstance</em> No. 5; <em>Nursery Suite</em>. Stravinsky <em>Symphony of Psalms</em>. Vaughan Williams <em>Job</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Flies to France, visits Delius (May). Work on Third Symphony. Falls seriously ill with cancer (Oct.). Hitler comes to power.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Elgar Complete Edition (Elgar Society Edition)

A date signifies that the volume had appeared by the end of 2003. All were published in the Elgar Complete Edition (Novello) except Vols. 18 (The Crown of India) and 25 (Wand of Youth, Dream Children), which are published by its continuation, the Elgar Society Edition (ESE).

**Series I: Choral works**
- Vol. 1. Spanish Serenade; The Black Knight; From the Bavarian Highlands
- Vol. 2. The Banner of St George; The Snow; Fly, Singing Bird; Pageant of Empire
- Vol. 3. The Light of Life (Luc Christi) (1989)
- Vol. 4. Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf
- Vol. 5. Caractacus (1985)
- Vol. 7. God Save the King (arrangement); Coronation Ode
- Vol. 11. Sacred music, with orchestra
- Vol. 12. Sacred music, unaccompanied or with organ
- Vol. 13. Secular part-songs and unison songs

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- Vol. 14. Solo songs, with orchestra
- Vol. 15. Solo songs, with piano (1)
- Vol. 16. Solo songs, with piano (2)

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- Vol. 17. Grania and Diarmid; Arthur
- Vol. 19. The Starlight Express
- Vol. 20. Carillon; Une voix dans le désert; Le drapeau belge; The Fringes of the Fleet
- Vol. 21. The Sanguine Fan; Beau Brummel

**Series IV: Orchestral works**
- Vol. 22. Short orchestral works
- Vol. 23. Short orchestral works
- Vol. 24. Music for string orchestra
- Vol. 25. Dream Children; The Wand of Youth (2001)
- Vol. 26. Severn Suite; Nursery Suite
- Vol. 27. Variations on an Original Theme (‘Enigma’) (1986)
- Vol. 28. Overtures
- [xviii]
- Vol. 29. Marches
Elgar Complete Edition

Vol. 32. The concertos (1988)
Vol. 34. Orchestrations of Bach, Handel and Chopin

Series V: Instrumental music
Vol. 35. Music for piano
Vol. 37. Music for violin
Vol. 39. Music for various ensembles
Vol. 40. Severn Suite (brass band)

Series VI: Sketches and fragments
Vol. 41. The Spanish Lady (1991)
Vol. 42. Piano Concerto, Symphony No. 3
Vol. 43. Miscellaneous sketches