



(The bronze relief of Dr Thiman, made by Linda Thimann Dewing, niece of the composer, owned by Caterham School, where Thiman was educated 1913 - 1917)

The Eric Thiman Collection

Newsletter No 2

This is the second Newsletter detailing the progress of the Eric Thiman Collection. If you know anyone else who would like to be included in emailing/ mailing list please send their details to Guy Turner (contact details at the end of the newsletter). Thank you.

THE ERIC THIMAN COLLECTION

Patrons

*Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, Principal, The Royal Academy of Music
The Very Revd Dr John Moses, Dean Emeritus of St Paul's Cathedral
The Revd Ian Howarth, Chair of the Methodist Church, Birmingham District*

*Frances Thiman, Eric Thiman's Niece
Paul Hale, Rector Chori, Southwell Minster
Guy Turner, Archivist*

PROGRESS WITH THE COLLECTION

Since the launch in October, the work of developing the collection has moved on a pace. What became very evident, as soon as cataloguing of Thiman's works got under way, was that Thiman was an *even more* prolific composer than we thought. There are already 1047 published titles in stock in the collection, and we have identified from the composer's own records, and from library and Performing Right Society catalogues about another 200 pieces we have yet to collect. How many other 20th Century composers had that number of pieces in print?

Our main source for all of the material remains Gerald Barnes, who has provided further materials, including some tantalising manuscripts which still have to be investigated and catalogued. However, we were also given a large donation by the Library of the Royal Academy of Music, where Dr Thiman taught for many years. They were able to let us have copies of everything of his of which they possessed more than one copy, and we are most grateful to Kathy Adamson, the RAM Librarian, for all her work in looking out all these pieces.

Our next important supporter is John Henderson, the librarian of the Royal School of Church Music, who has kindly agreed to provide copies of pieces we do not yet possess, from the RSCM library and from his own personal collection. Many thanks to him in anticipation.

Once we have the pieces from the RSCM, we plan to purchase copies of all remaining missing pieces that are still in print. At that point we will see what is still missing, and the approach the copyright libraries (who should have a copy of everything) to fill the gaps.

One interesting aspect of Dr Thiman's work that has come to light is a small number of early songs, published under the name of Eric Harding (Harding was his middle name). These include parlour ballads in the Ivor Novello style, and some jingoistic songs – one of which (we can see from the British Library catalogue) is called *When the Kaiser gets to Paris* and was published in 1916 - when Thiman was only 16! It will be interesting to investigate these further.

A particular pleasure during the process of collecting together the music has been making contact with some of Dr Thiman's friends and associates, in particular (in addition to those mentioned in the first newsletter) sisters Jean and Ann Phillips, who both wrote the words for many of Thiman's songs and partsongs.

PERFORMANCES

Numerous performances of Thiman's Music have happened as a spin-off from the Collection. Nottingham Bach Choir included *The Bell Carol* in their carol concert. Southwell Orchestral Society performed the Suite *Highland Scenes*, (in a concert in which the choir of St Peter's Ravenshead also performed two Thiman anthems). The orchestra enjoyed this so much that they are now planning to perform Thiman's orchestral march *Stirling Castle*.

In August, the St Michael's Singers will be including Thiman's anthem *O Father, who didst all things make*, in one of the service they are singing at Southwell Minster. In next year's Southwell Music Festival, it is planned to have a song and piano music recital as part of the Fringe – we also hope to re-mount the 2014 exhibition, and include an article in the Festival Souvenir Programme.

There have also been a couple of recent recordings, both with Priory Records, and both coming out shortly. Simon Hogan (on the Minster Quire Organ) recorded *Meditation on the Irish Tune Slane, Pavane and Postlude Alla Marcia*, and the Southwell Cathedral Choir included *O that men would praise the Lord* in its CD of psalms setting.

It is hoped that we might be able to make a CD of Thiman's Music with Priory at some point in the future.

We would love to hear from anyone involved in any performances of Thiman's music. We have some choral sets available, if anyone is in need. People are welcome to borrow these (postage only payable). Here are a few of the titles:

Choral Works (Christmas)

A Christmas Carol Sequence
A Christmas Triad
The Nativity
The Three Ships

Choral Works (non-Christmas)

A Spring Garland
Ring Out Ye Crystal Spheres
The Earth is the Lord's
The High Tide
The Last Supper

Anthems

Glory to God in the Highest
Who would True Valour See

Carols

The Bell Carol
Madonna and Child (SATB unaccompanied version)

Plus several chamber-choir-sized sets of partsongs

RESEARCH



David Dewar (above) has been accepted by Bristol University to do research (eventually aiming at a PhD) into Thiman. He has already been to Southwell to visit the Collection. David is a conductor, composer and organist living and working in Wiltshire: he is Director of Music at St Andrew's Church, Chippenham; of the Musica Vera chamber choir of Cheltenham; and of Schola of Wessex. He is currently seeking funding for this research, and the Collection is supporting him. However he needs further funds, and if anyone feels they would like to donate to funding his research they can either make a donation through the Collection's funds (cheques payable to Southwell Minster Choirs Association and endorsed on the back with 'Eric Thiman Collection') or by going to the crowd-funding site, at

<https://hubbub.net/p/davidsresearchatbristol/>

where you can also find further details of David's plans. We wish him very good luck with his fund-raising and look forward to supporting him when the research gets under way.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

We plan another edition of this Newsletter towards the end of the year. If anyone wishes to contribute any personal reminiscences of Dr Thiman, it would be nice to include some. Please send via the contact details below.

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