



Dr Thiman around 1960
The image used on the cover of the new CD of his choral music

The Eric Thiman Collection

Newsletter No 4

This is the fourth 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, former Rector Chori, Southwell Minster
Guy Turner, Archivist*

NEW CD OF THIMAN'S CHORAL MUSIC NOW AVAILABLE

In April and May the recording sessions for the new CD promoted by the Collection, took place.



The Tudor Singers, conducted by Guy Turner, with John Wright at the organ, recorded ten anthems and two organ pieces at the Priory Church of Deeping St James, in Lincolnshire.

*Morning Hymn – I praised the earth – A Morning Prayer – Who would true valour see –
There is a stream – Fight the good fight – Lord, think on me – seek ye the Lord – Let Thy
merciful ears, O Lord – Te Deum in D flat – Scherzetto for Flutes – March for a Pageant*



The Eric Thimans Singers, the Junior Choir of Caterham School in Surrey (Thiman's own school), conducted by Annie Ingrassia, with Adam Assen at the piano, recorded eight partsongs in the school hall.

The man in the moon – Evening in the birchpath – Away to Rio – The path to the moon – She walks in beauty – The Swans – Madonna and Child – I wandered, lonely as a cloud

Away to Rio, incidentally, has the distinction of being Thiman's only piece ever performed at a Prom.

The recordings went very well and all involved are very pleased with the result. Dorothy Webster Thomas (lead soprano in Thiman's choir at the City Temple, and close friend of the Thiman's) writes: *The CD of Eric's music is beautiful. May I congratulate you and everyone connected with the production of it. The choir sings beautifully, with expressive words....I loved it all....I will write to the children's choir conductor too. Eric would have loved their singing....I am sure people hearing the CD will love Eric's music'.*

The CDs are available now. They cost £12.50 each, plus £1.50 post and packing

You can order a copy of the CD as follows:

Email your order to Guy Turner at guyscottturner@gmail.com and pay by bank transfer to Southwell Minster Choirs Association 60-20-15 68034652

Or post your order, and a cheque made out to 'Southwell Minster Choirs Association', with 'Eric Thiman Collection' written on the back, to

Guy Turner, 11 The Old Silk Mill, Maythorne, Southwell, Notts NG25 0RS
(NB: Guy has changed his address since the last newsletter).

LEAFLETS

The collection has produced a leaflet about Dr Thiman and the work of the Collection. For people receiving the newsletter by email, a pdf is attached. If you get the newsletter in the post, then a leaflet is enclosed. If anyone would like some of the leaflets to distribute or place in a library etc, please let Guy Turner know.

PROGRESS WITH THE COLLECTION

Since the previous newsletter, more progress has been made in building towards a complete collection of Dr Thiman's work. Music Sales (the company that nowadays includes Novello, Thiman's main publishers, plus a number of others who handled his work) has now provided a copy of everything they have in print and in their archive. Many thanks to their staff for their hours of delving into their back-catalogue. A first visit has also been made to the British Library, where another thirty or so pieces were scanned. This, together with occasional donation, brings the current total of piece in the collection to 1165.

At the end of this Newsletter you will see the list, as we have it, of all the 157 remaining pieces that we believe existed but of which we have no copy. Please have a look at this, and let us know if you have any information about any of the pieces. Comments such as the following would be really useful:

1. This piece is also known by another title, which may already be in the collection
2. I think this piece is by (eg) Alec Rowley and not by Thiman
3. I remember this piece – the words were by..... and it was published by.... in the (eg) 1940s
4. So-and-so church choir used to have copies of this, and here is a contact.....
5. I have a copy of this and here it is!

All help with the remaining items gratefully received!

WHEN THE KAISER GETS TO PARIS

The visit to the British Library answered one question: Thiman really did publish his first piece when he was only sixteen! This is a humorous, patriotic song called 'When the Kaiser Gets to Paris', published in 1916 in the middle of the war. It is the only known piece published under his original spelling – Thimann. After that he dropped the second n, feeling that a less German-sounding name would be useful (the royal family did something similar!). The words of this song were by W. Allen Barker, who also wrote the words to all of the songs Thiman subsequently published as Eric Harding – songs which he evidently regarded as his 'parlour songs'. It has to be said that neither the words or the music are their best work!

SOUTHWELL FESTIVAL 2016

At the 2016 Southwell Music Festival, there was (a) an article in the Souvenir Programme about Thiman; (b) a small exhibition about his life and work; and (c) a recital of his songs and piano duets. The latter was given by three Nottinghamshire singers: Harriet Astbury (Soprano),

Emma Rae Ward (Mezzo) and Stephen Cooper (Baritone), with brother Edward and Alexander Turner at the piano. The programme, which was well performed and was warmly received by the audience, was as follows:

Sacred Songs - Harriet Astbury

Madonna and Child - Flower of Heaven - The Birds - Jesus the very thought of thee -
The Wilderness

Piano Duets

Suite: On Brockham Green

Secular Songs - Emma Rae Ward

Sleeping - Where go the boats? - I love all graceful things - I wandered lonely as a cloud -
The Rainbow

Piano Duets

1. Greenacre
2. Sligo Reel

Songs composed as Eric Harding - Stephen Cooper

Down a quiet little street - Out of the twilight - When I have passed - Ev'ry Sunday morning -
Aylesbury Ducks

The list above may well jog some memories of those reading this newsletter.

THIMAN TALKS

Following his talk to the Lincoln Organists' Association, Guy Turner has given two further talks in Southwell, and has been invited to talk to the Cambridge Organists' Association (8th April at 2.00 – venue tba in central Cambridge).

DAVID DEWAR'S RESEARCH

David Dewar's research in to Thiman's work, and place in the musical world continue. He writes:

It's interesting, and informative, to note during my research some occasional instances in the wider archive which shed light on Dr Thiman's character. There is a general lack of personal papers of his, and therefore these insights, small in themselves, assume potentially great significance. A few come to mind instantly – for example, his self-deprecating remarks to David Cairns, when the latter was interviewing him at home for an article to be published in Music in Education magazine. This took place in 1955. Cairns asked how EHT had become Professor of Harmony and Counterpoint at the RAM. Thiman's response is both instructive and illustrative: I got on the staff of the Academy through sheer luck, I wrote an anthem which was chosen to be sung by massed choirs at the Crystal Palace, and I was asked to play for it. At the dinner afterwards I happened to sit next to [Academy Principal] Sir John McEwen. We got talking and he asked me whether I would like to be Professor of Harmony and Composition at the Academy. I said that I would."

Cairns goes on, in the same article, to say “... his [shy, self-deprecating] manner was misleading; he was of course genuinely modest about his achievements, and concerned with the present not with the past ...; but his diffidence concealed a remarkable confidence, quiet but tenacious, a determination which carried him unswervingly through the early years and is with him still.”

There is naturally, in any such article celebrating the life and achievements of a composer (the article was one of a series of sketches entitled, “They write your music”) an element of hagiography. Nevertheless it is in snippets such as these from which Thiman’s character and motivations can be discerned. I note that, though the manner of the invitation to take up the role discussed was described in a light-hearted manner, and the milieu was social, Thiman’s acceptance was apparently certain and ready; truly quiet but tenacious.

On looking through documents related to Eric Thiman held by the BBC’s Written Archives at Caversham, some elements stand out. One is that Thiman was inclined to be politely but firmly combative whenever he felt that the BBC was not treating him or his submitted works with the response he felt was deserved. One such incident relates to fees paid to experts contracted for particular radio programmes. In this instance, he wrote to suggest that as his fee for such work had not changed for many years, the BBC might like to increase it. They agreed.

Another set of incidents related to the BBC’s having set up a vetting panel, usually of three members, who would opine on the suitability or otherwise of works submitted for broadcast. Thiman often, it seems, sent his compositions, sometimes as a result of recommendations from acquaintances who were themselves connected with the BBC. This panel appears to have come into existence some years after Thiman’s first appearances as performer or composer on the airwaves. Rejections by the panel, with no explanation given to the submitter, were fairly frequent. In one case a rejection was accompanied by the single word ‘No!’, in another with three words, ‘Not good enough’. The submitter was also supposed to be unaware of the names of members of the panel, all correspondence being handled by a BBC functionary. One wonders, however, whether this was as watertight as intended – members tended to be the ‘great and good’ of the British art-music firmament, and were thus Thiman’s colleagues.

MEMORIES OF DR THIMAN

Although there is no room in this Newsletter for further memories of Dr Thiman, we do intend to print more in future – new reminiscences would be most welcome.

Contact details:

Guy Turner

guyscottturner@gmail.com

11 The Old Silk Mill, Maythorne, Southwell, Notts NG25 0RS

THIMAN COLLECTION MISSING PIECES – In case any jog your memories!

A Celtic lullaby
A Hymn of Freedom SSA
A sequence in miniature
Adam Buckham O
Adeste Fideles
Advent
Air arr from Anna Magdalena Book
Air arr from Rinaldo
Air arr from Rodelinda Handel
Air with Variation
Alla Pastorella
Alla sarabanda
An English Garland
An Evening Prayer
An Irish Pastoral
An Irish Pastoral
Andante con Moto
Andante Piacevole
Aria (Bach Arr.) prob saem as Air above
As Pants the Hart
Aylesbury Duck (published as Eric Harding)
B and Brass (can't read - approximation) Bold as Brass?
Baban Mair
benedictus es Domine in D
Benedictus in E flat
Benedictus in F
Bethlehem Song
Buttercups and Daisies
By Verdant Pastures
Cebell
Chatter Box
Children's Suite
Christus Onze Heer Verre Trad arr
Cock-a-doodle do
Coming
Communion Service in D Minor
Communion Service in E flat
Congregational Anthem Book
Congregational Praise solfa version
D flat service - is there a benedictus - we have rest
Daisies
Dance for a Children's Party

Dance Suite
Dily's Wamal
Divertimento for Strings
Duettino and Punch's March
Elegiac Melody Full Orchestra (we have strings version
Eternal God from whose Eternal Love
Every Sunday Morning (published as Eric Harding) in C
Fair Clatto (can't read - approximation)
Fanfare
Fanfare for Organ - maybe same as above
Fanfares and processions
Finale (Mendelssohn credit)
Finale in D Minor
Fittleworth Fair - strings and organ
Five Carols

Four Occasional Pieces for Organ
Gathered Together
Gavotte (three listings in PRS - how many pieces?)
Go Lovely Rose female voices
Go Lovely Rose male voices
Homeward
Hop o' my thumb
Hymn of praise to the creator SA
Hymn of praise to the creator SATB
Hymn of praise to the creator SAB
In the Old Church
Irish Fantasy
It is not the ear
Jesus the Very thought publ Gray
Larghetto arr from Mozart
Larghetto e Teneramente
Legende
Llongau
March from Rodrigo (Handel arr)
March Stirling Casle organ version
March Windsor castle organ version
Menuet
Miniatures Four
Minuet arr Handel
Miss Muffet
Moderato Risoluto
Moon Daisies Unison versionj
Musik im Gottesdienst
My master hath a garden high voice in G

New Nursery Rhymes vol 2
Nightingale
Now thank we all our God
O brother man anthem version
O God of Love
O How could man betray T...
O Lord Protect
O No John solfa version
O sing the mercies of our lord
Once Upon a Time
Onwards (published as Eric Harding) in C
Out of the Twilight (published as Eric Harding) in D
Over the Mountains arr of 16th C song
Pavan(?a) Antico organ manuals
Pets Corner -
Poco Scherzando
Postlude on Duke Street organ
Praise the Lord of Heaven
Prelude
Preludes
Put peace into each other
Ring Joyous Bells
Risoluto
Round the Earth
Schaferlied arr from Haydn
Scherzo
School for Scandal
Scottish Interlude
Seascape
Second Piano to Haydn's Sonata No 7 in D
Serenade (I arise from Dreams)
Shenendoah + Billy Boy also listed as Two Pieces
Sing. Ause (can't read - approximation)
Song in Solitude
Song of Movement
Spendthrift
St Instay (can't read - approximation)
Suite from Purcell's Bonduca - Overture listed separately
Sussex Milkmaids string orchestra
The Coming of Spring
The Eternal God is thy refuge
The Flowers of the Forest arr SATB
The King's Men
The Little Flowers S+T duet

The Piper Pipes a Merry Tune
This is the day SATB version
Three Basque Carols
Three Introsits (To Thy Name Lord Jesus) sic
Three Pieces for organ Intermezzo in Gm, Carillon and Sortie
Three Quiet Voluntaries In modo Sarabanda, Meditation on a theme by JS Bach, Slow Air and Variations
Three Rounds or Canons
Thy Kingdom Come
To Music to becalm his fever arr of Walter Adrian duet version
Tom Tinker

Trumpet Tune arr from Purcell
Tuar Lloer
Twelve concluding Amens as used at the City Temple
Twenty Faux-Bourbons
Two English Dances trio
Two fanfares for organ
Two short anthems or introsits
Two Songs publ arnold
Variations on The Vicar of Bray
Viens Aurore
Violin Sonata
Virgin and Child
When I have passed (published as Eric Harding) in and in F
When I survey the wondrous cross
When the Lord of the Earth
Why weep alas
Windsor Castle or March: Windsor Castle orchestra and military band version