

BANBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Leader : Geoffrey Kent)

on

Saturday 6th July at 8.00 p.m. 1985

in

Bloxham Parish Church

Conductor

Philip Shaw

Programme

National Anthem

Festival Overture, Op.96

Shostakovich

The mood of this piece is simply one of unalloyed joy. Brilliantly written, it suggests unmistakably the care free jubilation of crowds enjoying themselves at a fair or festival, as befits a work written in 1954 for the 37th anniversary of the October Revolution.

Brandenburg Concerto No.3 in G Major

Bach

The 6 concertos known as the *Brandenburg Concertos* were written by Bach when he was Kapellmeister to the Prince of Anhalt-Cothen. These six *concerti grossi* were commissioned by the Margrave of Brandenburg about 1718 and sent to him by Bach with a dedicatory letter in 1721. It is thought quite likely that some may have been written earlier and therefore they were not conceived as a set. The Margrave had asked for some works for his private orchestra but there is no record of his having any of them performed. After his death they were found in his library apparently unused and were sold as a job lot for a few shillings, without Bach's name being mentioned.

The third concerto is unusual in that it has no *concertante* group of soloists. Instead, Bach has written for nine string parts : three violins, three violas and three cellos. There is also a continuo part. The instruments are frequently used antiphonally, thus providing the contrast that is normally produced in a concerto grosso by alternating *ripieno* and *tutti* parts. There are three movements, the first in ritornello form being separated from the last movement, a gigue, by a cadence in E minor. Tovey suggests that Bach improvised a slow movement on the harpsichord and these two string chords were the link between it and the final movement.

Suite No.2 in F, Op 28b

March; Song Without Words; Song of the Blacksmith;
Fantasia on the Dargason.

Holst

Born in Cheltenham in 1874, Holst undertook his serious musical studies at the Royal College of Music in London. For a number of years after graduation he made his living as an orchestral trombonist, then took up a school teaching career (from 1903) which continued until his death in 1934. The essential "playability" and sonic effectiveness of much of Guston Holst's music stems in large measure from the enormous amount of writing and teaching he carried on through the years with school and other amateur groups. It was in 1905 that Holst became swept up in the rediscovery of English folk song sparked by Cecil Sharp and the young Ralph Vaughan Williams. The English folk tradition, the mysticism of the East and the poetry of Walt Whitman and Robert Bridges seem to have been the major sources of Holst's musical language. Two Holstian "finger prints" unmistakable to any listener include his love for a sturdy "good tune" (often featuring his beloved trombone) and his superbly effective use of a "marching" *Ostinato* bass. The second suite for band in F is based on Hampshire Folk fiddle tunes. It was the first of a long time of similar folk song pieces for both band and orchestra to come from the pens of England's composers.

I N T E R V A L

Symphony No.5 in C Minor Op 67. Beethoven

Allegro con brio ; Andante con moto ; Allegro ; Allegro.

The symphony No.5 in C minor (1807) may very well be the most famous symphony ever written and the opening theme of its first movement (which appears without any introduction) the most celebrated symphony theme ever conceived. Beethoven himself was reputed to have told his friend Anton Schindler in explaining the meaning of those four notes. "Thus Knocks Fate at the door." The work was produced at a time when Beethoven was composing prolifically and is further proof of the musical 'change' that had taken place in his style after the *Eroica* in 1803-04. He was constantly fighting a battle against deafness but it was a

losing battle and Fate itself took a hand and forced him to retire before the performance of his *5th Piano Concerto* in 1809. This period was the 'time' of Beethoven and for any concerts to be a success a Beethoven work was a must. What a performance it must have been on the night of the 22nd December 1808, when the *5th Symphony* made its debut along with the *6th Symphony* in the same programme. To brighten the evening's enjoyment the solo part of his *4th Piano Concerto* was performed by Beethoven himself. Although it was a momentous evening it was also tinged with sadness, especially for Beethoven for it was the last time that he dared risk a personal appearance as a performer. Whereas he triumphed in music, Fate had triumphed against him.

The 5th Symphony is a truly magnificent work in four movements and it is interesting to note that there is no pause between the scherzo and the final movement.

Our grateful thanks are due to: The Vicar and Church Wardens
Robert Gilchrist

and all our Patrons for their continued support.

Anyone wishing to join the orchestra should contact the
Hon. Secretary, R. Barnett (Banbury 57314)

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