British wind Music Before 1981

A personal look at twenty-four years of repertoire development

Tim Reynish July 24th 2004

..I am sure that our English masters in Musick (either for Vocal or Instrumental Musick are not in Skill and Judgement inferiour to any Foreigners whatsoever... *John Playford, in his Introduction to Choice Ayres & Songs, 1681*

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CHAPTER 1
THE BEGINNINGS OF WIND MUSIC - RENAISSANCE & BAROQUE

MUSIC ON THE BATTLEFIELD

It is easy to forget the vital part played by musicians in war throughout the ages, and the subsequent role of military music in the development of the wind of both band and symphony orchestra. One of the earliest accounts in English history of military music is of the Battle of Halidon Hill in 1333, the first time that instruments were recorded as part of the army. As the ballad ran:

This was do with mery sownde,

With pipes, trompes and tabers therto,

And loud clarionnes thei blew also.

Drums and trumpets had been used in battle from time immemorial, but in the Middle Ages, the Crusades had had a particular impact on Western music, through the introduction of a wide range of instruments in the Saracen armies; pipes, shawms, drums and kettledrums, cymbals and bells must have made a terrifying noise.

THE FIRST MUSICIANS' UNION

The Middle Ages is one of the richest periods in the development of the arts, but whereas architects, painters and a handful of poets and writers left us great examples of their industry, musical traditions were largely lost. Until the invention of printing in the 16th century, music was largely improvised, passed down through generations in the same way as the great epic poems and songs. The key figures in the music of the Middle Ages were the minstrels and jongleurs, who formed themselves into unions or guilds as early as 1288, when the Nicolai-Brüderschaft was founded in Vienna. They were versatile: *I am a fiddler, I play the bagpipe and flute, harp, chifonie and giga, psaltery and rote, and I can sing a song as well* boasts one*.*

Gradually these itinerant musicians became an important part of community life; in England groups of civic minstrels were called "waits", the equivalent of the Italian civic pipers, German Stadtpfeifer or town musicians. Gradually too, musicians gained respectability and subsequent employment in the church, while at court they naturally enhanced pomp and circumstance.. Performance of Renaissance and indeed much Baroque music languished until the latter half of the twentieth century, when scholarship and investigations led to the professional development of authentic performance of "Early Music". The late David Munrow led the field, and his book illustrated with a set of records, *Instruments of the Middle Ages* published by OUP in 1976, reads like a detective story, piecing together the musical practice of four centuries from contemporary pictures and writings and from the few examples of pre-1600 instruments extant.

Some idea of the wealth of music making in the 16th century can be culled from contemporary accounts. A procession to honour Charles V of Spain had no less than fifty trumpeters, while in England the collection of instruments of Henry VIII included 154 flutes, 22 cornetts, 21 crumhorns, 17 shawms and 11 bassoon-type instruments. There is a great deal of pictorial evidence of the use of wind, brass and percussion, perhaps best shown in the magnificent woodcuts of 1512, "The Triumph of Maximilian", typifying all of the exuberance of the Renaissance.

Some of the earliest permanent public groups of wind were consorts of shawms or of two cornetts and three sackbuts. These proliferated, carrying out civic duties throughout Europe, and every town had a group of Stadtpfeifer, many until the turn of the nineteenth century when revolution and legislation did away with these "waits". A great deal of music for five instruments, either recorders, viols, or sackbuts and cornets, can be found in modern editions, including works by Holborne, Brade, Susato and Pezel.

THE VENETIAN SCHOOL & MONTEVERDI

Instrumentally, the climax of this period is undoubtedly found in the canzonas and ricecares of Italy of the late 16th Century and in particular those of the Venetian School. The great antiphonal works of Giovani Gabrieli and his contemporaries were conditioned by the architecture of St. Mark's Cathedral, with galleries surrounding, each with an organ. It is convenient to cite his **Sonate pian e forte** (1597) as the first work specifying dynamics as well as the orchestration of two choirs, one with violin and 3 sackbuts, one with cornett and 3 sackbuts. The echo effects of his polychoral works were to imbue the Baroque repertoire for a century and a half, through the great works of Schutz to the massive double choruses of Bach, and his experiments with instrumental colour must have been a source of inspiration for Monteverdi.

By 1600, already experiments were underway with simple monodic settings of Greek plays, but nobody could have anticipated the sudden flowering of opera in the hands of Montgeverdi, who brought his considerable experience in the late renaissance madrigal to combine with the new baroque style, and in 1606 was able to write the first masterpiece in this genre, **Orfeo**, with an orchestra of over 40 instruments, the earliest opera in today's repertoire.

DEVELOPMENT OF BAROQUE INSTRUMENTS

The 17th Century was one of constant experiment and change in instrumental music, experiments carried out for both civilian and military purposes. As Raoul Camus points out in his fascinating book *Military Music of the American Revolution*, war up to and during the Middle Ages was an haphazard affair, with soldiers engaged in hand to hand fighting. What little organisation there was would stem from drum beats used to give signals; later during the 17th century. as a more disciplined teamwork developed, so the army needed marches, and bands became more necessary, first with drums to which fifes and bagpipes were added.

The concept of shawms and drums seems also to have come from the Turkish Janissaries, first adopted in France and then later in England, with the establishment of 6 "hoboys" attached to the Horse Grenadiers in 1678. The old Renaissance instruments had been made in one piece, the new Baroque were generally jointed in three, with a possibility for greater accuracy in tuning, and greater flexibility of dynamics. Gradually recorders gave way to flutes, shawms to oboes, dulcians to bassoons.

THE COURT OF LOUIS XIV

Military music of the century is summed up in the Philidor Collection of 1705, a large body of military music by Lully, Philidor father and son, Hoteterre and others, with music for oboes in four parts and intricate parts for side drum and kettle drums. These were the musicians and instrument makers who spearheaded the first big technological revolution in the late 17th century at the Court of Louis XIV, and under the Sun King's court musicians, we see the growth of ballet, opera and orchestral music with mixed bands of strings and wind.

To escape from the politics and intrigues of Paris, Louis moved his court to Versailles whenever possible, eventually even transferring the seat of government there, along with the heady delights of theatre and opera. He appointed Molière and Racine to write plays and devise ballets and entertainments. Music was provided by Lully, Delalande and Couperin the Great, and they had at their disposal a musical establishment including the musicians of the Chapel, the Chamber, and the Ecurie as well as the soloists of the Royal Academy, each with its own personnel and place in the entertainments of the day.; Les Grands Hautbois, a group of twleve wind, is one of the most significant groups of the period, rivalling the highly disciplined "twenty-four violins". This ensemble was to be lampooned in the traditional nursery rhyme of "Four and Twenty Blackbirds, Baked in a Pie", a satirical piece of doggerel attacking the "Kings Violins", imitated in England by Charles 11 after the Restoration of 1660.

At first Lully provided incidental music for the plays of Moliere, but from 1669, public taste turned to Italian opera, and Lully wrote an opera each year. With the lyric theatre came the need for a richer palette of orchestral colour; horns were introduced for hunting scenes, and trumpets and drums for martial episodes.

WIND IN THE LATE BAROQUE

Throughout the Baroque, the shape of the orchestra was left to the requirements of the occasion and the whim of the composer. Bach's six Brandenburg Concerti (1723) are perhaps typical. The third and sixth are written for solo string groups, the other four have a ripieno accompaniment of strings and continue (harpischord with cello) to a wide range of differing ensembles, the first with a solo piccolo violin, two horns and three oboes, the second with a solo quartet of violin, flute, oboe and trumpet, the fourth with violin and two flutes and the fifth with violin, flute and harpsichord.

However, while in orchestral music this somewhat chaotic state of affairs held sway, the military bands of the middle and late barqoue were already developing in embryo the wind groupings of the classical orchestra. In England, one of the initiatives of Thomas Cromwell's Commonwealth had been the formation of the New Model Army, which in 1660 swore allegiance to Charles 11, forming among other regiments the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards. Drummers were attached from the outset, in 1662 a fifer was added, and in 1685 a warrant was signed by the King authorising the maintenance of twelve hautbois, clearly in imitation of Louis' "Grands Hautbois". By 1725 a pair of horns had been added, and by 1748 the Coldstream Guards had an octet.

The first recorded example in England of what must have been a "classical" orchestra is the advertisement for a concert by The Buffs, 3rd Regiment of Foot, at the White Hart in Lewes on 29th December 1749; there were ten items, four described as *Symphony with French Horns*, with two concertos for Hautboy, one for the German Flute, one for Violin, and solos for the French Horn and the Trumpet. Tickets were not cheap, 1s 6d, but since the regiment inspection report of 1785 notes briefly *No Band*, the longest surviving British band is almost certainly that of the Royal Regiment of Artillery.

THE ROYAL ARTILLERY BAND

Formed in 1716, the regiment was on active service in Minden in 1762 during the Seven Years War, when the commanding officer, Lt Colonel Philips, decided that the long winter evenings would be enlivened by the appointment of a band. He proposed the following:

i. The band to consist of eight men, who must also be capable to play upon the violoncello, bass, violin and flute, as other common instruments.

ii. The regiment's musick must consist of two trumpets, two French horns, two bassoons, and four hautbois or clarinetts; these instruments to be provided by the regiment, but kept in repair by the head musician.

Articles of Agreement for the formation of the Royal Artillery Band, 1762.

Already pay differentials were in force since it was stipulated that *So long as the artillery remains in Germany each musician to have ten dollars per month, but the two French horns to have twelve dollars per month.*

It was later agreed that *the players should be men whose regularity, sobriety, good conduct and honesty can most strictly be depended upon; that are most remarkably clean and neat in their dress; that have an approved ear and taste for music, and a method of teaching; without speaking harshly to the youths or hurrying them on too fast.*

From these militaristic beginnings, what was perhaps the greatest development of repertoire of the wind ensemble took place in the latter part of the 18th century, under the enlightened patronage of courts throughout Europe but particularly in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The culmination was in the great masterpieces of Mozart, the Serenades in C Minor, Eb and Bb, and the lesser works in similar vein by Haydn, Beethoven, Krommer and Hummel, but scores of works by lesser composers exist, especially of operatic arrangements by Wendt, Triebensee, Wendlak and other players.

CHAPTER 2
THE CLASSICAL HARMONIE

There was music every day, during dinner, and in the evening at the inn where I lodged, which was the Golden Ox; but it was usually bad, particularly that of a band of wind instruments, which constantly attended the ordinary. This consisted of French horns, clarinets, hautboys and bassoons; all so miserably out of tune that I wished them a hundred miles off.

Dr Burney, travelling through Europe to research his General History of Music, was quite scathing about the background music which he heard in his lodgings in Vienna at the beginning of September, 1770. His feelings are clearly similar to those of us who object to the all-pervasive musak in our restaurants and pubs. But the vital importance of music as part of everyday life in the late eighteenth century can be gauged by a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to a friend in Europe at the height of the American Revolution, quoted by David Whitwell in "A Concise History of the Wind Band":

I retain for instance among my domestic servants a gardner..., weaver..., a cabinet maker... and a stone cutter... to which I would add a vigneron. In a country where, like yours, music is cultivated and practised by every class of men, I suppose there might be found persons of those trades who could perform on the French horn, clarinet or hautboy and bassoon, so that one might have a band of two French horns, two clarinets and hautboys and a bassoon without enlarging their domest (sic) expences.

This then was the cultural background to the short but most glorious period in the history of the wind ensemble. Vienna was full of music:

During the summer months, if the weather is fine, one comes almost daily serenades performed in the streets... However, these do not, as in Italy or Spain, consist simply of a singer accompanied by a guitar or mandora... here serenades are not a means for declaring one's love, for which there are a thousand more comfortable opportunities; but these serenades consist of trios, quartets, mostly from operas... played by wind instruments.

Vienna Theatre-Almanac, 1794.

The British scholar Roger Hellyer, in the 1980 New Grove, states that the term "Harmonie" in its most clearly defined sense was used only from the mid-18th century until the 1830's, and is applied to the wind bands of the European aristocracy. He says that *to translate "Harmonie" as "wind band" is vague, and as "military band" is wrong*. In general we take it to mean music for three or four pairs of wind written in classical style and forms.

The heyday of the Harmonie was from 1782, in Vinenna. Mozart in January had written to his father to say that Prince Lichtenstein hoped to form a Harmonie, and that he, Mozart hoped to be appointed composer. In the event the Prince did not engage Mozart and did not form his ensemble until 1789, but meanwhile on 1st April Emperor Joseph II set up his own Harmonie, the Kaiserlich-Koniglich Harmonie. The oboists were Triebensee and Wendt, both experienced composers and arrangers, the clarinets were Johann and Anton Stadler, the bassoonists were Krazner and Drobney and horns were Rupp and Eisen, all members of the Burgtheatrer opera. Thus the full Harmonie Octet came into fashion, imitated immediately in courts throughout the Hapsburg Empire. The repertoire was drawn from two sources, arrangements of popular operas, a genre which would sustain the military band repertoire for the next two hundred years, and original works.

These original works have a number of generic titles: serenade - divertimento - partita - cassation.- suite. The general shape consisted of a first movement in a rudimentary sonata form, a pair of minuet and trios framing an arioso-type slow movement, ending with a fast finale often in rondo form.

WIND MUSIC OF MOZART

The masterpieces of the period are without doubt by Mozart. The American scholar Michael Votta divides his oeuvre into three periods. During the first, 1773-1777, he wrote a number of Divertimenti, two probably composed in Naples and scored for pairs of oboes, cor anglais, horns and bassoons, and a further series written in Salzburg for pairs of oboes, horns and bassoons. It is almost certain that a Divertimento for two flutes, five trumpets and timpani is spurious.

The three great Serenades were composed in Vienna. The Serenade in Eb K 370a was first written in 1781, for a sextet, pairs of clarinets, bassoons and horns, the Octet version followed in July 1782, perhaps re-composed for the Emperor's Harmonie. It was the sextet version which undoubtedly caused Mozart to write to his father on November 3, 1781:

At 11o'clock p.m. I received an evening serenade of two clarinets, two horns and two bassoons - and to be sure one of my own compositions... the six gentlemen who played are poor beggars, but they play well together...

The **Serenade in C minor** K.384a probably dates from July 1782; it is in four movements, and was later re-written as a string quintet. Traditionally the **Serenade in Bb, Gran Partita** K. 370a has been considered to be the first of the three, but recent research suggests that it was written late 1783 or early 1784 and probably premiered at a benefit concert for Anton Stadler on March 23rd, 1784. This is sometimes known as the **Serenade for Thirteen Wind**, a misnomer since the bass part is most certainly for double bass, not contra bassoon, as at times it is marked pizzicato. The additional instruments to the standard octet are a pair of basset horns, an extra pair of horns and the double-bass. The work is cast on a large-scale in seven movements; largo/allegro - minuet and two trios - adagio - minuet and two trios - romance - theme and variations - finale. New critical editions of all of the works of Mozart are now available from Bärenreiter.

Mozart's final works for wind include Divertimenti for two clarinets and bassoon, Duets for two horns, and a number of ravishing notturni for three voices and three basset horns. Research still continues apace, and the recent find in the library at Donaueschingen of parts to a wind version of **Die Entfuhrung aus dem Serail** might well be the "lost" version by Mozart himself. The Dutch scholar Bastiaan Blomhert puts up a very good case for Mozart as the arranger; certainly Wendt, Sedlak, Rosinak and Triebensee never used the wind octet with as much imagination as the unknown composer of this arrangement.

GROWING REPERTOIRE

The three Serenades of Mozart are undoubted masterpieces, but in the past half-century an enormous amount of new music has come to light. As well as the works of Haydn and Beethoven, chamber music by Hummel, Krommer, Myslivecek, Masek, Salieri , Druschetzky and many others have been published. Much of the rearly esearch into the Harmonie was carried out by Roger Hellyer for his Oxford dissertation "Harmoniemusik: Music for small wind band in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries" (1973) and by David Whitwell, while more recently Jon Gillaspie, Marshall Stonham and David Clark have completed three volumes on this repertoire.

The results of twenty years of research in the libraries of Europe have been painstakingly catalogued, checked and written about in three volumes, one a catalogue of works and their locations, a companion *Thematic Catalogue*, and a *Wind Ensemble Sourcebook and Biographical Guide*. In all, they mention some 12,000 works by over 2,000 composers, including details of hundreds of operatic arrangements. Their enthusiasm for the project is evident, and although the critical reader will find inconsistencies and lacunae, the books are essential for our knowledge and undertanding of a vast new area of performing material from the 18th and 19th centuries.

CHAPTER 3
REVOLUTION: LIBERTY, FRATERNITY and EQUALITY

While the Harmonie continued to flourish in the more sheltered courts of the German states and the Hapsburg Empire, in France the Revolution of 1789 was to have far-reaching consequences. As David Whitwell puts it in his excellent book "Band Music of the French Revolution"

On the day the Bastille fell, the word "band" in France meant the eight to twelve member ensemble familiar to military music in England, Austria, Prussia and America of the same period. Little more than a year later there was in Paris a full-time, paid "concert" band of at least 45 members.

Under the Revolution, music moved from the courts and churches into the streets; on July 14th 1790, the anniversary of the Fall of the Bastille was celebrated at the Champ de Mars with a spectacle for an audience of 400,000, for which a **Te Deum** was commissioned by Gossec, performed if contemporary press is to be believed by 1,200 musicians, including 300 drums, 300 wind instruments and 50 serpents. Despite a row in the press over whether it was appropriate to sing a "Te Deum" at such a peculiarly French festival, the event was an enormous success, so much so that by October the city of Paris had established a paid band, and on June 8th 1792, the General Council created a free music school of the Parisian National Guard with a distinguished staff led by Bernard Sarette; a payroll memorandum of 1793 includes Gossec and a number of distinguished wind players and composers such as Lefevre, Devienne, Blasius, Duverenoy, Gerber, Ozi, Gebauer and Catel.

David Whitwell paints a brilliant picture of the struggles, both political and musical, and perhaps the most striking fact is the extraordinary involvement of many of the leading composers of the day in the development of the young French Republic. Scarcely at any time since the Greek city states, have the arts and politics been so closely interwoven, and the great national fetes with thousands of performers carried the messages of Liberty, Fraternity and Equality. Finally, in 1795 a decree was made to establish a Conservatory of Music, the Paris Conservatoire, to teach six hundred pupils, free, to found a library of music and instruments, to provide musicians daily for the National Guard, and to celebrate the national festivals.

It is unfortunate that so little of this classical band repertoire is known today. Much of it can be obtained through W.I.N.D.S. David Whitwell's own publishing imprint, and a few other works are available in modern editions.

1790	Gossec	Marche Lugubre	Leduc
	Catel	Symphonie Militaire	E C Kerby
1792	Catel	Overture in C	Presser
1793	Gossec	Classic Overture in C	Mercury/Presser
1794	Gossec	Military Symphony in F	Mercury/Presser
	Jadin, Louis	Symphonie	Shawnee
	Mèhul	Overture in F	Peer-Southern
	Devienne	Overture	Friedrich Hofmeister
1795	Jadin, Hyacinthe	Overture in F	Franco Colombo

David Whitwell, Band Music of the French Revolution, Hans Schneider-Tutzing, 1979

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CHAPTER 4
THE NEW TECHNOLOGY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY& LOST OPPORTUNITIES

The influence of this musical explosion was felt in England, echoing the gradual change from a rural to an industrial society. The waits were dissolved, the Church musicians were replaced by organs, (even in Hardy's Mellstock), and by the second decade of the new century, factories and mines throughout Lancashire, Yorkshire and South Wales were forming bands to provide enjoyment and entertainment for their workers. In 1816 Peter Wharton's Band was founded in the village of Queensbury near Bradford, Yorkshire; two years later Clegg's Reed Band was started over the border in Lancashire. These were mixed brass and reed bands and remained so until the late forties, when under the influence of the Distin family, they and many other military bands became all brass.

John Distin was a trumpet virtuoso whose four sons were also brass players. When the youngest was but 12, the family began touring the British Isles, and in 1844 they travelled to Paris, playing a motley selection of slide-trumpet, cornet, trombone, key-bugle and French horn. Equipped with new saxhorns by Adolphe Sax, Distin's flair for publicity, allied to Adolphe Sax's advance technology saw the beginnings of a new era for valved brass instruments. In 1845, Distin became the agent for Sax's instruments in London, and eventually the firm was taken over by Henry who in 1853 provided a complete set of matching saxhorns for the Mossley Temperance Band; they easily won the first Belle Vue Contest, spelling the eclipse of the mixed reed bands. Wharton's and Clegg's bands became Black Dyke Mills and Besses o'th Barn respectively, and the great British brass movement was launched, with its rigid rules on instrumentation, its passion for contesting and its resultant high standards of performance.

There is no doubt that civil military bands flourished during the last century and well into this, but the brass band, with fewer digital problems for fingers gnarled by work at pit face or mill bench, and its simple system of one clef so that all instruments can be taught at one time, was an irresistible force which swept the military band into virtual obscurity.

Adolphe Sax played little part in the development of valve technology. The early experiments on a piston valve by Stozel and Bluhmel from 1814 were improved by Wieprecht and Moritz in 1835 and finally perfected by the French maker, Perinet. The rotary valve was largely the work of Riedl, and was patented in 1832.

Meanwhile, there was a similar technological development on all of the woodwind instruments, which was to drastically increase the expressive potential of the wind band and of course the symphony orchestra. Instrument makers worked alongside instrumental virtuosi , much as they had at the court of Louis XIV, but there are a handful of leading makers to whom we owe the instruments of today.

The flute was virtually re-designed by Theobald Boehm, and by 1847 he had launched an instrument with cylindrical tube, parabolic head, and enlarged toneholes which were covered by a new system of pads. Despite advocacy of the old-fashioned Viennese oboe by the first two professors of oboe at the Paris Conservatoire, their younger pupils had different ideas. Henri Brod began manufacturing oboes in 1839 and was followed by the Triébert family and their foreman, Lorée, who brought in various systems culminating in the "thumb-plate" and the conservatoire models of the 1870's. Their influence can also be found in the french bassoon system; by 1847, Jancourt, working with Triébert and Buffet-Crampon, had made a 22-key model bassoon which has been established as the standard French-system model, while in Germany Almanraeder and Heckel worked on the German model, with its wider bore, difference of placing of tone-holes and of keywork, here using innovations of Boehm. As with the bassoon, there were two schools of clarinet technology. In France the actual development was carried out by Klosé and Buffet, greatly influenced by Boehm's experiments on the flute, while in Germany the early 19th century clarinet of Iwan Muller was later the basis for the models by Oscar Oehler.

Sadly for the "wind band movement", despite the enthusiasm for the medium by composers such as Berlioz and Wagner, very little orginal music was written. The Harmoniemusik tradition continued fitfully, giving us a little-known gem in the Mendelssohn **Overture op 24**, (1824) and the superb **Serenade in D Minor** (1878) by Dvorak , while the two early works by Strauss, the **Serenade in Eb op 7** (1881) and the **Suite op 4** (1884) also look back to the 18th century for inspiration.

There was one French work of importance, Berlioz' Symphonie **Funebre et Triomphale** (1840), commissioned by the government to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the 1830 Revolution.. It is scored for over one hundred wind, with optional choir and strings in the finale, and it made an enormous impression on Richard Wagner who wrote.

I am inclined to rank this composition above all Berlioz' other ones; it is noble and great from the first note to the last.

Wagner himself was similarly inspired when he provided the **Trauersinfonie** (1844, AMP)) to accompany a solmen torchlight procession for the re-burial in Dresden of the remains of Weber who had died in London eighteen years earlier; his **Huldigungsmarsch** (1864, Shawnee) was probably written originally for orchestra, but he almost certainly re-scored it for band and it is well worth reviving.

The 19th century predlilection for orchestral arrangements continues unfortunately into the 20th; even now band directors will prefer to programme an extremely difficult arrangement of an orchestral war-horse, with the clarinets vainly pursuing the original string writing, rather than playing an original. How many performances are there each year of arrangements of Saint-Saens' Overture **La Princesse Jaune** compared with his very exciting and original **Orient et Occident** (1869), now available in a new edition from Maecenas.

LA SOCIETÉ DE MUSIQUE DE CHAMBRE POUR INSTRUMENTS A VENT

The considerable contribution of French composers to wind chamber music repertoire during the past 120 years is largely due to Paul Taffanel, who besides being acknowledged as the "father of modern flute playing", was also the founder of an important chamber music society. The first concert was at the Salle Pleyel on February 6th, 1879, the programme was:

Octet op 103	Beethoven
Flute Sonata in B Minor	Bach
Aubade for Wind Quintet	Barthe
Quintet for Piano and Winds	Rubinstein

Other works written for the group include Gounod's Petite Symphonie (1885) with its marvellous flute solo designed to show off Taffanel's superb tone, and Chanson et Danses (1898) by D'Indy, but the restoration to the repertoire of classical works was as important as the promotion of contemporary music. This initiative was continued in Paris by La Societe Moderne pour Instruments a Vent founded by another flautist, Georges Barrere; later Barrere and the oboist Longy founded similar ensembles in New York and Boston respectively.

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… the more we encourage composers to use the wind ensemble, the better it's going

to be, particularly with the generation of wind players that’s out there now

Sir Simon Rattle

President of BASBWE

CHAPTER 5
ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS OF MUSIC AT KNELLER HALL

2007 sees the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall, the first of a series of important anniversary dates in the history of British wind music. 2009 is the centenary of the Competition by the Worshipful Company of Musicians for a composition for wind music, while 2011 is the Centenary of the Festival of Empire Imperial Exhibition at Crystal Palace.

As well as two civilian bands, the Exhibition involved the bands of the Grenadier, the Coldstream, the Scots and the Irish Guards, and the Pageant itself was seen and heard by over 4,000,000 people. Composers contributing included MacEwen, Holst, Balfour Gardiner, Haydn Wood, Edward German, Hubert Bath, Mackenzie Rogan, Frederick Austin and Percy Fletcher. Probably the best piece to emerge was Frank Bridge’s **Pageant of London**.

The Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall, was founded in 1857 by the Duke of Cambridge, following an appalling show by the British military bands at a grand review during the Crimean war. The method of forming British bands had been completely ad hoc, left to the whim of commanding officers; in addition, then as now, bandsmen became hospital orderlies in the front line, so it was little wonder that the cacophonous British sounds at the grand review of allied troops drove the Duke of Cambridge to action.

According to Henry Farmer,

The final humiliation came at Scutari in 1854 when at the Grand Review in honour of the birthday of Queen Victoria, with some 16 thousand men marching past in perfect order, our band later struck up 'God Save the Queen' not only from different arrangements, but in different keys and this before the General Staff of the Allied Army.

After the Peace Treaty in 1856, the Duke as Commander-in-Chief of the British Army determined to restructure the training of military musicians, and with commendable speed and efficiency the Royal Military School of Music opened to train musicians and bandmasters for the British army in 1857 Despite the initial reservations of many regiments, within twenty years a circular from the War office could proudly declare that *there are now nearly 120 Military Bandmasters in active employment, all of whom have qualified at Kneller Hall, while there are only 35 left of the old class of civilian bandmasters.*

Years of steady development followed, with a musical mix largely of entertainment and ceremonial, for which successive Directors of Music, and the student bandmasters as part of their course, wrote marches and fanfares. The concert programmes in the last century were catholic, ranging from classical to contemporary; the first surviving programme, dated June 1888, includes music by Handel, Mozart, Meyerbeer, Wagner, Saint-Saens, Gung'l, Thomas and Stainer.

Links with the music profession, through the staff and formal and freelance work in London, have always been strengths of Kneller Hall and are continued today. As Mackenzie Rogan records, the students *were expected to attend the opera at Covent Garden or Her Majesty's Theatre twice a week....We also had complimentary tickets for the Monday 'Pops' at St James Hall.*

Musically, the most ambitious period was that of the early twenties, inspired by the then Commandant, Colonel J A C Somerville who had succeeded his elder brother Cameron Somerville in 1920. Somerville was very outspoken; in an article in *The Army Quarterly* he claimed that civilian taste in music had improved under the influence of Sir Henry Wood (who visited Kneller Hall in 1923) but that this progress had not been matched by the military.

CROAKING LIKE FROGS IN A POND

We in the army have been content to continue in the old rut, croaking to one another like frogs in a pond - damned impenetrable from the main stream of progress - and continuing to regard the overture to "William Tell", " Zampa" and other such rococo claptrap as the summit of ambition for the band to play or the soldier to appreciate.

Among other innovations, Somerville proposed an annual conference; the Kneller Hall Diary recorded that on 7th December 1921 *A Conference attended by the Directors of Music and representatives of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Airforce, bandmasters of the Army and music publishers was held at the School to deliberate the numbers and instrumentation of the minimum Military Band, and other questions of importance therewith*. One result was an agreement about the basic Instrumentation of Military Bands of 20 to 50 Players; the interesting points are the complete lack of baritone saxophone, even in larger bands, and the use of only piccolo in smaller bands, the flute being introduced from bands of 40 upwards.

A further consideration was the investigation of pitch and the adoption of the flatter International Pitch, first mooted in 1885 and agreed by the War Office as long as it was carried out *without expense to the public*. This reform was delayed until 1928-1930, and then regrettably often achieved by merely adding pieces of tubing to high-pitch instruments.

MUSICAL LEGACY OF SOMERVILLE

The musical importance of Colonel Somerville cannot be exaggerated. Frederick Fennell, in his fine book Basic Band Repertory, published by The Instrumentalist in 1980, writes *At least 90% of the band music now published and played in the United States is patterned after the British Army band repertory of the early 1900's*.

Such is the influence of a handful of works.

1909	Gustav Holst	Suite no 1 in Eb
1911	Gustav Holst	Suite no 2 in F
1924	Ralph Vaughan Williams	Toccata Marziale
1924	Ralph Vaughan Williams	English Folk Song Suite
1924	Gordon Jacob	The William Byrd Suite

To this listing of important early music, I would now add the splendid **Pageant of London** by Sir Frank Bridge, (da Capo Press), written in 1911 for the Festival of Empire Imperial Exhibition. As well as two civilian bands, the Exhibition involved the bands of the Grenadier, the Coldstream, the Scots and the Irish Guards, and the Pageant itself was seen and heard by over 4,000,000 people. Other composers contributing included MacEwen, Holst, Balfour Gardiner, Haydn Wood, Edward German, Hubert Bath, Mackenzie Rogan, Frederick Austin and Percy Fletcher.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL 1922

The musical highpoint of the early twenties was the concert given at the Royal Albert Hall on June 30th, 1922, sponsored by the British Music Society, Incorporated Society of Musicians and Federation of British Music Industries. The Director of Music, Hector Adkins, conducted 165 musicians in **Three Humoresques** by Walton O'Donnell and **The Wreckers Overture** by Ethel Smythe, transcriptions of Bach Fugues and the Prelude to **Die Meistersinger**, Holst's **Festival Choruses** and the **Second Suite in F**. The Press was enthusiastic:

The Sunday Times *July 2, 1922*

Military Band Concert; Music Society's Project to Encourage Composers

In connection with the British Music Society's annual conference, a concert was given in the Albert Hall on Friday night by the band of the Royal Military School of Music. They had three aims in view: to demonstrate the influence of the military band as a factor in the musical life of the nation; to encourage composers to write for it; and to secure public appreciation for military music and all concerned with its performance. Of these, perhaps, the most important was the second.

The Observer *July 2, 1922*

One object of this concert was to demonstrate the effectiveness of the military band as a medium for the performance of the best music, and in this way to draw the attention of the composer to the desirability of writing directly for it. Roughly speaking, it must be said that the serious composer still rejects the wide opportunity that lies open to him of reaching the great masses of the people who take their musical pleasure in parks and on piers, as distinct from the smaller special public that takes it in the concert halls. Perhaps he does so under the impression that as an instrument the military band is relatively inexpressive, but in this case a hearing of Holst's Suite in F.....must have convinced him that he is neglecting a mobile and varied agency of musical expression.

The Daily News *July 1, 1922*

Here is music which everyone can understand, but which also appeals to the musician, and should replace much of the bad music, both native and foreign, of which military bands are so fond - or believe to be the only thing the public wants.

The Daily Telegraph *July 1, 1922*

The example of Mr Holst ought to bring about a change in this respect securing band works from composers, for his ***Suite in F*** *(performed for the first time last night) is a most effective piece of serious music and at the same time a proof that a composer gifted with inspiration and understanding can obtain from a military band effects of sounds entirely novel and beautiful.*

BEGINNING OF A NEW AND BETTER EPOCH

On July 3rd Colonel Somerville wrote to the British Music Society thanking them for organising and financing the concert: *I am confident that this concert will mark the beginning of a new and better epoch for the military band, by the demonstration thereby given of its musical possibilities. If so, the credit of this must be awarded to the three societies whose joint enterprise made it possible.*

This early flowering of significant repertoire was perhaps directly due to the facts that Holst was a professional trombonist, with experience in the Scottish Symphony Orchestra, opera and in seaside bands, and he also lived in Hammersmith, near Kneller Hall. Vaughan Williams was of course a close friend, and he in turn was Professor at the Royal College of Music to Gordon Jacob.

For only two more years, the new epoch continued. On July 4th 1923 the premiere of **Folk Song Suite** by Vaughan Williams was given. The Musical Times wrote The good composer has the ordinary monger of light stuff so hopelessly beaten. An interesting point about the premiere is that it appears that the **March Sea Songs** was originally intended as the third movement of the Suite.

Finally in 1924 at the British Empire Exposition at Wembley, Adkins conducted **Toccata Marziale** and Jacob's **William Byrd Suite**. However, the next six decades show a virtually complete neglect of the possibilities opened up by Holst and Vaughan Williams; there were no significant commissions from Elgar or Walton, Bliss or Britten. After that early flirtation with the two leading young British composers, military musicians in England returned to their appointed business of providing music for ceremonial and entertainment. and the British musical establishment continued to develop in other ways. What might have been achieved by a consistent policy of commissioning is only hinted at by the following works:

1951	Gordon Jacob	Music for a Festival	
1957	Malcolm Arnold	The Duke of Cambridge March	Pattersons/Music Sales
1977	John Gardner	English Dance Suite op 139	OUP Press
1982	Adrian Cruft	The Duke of Cambridge Suite	Joad Press

FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN IN 1951

BANALITY AWAITS AROUND THE CORNER !

The Festival of Britain in 1951 was an excuse for a nationwide jamboree, a post-war celebration of the arts; **The Times** of May 15 covered the premiere of Jacob's **Music for a Festival**.

Last night the Royal Military School of Music brought about 200 players from all regiments and in addition its 30 trumpeters to the Festival Hall to play in ceremonial dress under Major Roberts, the director of music and Kneller Hall....its main interest was the new suite composed to the commission of the Arts Council by Gordon Jacob...it is a substantial addition of the finest quality to the repertory of the military band..... Banality, which waits round the corner for a medium that is capable only of broad effects and massive designs, is avoided by ingenuities of harmony and still more of rhythm, and of sheer contrapuntal skill....Here at any rate is one festival commission that immediately justified itself.

The Centenary of the founding of Kneller Hall was the signal for another round of celebrations, culminating in the Annual Garden Party on 28th June in the presence of Queen Elizabeth the Second who unveiled a commemorative stone and heard the world premiere of Malcolm Arnold's **Centenary March; March for the Duke of Cambridge**. Twenty years on, the Queen also heard the world premiere of John Gardner's **English Dance Suite** (1977, OUP) when she attended a concert at the Royal Albert Hall to celebrate her Silver Jubilee. This work is unjustly neglected, having been "lost" in the Kneller Hall Library until resurrected by the RNCM for a concert to celebrate Gardner's 65th birthday. Finally there was the **Duke of Cambridge Suite** (1982, Joad) by Adrian Cruft, commissioned to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the founding of the RMSM, and first performed on 16th October in 1982. The encouraging growth of involvement by all three services in the development of wind music in the UK since 1981 through the British Association of Symphonic Bands & Wind Ensembles, BASBWE, has been matched by increased activity in commissioning. A significant series of works commissioned for the Royal Tournament began in the nineties under the then Director of Music at Kneller Hall, Frank Renton.

CHAPTER 6
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PERCY GRAINGER

While the innovations of Colonel Somerville in the music at Kneller Hall had a far-reaching effect on all but the British Army, there had in fact been early stirrings in England. It is tempting to dwell on what might also have happened had Beecham continued his interest in the Beecham Wind Orchestra; In The Musical Times of November 1, 1912 we read:

The most interesting feature of the present season hitherto has been the formation and appearance of the Beecham Wind Orchestra or "London Civil Band" under the conductorship of Mr Emile Gilmer. It is the outcome of a desire on Mr Beecham's part to arrest the alleged decline of English wind playing, and to explore new sources of tone colour The constitution of the band or orchestra is as follows:

2 Piccolos
2 flutes
2 oboes
1 bass oboe
1 heckelphone
1 English horn
2 clarinets in Eb
8 clarinets in Bb
2 basset horns
2 bass clarinets
2 bassoons
1 sarrusophone in Bb
1 sarrusophone in C
1 soprano saxophone
1 alto saxophone
1 tenor saxophone
1 baritone saxophone
2 trumpets
1 cornet à pistons in Eb
2 cornet à pistons in Bb
1 bass trumpet
4 French horns
1 alto trombone
1 tenor trombone
1 bass trombone
1 tuba in F
1 tuba in Eb
1 contra-bass tuba in Bb
1 celesta
1 kettle-drum
1 side-drum
1 bass drum and cymbals
1 harp

The scheme has not only been formulated but has been carried to completion and, we understand, tested in public. Familiar music has been arranged for the "wind orchestra" and composers of repute have been asked to write new music for it. Once more we are in debt to the enterprise of Mr Thomas Beecham, who has the brain to conceive original plans, and the energy and other essential means to fulfil them.

Philip Mather researched an article in WINDS which gives some idea of the potential of the venture. The fifty-six piece BWO made its first appearance at a concert at the Alhambra Theatre in October 1912, when the two most admired works were a selection from **Die Walkure** and Jarnefelt's **Praeludium**. The orchestra's first veture outisde the capital was to travel north to St Helens, Lancashire where it was to take part in the outgoing Mayor's concert; the outgoing mayor was Sir Joseph Beecham, father of Thomas. The programme was typical of the period, a mix of operatic excerpts and orchestral transcriptions, culminating with Tchaikovsky's inevitable **Overture 1812**.

What led Beecham to found this orchestra? Was it his acquaintance with Grainger during the first decade of the century, and their joint devotion to Delius and his music. In *The Percy Grainger Companion* we find Rose Gainger writing to Delius: *Dear little Beecham was here last night & was telling Percy all his plans, wonderful aren't they?* Grainger and Beecham must have met at the latest in 1908, at the London première of **Brigg Fair**; in his biography of Grainger, John Bird writes that Beecham invited Grainger to become his assistant conductor. Were the "little

Beecham's" wonderful plans for opera or for wind orchestra? Was Grainger to assist with the Beecham Wind Orchestra? We can imagine Beecham carried away by Grainger's excitement about the wind band. In the event Grainger turned the offer down, ostensibly because he wanted to concentrate on composition; though according to John Bird's candid account, the real reason was that Beecham did not have blue eyes.

We know little about this venture, it needs researching, hopefully some of the repertoire recovered; presumably Beecham tired quickly of the restrictions imposed by a wind band, and instead concentrated his energies on the Beecham Symphony Orchestra which he had started in 1909, and the subsequent glittering seasons with Diaghilev's Ballet Russe.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PERCY GRAINGER

It is impossible to categorise Grainger; his international reputation during his lifetime rested largely on his prowess as a virtuoso pianist. As a composer, he was renowned for a number of miniatures which he came later to despise as un-characteristic of his music at its best. He wrote no opera, no symphonies or concerti, no quartets, and most of his music was "dished up" in so many different forms as to make publication and even performance a hazardous affair.

Thomas Slattery points out that with **Hill Song no 1** (1901-1902), **Hill Song no 2** (1907) and the march **Lads of Wamphray** (1905), Grainger had written three significant works some years before Holst's **Suite in Eb** (1909). It was to be many years before these three works were to be published; even the March waited until 1941. Curiously, while much of his music met with acclaim, the early "chamber experiments" of Percy Grainger went largely un-noticed and had little influence on his contemporaries.

The most dramatic example of his forward thinking is to be found in *Hill Song no 1*; scored for the extraordinary combination of 2 piccolos, 6 oboes, 6 cor anglais, 6 bassoons and contrabassoon, the flow of the music is almost continuous. Bar-lines are added by the editor simply as a convenience. The harmonic language reminds us often of Richard Strauss, the rhythmic vitality of Walton; every voice is treated as a soloist and it was this passion and this chamber concept that was lost in a great deal of the largescale wind band music of the early and mid-century.

In Lewis Foreman's *The Percy Grainger Companion*, Thomas Slattery writes:

> *When considering Grainger as an original composer, his significance is not because he initiated particular techniques, but rather that he embraced new ideas and change. From his childhood visions of "free music", through his scholarly notation of folk-songs, his solo wind chamber pieces, his experiments with improvisation, the editing of old music and his experiments with electronic music, Grainger's thoughts, as documented in his writings and his compositions, were always advanced. His concept of woodwind families and woodwind sounds was the beginning of the emergence of a standardization of instrumentation for the wind band.* ***No single composer has done more in this century for the wind band medium****.*

One of the tragedies of Grainger's career was that public acclaim was reserved for his career as a virtuoso pianist, and for his smallest pieces, works like **Country Gardens**. Only recently has his stature as a composer been re-assessed, following a number of recordings by conductors such as Sir Simon Rattle and Richard Hickox and excellent new publications by Southern Music edited by Mark Rogers. A number of important books have been published which deal fully with his works for wind; the full flavour of his idiosyncracies and energy is caught in an article written by the late Rodney Bashford.

CHAPTER 7

INTERLUDE - RODNEY BASHFORD ON GRAINGER

In an article appearing in an earlier WINDS (*Holst, Horns and Unharmonious Blacksmiths*, WINDS, Spring 1987) I gave forth on certain matters concerning the Suites in E flat and F, on the tenuous authority of having met Holst for a few minutes and a later friendship with his daughter Imogen. So may I give forth on Percy Grainger with whom I did have the privilege of several conversations, not all of them to my own conceit?

In 1957 Percy Grainger and his wife visited Kneller Hall, its centenary year, to conduct four of his lollipops at a summer concert. During his stay he watched me, as the then staff bandmaster of the school, rehearse the four pieces (*Hey, Molly, Derry, Gardens*) and greeted me as I left the rostrum with *Everyone plays my music too slowly*. My deflation was only slightly tempered by his rider; *it was good to hear it up to speed for once*. I didn't believe him for a moment, especially when next day he took them all at a furious pace far outstripping mine louder (lots), cringingly, fulsome, and con *fuoco* - though he would have abhorred the latter non-white musical term. I did, though, believe his remark about too slowly, and still do. Anyone who remembers that glorious television documentary on Grainger, the one in which he plays Grieg and himself on piano, and Raimund Herinex exults in **Shallow Brown**, will know his general approach to tempi.

So, what about **Lincolnshire Posy**, the great seminal work of the repertory which any band with ambitions to fame must eventually come to terms with? Frederick Fennell has said and done everything that matters concerning the work, though even he in his writings gets somewhat bogged down with inessentials. Misprints? Articulation? Up beats, down beats, note values? All no doubt of some little importance! ~ but do 1 hear from Percy *Bah, get on and play the bloody thing, and do have fun*. Fennell made a much-admired early recording of the **Posy**, and was rightly praised for his work on it. Nevertheless later performances from him and others seem to me to lack something. My own acquaintance with Grainger, of but a few days, leads me to believe that we have all come to treat the **Posy** as some sort of sacred cow, full of 'problems', technical how-d'ya-do-its, up beats, side beats, and (most emasculating of all) complete and utter precision at the expense of spontaneity, delight, and that indefinable English pastoral rough-hewedness with which Grainger imbued it in its harmony and instrumentation.

Inexperienced bands do of course have their problems, but 1 am talking about the good ones 1 have heard, who should be beyond worrying about the details. 1 did not have a chance to discuss the **Posy** with Grainger, though from his almost cavalier treatment of his shorter pieces 1 am convinced he would not be totally sincere in admiring most present-day performances of it, or come to that, any of his music. Has all of it become too urbanised 1 wonder? That lovely word 'bucolic', with its undertones of country junketings, cider, and unseemly goings-on 'neath the haystack just about sums up my own vision of **Lincolnshire Posy**. *The Sailor's Song*, in spite of its title, is a full-blown and vivid hunting scene with view-hulloos, tallyhos, and horns a-plenty as the hunt approaches then disappears over the hills and far away; *Horkstow Grange* is a tale of miserly passions, not a rather good hymn tune; the *Poachers* are sure-footed if canny professional thieves, not mincing poofs; the *Young Sailor* is not only brisk but frisky, randy, and not a little 'Brahms and Liszt' during his hornpipe; Melbourne should rant for himself, not mutter under his breath; and the poor *Lost Lady*, she's rarely found.

Grainger was scathing about the feeble effects' usually achieved in **Molly on the Shore**, particularly at the banshee cry. On **Shepherd's Hey** there was never enough 'hey'. The **Tune from County Derry** was not a setting of *Danny Boy*. **Country Gardens** were too often full of exotic arum lilies instead of dog roses. Now that much more modern works have arrived, with their rhythmic complexities and outrageous demands on technique, perhaps these wonderful evocations of a rural England that Grainger knew and loved will be treated with less awe (and dare one say respect), and a little more joy. Dullsome is a word Grainger did not coin, though he might well consider it were he alive today.

REPERTOIRE

One of the leading UK record companies, Chandos, is engaged in recording all of the music of Percy Grainger; two records have been issued by the RNCM Wind Orchestra of all of the original music for wind band and wind ensemble, listed here in order of composition.

CHANDOS

1905	The Lads of Wamphray
1918	Shepherd's Hey
1919	Molly on the Shore
1928	Colonial Song; Country Garden; The "Gum-Sucker's" March
1937	Lincolnshire Posy; Hill Song No 2
1938	The Merrie King

1949	Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon
1954	Faeroe Island Dance

CHAPTER 8

BETWEEN THE WARS

DONAUESCHINGEN

In 1925 Somerville retired, and the focus of development of the serious use of the wind medium moved from England to Europe and the USA. In Germany, the town of Donaueschingen had been a musical centre throughout the 18th and 19th centuries; composers such as Kalliwoda and Fiala worked there, and an enormous library of Harmonie was built up, including what in all probability is Mozart's original arrangement of **Die Entführung aus dem Serail** for Wind Octet, recently discovered.

In 1921, Prince Max Egon zu Furstenberg founded the international Festival of Contemporary Music, which still thrives today, although now in competition with younger trendier avant- centres such as Darmstadt. Hans Werner Henze writes in his recent autobiography of the premiere of his ballet Ondine:

> *With this score I had reached a position that could hardly be further removed from that of the so-called Darmstadt School, so it is scarcely surprising that at its first performance at Donaueschingen on 20th October 1957, under Hans Rosbaud's outstanding direction, three representatives of the other wing - Boulez, my friend Gigi Nono and Stockhausen - leapt to their feet after only the first few bars and pointedly left the hall, eschewing the beauties of my latest endeavours.*

HINDEMITH & TOCH

In the twenties, the Festival had tried to encourage different ensembles, first concentrating on quartet, later on vocal music and music theatre. Under the direction of Paul Hindemith, the Festival led experiments in music for mechanical instruments and in *Gebrauchsmusik*, a term which Hindemith came to hate, preferring *Musik fur Sing- und Spielkreise*. Basically this is music to be written for use by amateurs or professionals, the musical equivalent of the Bauhaus designs, simple and functional. Hindemith's own conviction was that the ever-widening gap between composer and general public could be bridged if composers wrote with a particular purpose, encouraging the growth of amateur music.

In 1926, he commissioned three works for performance at the Festival, he himself contributing the Konzertmusik op. 21. The full programme was:

Drei Lustige Marsche op 44	Ernst Krenek
Kleine Serenad	Ernst Pepping
Spiel	Ernst Toch
Konzertmusik op 41	Paul Hindemith

The band was that of the training battalion 14th Infantry Regiment stationed in the town, and the conductor was Hermann Scherchen, to whom the works by Hindemith and Toch were dedicated. Hindemith's experiment in trying to "improve" the musical fare of professional and amateur bands initially came to nothing, as did the commissions for the military bands in London a few years earlier by Holst and Vaughan Williams. His hope that the greatest composers would write for bands was of course taken up in America after the War and here in England in the past two decades.

BANDS IN THE USA

Raoul Camus has painted a vivid picture of the military bands in the USA; Dutch, French and British militia played a part in establishing the early colonial groups, later followed by Italian influences. America was a melting pot of European band traditions, and it is not surprising that villages, towns and cities after the Revolution and the Civil War took to the civilian bands as their main source of entertainment. The time was ripe for the great conductors and showmen of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Patrick Gilmore, Patrick Conway, Victor Herbert and the greatest of all, John Philip Sousa. Sousa.

Sousa's influence on music in America is enormous. He introduced music by Wagner before it was played by the orchestras and opera companies, he pioneered muted effects and is said to have influenced Richard Strauss with this colour, his concept of tonal balance between wind, brass and percussion still holds good, and the variety and lightness which he brought to performance might well be emulated more often now.

The great band programmes of the Universities and Colleges developed enormously after the First World War, and the last eighty years has seen the growth a multi-million dollar business based on College bands. The struggle which still goes on in some Universities is between the Music Department, tradionally suspicious and un-enthusiastic about what is often perceived as a populist entertainment, and the Sports Department, for whom the bands are a crucial part of the entertainment package. The income from the Marching Band is usually essential to support the Concert Band and the Wind Ensemble programmes.

COMMISSIONS

From the twenties, Universities and professional bands such as the Goldman Band and the Military Bands of Washington and West Point, began a steady programme of commissions for the large scale symphonic band from leading American composers such as Copland, Cowell, Creston, Dahl, Persichetti and Schuman, and emigrés such as Hindemith, Krenek, Milhaud and Schoenberg. These original works were programmed alongside orchestral arrangements, and the bands ranged from sixty to over one hundred players with multiple doublings in flutes, clarinets and brass. In a great deal of this repertoire, the opaque heaviness of the scoring lends a "sameness" to the tonal picture; many of the slighter instruments, oboes or bassoons for instance, lose their character, swallowed in the mass of sound.

EASTMAN WIND ENSEMBLE

However, in 1952, Frederick Fennell developed a new concept, founding the Eastman Wind Ensemble which started from *..the basic format of the British military band....increasing it to allow for triples among the reeds required for Stravinsky's "Symphonies"....I could hear how clean this sound was going to be.*

This return to the lean original scoring of the Holst Suites, meant that composers for the first time could write for an exact number of voices, confident that the music would be played by solo instruments rather than the mass of flutes, clarinets and brass characteristic of the large-scale Symphonic Band. It is probably true to say that most of the best wind music written in the past forty years has been orchestrated with the Eastman Wind concept in mind; the scoring for the larger band is more suited to *Gebrauchsmusik*, music written primarily for educational or entertainment purposes.

In an excellent set of Essays on the Fortieth Annieversary of the Eastman Wind Ensemble, entitled *The Wind Ensemble and its Repertoire*,.Donald Hunsberger traces the influence of the importance and influences of Fennell's innovation, through the early historial recordings for Mercury, a second decade in which Hunsberger launched a series of editions with MCA of composers such as Warren Benson, Henry Brant, Dahly and Hartley, on to the third decade which saw a series of eight *Wind Ensemble Conferences* .Composers such as Bassett, Benson, Husa and Schuller introduced their music, conductors such as Battisti, Benson, Boudreau, Fennell , Hunsberger , Reynolds and Whitwell conducted and discussed repertoire, and in 1973, Hunsberger founded The National Center for the Symphonic Wind Ensemble at Eastman. It was this group who were mainly responsible for the 1981 International Conference in Manchester which gave rise to the birth of WASBE and BASBWE.

FORTY YEARS OF THE AMERICAN WIND SYMPHONY

One of the most extraordinary and certainly the one of the largest commissioning programme in the world is that of the AWS and its founder and conductor, Robert Austin Boudreau. The ensemble has the unusual shape of an enlarged orchestral wind section, hence with no saxophones: 4454:5552:6 percussion: harp and piano. Out of over 350 works commissioned, more than 150 are published by Peters; for the 1991 WASBE/BASBWE Confernece, Jeffrey Renshaw prepared an introductory paper, later developing into a Descriptive Catalogue The American Wind Symphony Commissioning Project, listing all of these publications, with details of composition, instrumentation a short biography of the composer and a summary of compositional characteristics, facing the first page of the score. This library is a wonderful resource, neglected by most of us, partially perhaps because of the absence of saxophones, partially because of the difficulty of reading some of the material and the need to hire, rather than purchase.

The handful of works which we have programmed in Manchester are but the tip of a very productive iceberg: **Paeans and Dances of Heathen Iberia** (1959) by Surinach, **Concerto Grosso for Woodwind Quintet and Band** (1959) by Robert Russell Bennett, **Concerto for Wind Orchestra** (1960) by McPhee, **Children's Overture** (1964) by Bozza, **Concerto for Percussion** (1965) by Mayuzumi, **Adagio** (1966) by Rodrigo, **Pittsburg Overture** (1967) by Penderecki, **Concerto for Oboe** (1980) by Tcherepnin, and **Scherzo** (1989) by Patrick Zuk.

CHAPTER 9
THE WIRELESS MILITARY BAND

First Performance 23 September 1927 Last Performance 16 March 1943

The history of wind band music broadcasting in this country is as long as the history of radio. The first broadcast ever was on 23 January 1923 by the Band of the Irish Guards and band concerts were a regular feature for most stations. Manchester, as ever to the fore, was the first station to have a civilian military band formed specifically for broadcasting, assembled by Dan Godfrey in 1923 and conducted by the first clarinet of the Halle Orchestra, Harry Mortimer. Godfrey studied at the Royal Academy of Music, enlisted in the Coldstream Guards to obtain his bandmastership, and in 1922 conducted the bands at Harrogate and St Leonard's before being appointed Musical Director for the British Broadcasting Company in Manchester in 1923. In 1924, Godfrey was transferred to London as conductor of the orchestra, where he immediately formed and conducted the 2LO Military Band from the orchestral wind players. However, it was decided in 1927 that a separate band would be required to cope with the growth of work expected and the members of the band were given a choice between playing in the orchestra or the newly formed Wireless Military Band, later the BBC Military Band.

B. Walton O'Donnell, formerly Director of Music of the Royal Marines, was the conductor, joining the Corporation on 7 June 1927. The 29-piece band was contracted from 21 August for three rehearsals and three concerts a week at salaries of £7.10s (£7.50) for leaders, £7 for principals and £6 for rank-and-file. Many of the best players in London were recruited including Robert Murchie (flute), A. Tschaikov (solo clarinet), Walter Lear (alto saxophone) and Charles Leggett (principal cornet, deputy conductor and general supervisor) whose name lives on commemorated by the Leggett Award for brass. Later players associated with the Band were Reginald Kell on clarinet, Gilbert Vinter, bassoon and Philip Catelinet, euphonium. The first broadcast included the **March from Crown of India** by Elgar, the second and third movements from Mendelssohn's 'Italian' symphony, **A Folk Song Suite** by Vaughan Williams, a selection from **Cinq Mars** by Gounod, Tchaikovsky's **1812 Overture** and the Symphonic Poem **Le Rouet d'Omphale** by Saint-Saens.

The Wireless Military Band flourished from 1927 until 1943. It had its own staff arranger, Gerrard Williams, and the repertoire was largely made up of orchestral works scored with great virtuosity. Among those who wrote original pieces were Alan Bush and Gustav Holst, who returned to the medium with his arrangement of Bach's **Fuga a la Gigue** (1928, Boosey) and the extraordinary **Hammersmith** (1930, Boosey), still a major undertaking for bands and audiences. Its conductor, Walton O'Donnell was a fine composer; and in fact the late Rodney Bashford asserted that it was O'Donnell rather than Holst and Vaughan Williams who was largely responsible for the development of contemporary band music in the early years of the century, through his virtuoso scoring and mixed metres. With the current interest in light music, perhaps interest will be rekindled in his music, such as **Songs of the Gael**, (1924, Boosey) and **Three Humoresques** (1922, Boosey).

BRING OUT THE HARPSICHORDS AND MADRIGALS

In 1937, B. Walton O'Donnell was appointed Music Director in Northern Ireland and was succeeded as conductor of the BBC Military Band by his brother, Major P.S.G. O'Donnell of the Royal Marines, Chatham. The Band was one of the most popular of the BBC organisations, indeed it had been the favourite group of King George V who once, on a State visit to Broadcasting House, demanded to have O'Donnell to be presented and to conduct. However, in the early forties, the BBC determined to concentrate broadcasting on existing service bands and to axe the Wireless Military Band; a letter appeared in the Daily Herald:

> *One reads with misgivings of the suggested disbandment of our BBC Military Band, a combination standing head and shoulders above any other military band in the world. At the beginning of the war, listeners had to protest at the lack of military music and eventually our BBC Military Band was given some work to do. Maybe, because of Eighth Army success, they now feel they can bring out the harpsichords and madrigals again.*

Questions were raised in the House of Commons, letters to the Press came from all quarters ~ to no avail, and at 9.40 pm on Tuesday, 16 March 1943, on the Home Service, the Band gave its final performance: **A Frivolous Overture** by Sir John McEwan, dedicated to the conductor and members of the BBC Military Band, the Symphonic Poem **Phaeton** by Saint-Saens, the Oriental Fantasy **Islamey** by Balakirev, and **Three Humoresques - Pride and Prejudice; Prevarication; Petulance and Persuasion -** by B. Walton O'Donnell. On 19 March 1993. this programme was recreated on BBC Radio 2 by the RNCM Wind Orchestra conducted by Clark Rundell, unfortunately without McEwan's Overture which has not yet been located.

POST-WAR CELEBRATIONS -THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES

The next six decades in England were not entirely barren; Gordon Jacob, student, friend and amanuensis of Vaughan Williams, continued to write throughout this period, and in the Festival of Britain of 1951, his status was recognised by the commissioning of a work for the Royal Military School of Music, the **Music for a Festival** (1951, Boosey). Although the work was premiered at the Royal Festival Hall, and met with critical acclaim, it is ignored in the listing of his output in the New Grove which mentions only one band work, the **Concerto for Band** (1970). His own listing contains 14 works for wind band, most published by Boosey and Hawkes, and other works such as the **Concerto for Timpani and Band** (1984) and **Symphony A D 78** (1978) have been published posthumously by G and M Brand/R Smith.

Gordon Jacob was the first President of BASBWE, and was Guest of Honour at the Banquet in the 1981 Manchester International Conference. He spoke movingly of his life-long love of the sound of wind, brass and percussion.. Although an excellent teacher and musical craftsman, Jacob unfortunately did not have the major talent needed at this time to put the wind band on the musical map.

ALUN HODDINOTT

During the sixties and seventies, a number of important additions to the wind ensemble repertoire were written, most of which still need recording, regular performance and recognition. The first was Alun Hoddinott's **Piano concerto no 1, op 19**, (1960 OUP), a fine work scored for orchestral wind, brass and percussion. Hoddinott followed this with the equally fine **Ritornelli** (1974 OUP) for trombone and chamber ensemble and a year later with the charming **Welsh Airs and Dances** (1975 OUP) for symphonic band. His last work for wind was written for Roger Boudreau's American Wind Symphony, **Welsh Dances, Suite no 4** (1990, Peters).

ELIZABETH MACONCHY

Because so many wind works are pièces d'occasion, very often they lie neglected. One such work is Elizabeth Maconchy's superb **Music for Wind and Brass** (1966 Chester/Music Sales), written for the Thaxted Festival founded by Gustav Holst, a magnificently crafted work for orchestral wind 2222:4331:T, forgotten even by the composer until restored to the repertoire in the eighties. Maconchy has an original voice and an a sure technical ability. It is sad that, she like so many, wrote only one work, but wind players would be well advised to explore her **Clarinet Quintet** (1963) the works for solo wind instruments, and her superb **Variazioni Concertante** (1965) for oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn and strings, all published by Chester/Music Sales.

BBC COMMISSIONS

A work by yet another distinguished lady composer, the South African Priaulx Rainier, is **Ploermel** (1972, unpublished but recorded on RR 007); written for the BBC Symphony Orchestra wind and brass, this was a commission for the BBC Proms. The idiom is exciting abrasive, owing something perhaps to the sound-world of Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps, but with her own primitivism, derived from her native Africa. Did someone at the BBC have a guilty conscience about the death of the Wireless Military Band, because the Proms have continued to commission wind works; Alan Bush's **Scherzo for Wind Orchestra** (1969, Novello), Elizabeth Lutyen's **Symphonies Op. 46** was commisisoned for 1961and Harrison Birtwistle's **Panic** for 1995.

Hoddinott's **Welsh Dances**, Buxton Orr's **John Gay Suite** (1973 Novello) and John Gardner's **English Dance Suite** (1977, OUP) continued the folk-song based traditions of the earlier part of the century; the first "modern" work from this British "Dark Age" was **Metamorphoses** (1977 Novello) by Edward Gregson. Written for orchestral wind, brass and percussion ensemble without saxophones but with piano and basses, it explores simple aleatoric and electronic techniques, with an echo effect for solo flute and clarinet which is magical. It remains both an excellent introduction to contemporary music and a most enjoyable piece for audiences.

BRITISH YOUTH WIND ORCHESTRA

A fine series of commissions for the British Youth Wind Orchestra, now the National Youth Wind Orchestra, was started in the seventies by Andrew McGavin and Harry Legge: Most are available only from the composers, though some are published and on hire, including **Concert Dances & East Coast Sketches** from Faber. **Quiet** from OUP, (a beautifully restrained work which should receive many more performances), **Theatre Fountain**, available from Camden Music, and Philip Sparke's **Sinfonietta no 2** published by from Studio Music.

COMMISSIONS BY THE BRITISH YOUTH WIND ORCHESTRA

1972	Introduction & Rondo (clarinet choir)	Gordon Jacob
1974	Work for clarinet choir	Edwin Roxburgh

	Wind Symphony	Stephen Dodgson
1976	Concerto for Wind Orchestra	David Morgan
	Tonada Sefardita (clarinet choir)	Leonard Salzedo
1977	Symphony 8 The Four Elements	Wilfred Josephs
	Epigrams from a Garden (sop & Cl choir)	Stephen Dodgson
1979	Processiones	Leonard Salzedo
1980	Scenes from an imaginary Ballet	Graham Williams
1983	Sinfonietta	Derek Bourgeois
1984	Ultramarine	John Hopkins
1985	East Coast Sketches	Nigel Hess
1986	Quiet	Gordon Crosse
1987	1984	Dominic Muldowney
1988	Concert Dances	Howard Blake
1991	Theatre Fountain	Gary Carpenter
1992	Sinfonietta no 2	Philip Sparke
	Symphony *Our Hopes like Towering Falcons*	Colin Touchin
	Bandwagon	Stephen Dodgson

There was similar activity north of the Border, where the Scottish Amateur Music Association gave full support to Rodney Bashford's policy for the National Wind Band of Scotland, programming his own arrangements of standard orchestral works, traditional repertoire by Holst, Vaughan Williams, O'Donnell and Gordon Jacob, with new commissions, sadly again few published:

COMMISSIONS BY THE NATIONAL YOUTH WIND ORCHESTRA OF SCOTLAND

1974	Sinfonietta for Band	Arthur Oldham	SAMA
1976	The Eagle	Stephen Dodgson	comp
1977	Matelot	Stephen Dodgson	com
1978	Scottish Tune	Adrian Cruft	Joad
1978	Beowulf	Peter Naylor	SAMA
1979	Caledonia Caprice	David Dorward	SAMA
1980	The Wee Cooper of Fife	Cedric Thorpe Davie	SAMA
1984	Tam O'Shanter	Learmont Drysdale	SAMA
1985	Ronde for Isolde	David Bedford	Novello
1985	Celebrations	Bruce Fraser	Bandleader

Information about any of the above works can be obtained from SAMA:

National Youth Wind Ensemble of Scotland
Scottish Amateur Music Association
18 Craigton Crescent, Alva
Clackmannanshire
FK12 5DS

CHAPTER 10
An Interlude
LT. COLONEL RODNEY BASHFORD 1917-1997

Since the 1920's one military musician above all others has essayed to carry on Colonel Somerville's developments in wind band music. The late Rodney Bashford was a valued contributor to *WINDS* and supporter of BASBWE, and in the 1988 Conference we reflected some of his extraordinary legacy to wind music of the second half of the century, in his commissions, his arrangements and compositions and in his writings. Who, apart from the incomparable Percy Grainger, can match Rodney's verbal wit writing about wind band repertoire?

Another subject of discussion, often with Imogen Holst, was Song of the Blacksmith in the Second Suite. 1 have always been of the opinion that most (if not all) conductors 1 have heard are apt to play the thing too fast, mostly I suspect because they can't control their bands at a truly moderate and majestic tempo as indicated. Blacksmiths work steadily and the anvil chords from the brass cannot be given full weight and deliberation at MM 100 or more. About 72 is more like it, otherwise this masterly tonepicture sounds like a quick march with off-the-beat chug-chug accompaniment. It may be fanciful on my part but 1 think Holst knew very well what he was up to for he must have watched many a smithy at work. The conductor is the hammer in the hand of the smith. He strikes the white-hot metal in silence and the hammer then falls onto the anvil creating so to speak the afterclang. Try that at march tempo.

And there is a magnificent coda, when he muses on what might have been had he purchased Holst's house, on sale in 1965 at a mere £13,000 - "*far beyond my means as I could then calculate them. Within a few years that sum wouldn't have bought a dog kennel, and of course, I* **could** *have afforded such a paltry figure, had 1 known what the future held.*

Perhaps it was all for the best. A spirit might have walked and ghostly strains of Saturn remind me of my own approaching senility, sinister Egdon Heath have haunted my dreams and a hammer in a massive blacksmith's brawny arm come crashing down as 1 sailed up to the top B flat."

Sheer poetry, recaptured in an exquisite letter written to The Editor of *The Gramophone* in December 1996 on "Fashion in Music", worth quoting in toto.

L*ong ago in callow youth, one's whole world concerned with conforming to current fashion - in the right mode of dress, in the right company and of ultra left-wing political stance - I was conformist to profess a love of (according to the right people) the right music.*

My penchant for the music of Elgar and Vaughan Williams went unspoken, for the names of Bartok, Stravinsky and Shostakovich had as often as possible to be on one's lips. By the time I had come to love Bartok, Stravinsky and Shostakovich, one then had to he in favour of Boulez, Berio, Stockhausen and the like. Still later one had, fashionably, to give Adams, Reich and Glass a go. Never dared one admit to an abiding predilection for the English Pastorals, the cowpat school so fashionably despised by the right people. Even George Lloyd qualifies according to them. But old age does so concentrate the mind, believe me. The non-cow-pat brigade may lie on their death-beds seeking solace for their final journey off this mortal coil listening to their sequenzas and plink selon plonks. Much comfort may they derive from them. Me? I shall be wallowing beside a bank of green willow (loveliest of trees) which grows aslant a brook. Or maybe by the wild brooks of Amberley, I shall dream of Ludlow and Teme, wondering if my team is still ploughing, and on my better days perhaps a leavening of Chabrier, Poulenc and Ibert. But, at my end, 1 trust I shall find myself In Gloucestershire, a'babbling of green fields, and ascending alongside that lovely lark with my old friend and Grenadier colleague Hugh Bean's violin in attendance.

A personal letter of February 1997 finds the great man in typical form. The quotable bit on the composers of the nineties runs: *"Whatever you write about this early repertory the most important music was that of Walton O'Donnell, not RVW or Holst. The real challenge that woke bands up to their future role was that he supplied what 1 consider quality music in advance of so much formula stuff being churned out today."*