

# *Time to Remember*



*Eric Pinkett*

*An Anniversary Tribute 1948-1969  
Leicestershire County School of Music*

**Time to Remember**  
**by Eric Pinkett**

**with**

**Interludes by many Friends**

**1948-1969**

*Only let me make my life simple and straight  
like a flute of reed,  
for thee to fill with music*

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A friendly caricature by R.A.P.

## **PREFACE**

**I feel most complimented that I should have been asked to write a preface to Eric Pinkett's book about the County School of Music's 'Coming of Age'.**

**This enterprise has become one of the most famous and rewarding of all the activities of our County Council and it has been a source of considerable pride to me that it should have been my good fortune to have become connected with it. The importance of this venture goes far beyond the achievement of a high degree of musical excellence.**

**The fact that our young people travel the Continent annually and create such a stir among our European friends has brought considerable credit to Great Britain itself.**

**We were fortunate in having Stewart Mason as our Director of Education. He had the vision and courage to set this venture in train - he had a hand in picking Eric Pinkett as our Music Adviser - a man of immense ability and energy who realised the talent which lay hidden in this County. Eric Pinkett got around him a group of dedicated people who took this hidden talent and set the County ablaze.**

**If Eric Pinkett had not been a superman the whole affair could well have been bogged down in mediocrity.**

**We were fortunate in having, at the time all this started, Sir Robert Martin as Chairman of the County Council and the Education Committee - a man whose heart was in making a success of this new venture. He, I understand, even used to give a pep talk to our young people before they set off on their travels.**

**I took over from Sir Robert as President of the Friends of the County School of Music some seven years ago. At that time my knowledge of music was practically non-existent, and my instrumental ability was confined to making a noise like a dying cow on a hunting horn whilst careering across the grasslands of Leicestershire.**

**Soon, however, the enthusiasm of our youngsters and the energetic direction of Eric Pinkett fired me with a true pride and liking for our County School of Music and all who worked within it, both staff and pupils.**

**The Friends of the County School of Music is a remarkable body of voluntary people headed by Don Mobbs - a tireless worker and one of those rare birds who never get fussed, bad tempered, or more important still 'slighted' by some unfortunate saying or happening. These splendid people have been of the greatest support, both in help and money, and thanks to them, instruments have been purchased and money put up for our Continental ventures and many other things.**

**All these efforts and the remarkable talent amongst our young players so impressed Sir Michael Tippett that he took a personal interest in them. He wrote music for them, he conducted them, he bound them with the spell of his personality and he even became our Patron. What a tremendous encouragement he is to our young people - an encouragement the full measure of which I don't think even he realises.**

**Not only this, but Norman Del Mar, acknowledged to be one of the greatest conductors of our day, took such a liking to them that he has taken a major part in our work, helping in every way and conducting our concerts both at home and abroad.**

**How lucky we are, and how lucky our young people are. In years to come they will be able to tell their children and grandchildren that they were friends of Sir Michael Tippett and Norman Del Mar, and had in fact been taught and conducted by them. They will be able to recount with pride their trips abroad**

**and quote the remarks of the Ambassadors to both Belgium and Denmark who referred to them as being one of the best British exports since the war. They will be able to recall with pleasure the Lord Mayor of London's praise at the Guildhall concert last year.**

**I cannot finish without one word of thanks to our young players who on so many occasions and so unselfishly give up their time to help me by making music at the many functions throughout the year when I entertain ministers, judges, foreigners, councillors and others. The County Council is extremely proud of you and I, as Chairman, very humbly bask in your reflected glory.**

**Colonel P.H. Lloyd, CBE.TD. JP. DL.**

## **PREAMBLE**

**I had climbed seemingly endless stairs leading to the upper gallery of the 'Palais des Beaux Arts' in Brussels, and then peeped carefully around the curved promenade until I found the empty box I had spied from the stage door a few moments earlier. I let myself in and sat down .....**

**It was January 1966 and we of the County School of Music in Leicestershire were in Belgium at the invitation of "Jeunesse Musicales" to take part in their 25th anniversary celebrations. We had already played five concerts throughout the country, and, to reach our various rendezvous, had travelled through almost continuous snow storms and intense cold. Now we were about to play our last concert in this, the most famous hall in Belgium.**

**Sir Michael Tippett had flown over to join us especially for this performance. We had rehearsed during the early afternoon and now, as the last instrumentalists stepped out on to the platform, I slowly and silently closed the stage door and saw that single vacant box, high in the roof of the hall .....**

**I settled back in my quiet corner and looked out into the vast auditorium. There was not a vacant seat; and there too was the British Ambassador and his party. Soon the concert was under way and Sir Michael led the orchestra through the overture and a fantasia for piano and orchestra of his own. They played a new symphony written for them by Alan Ridout and then came the final item, the Enigma Variations. Throughout the whole evening I had been gradually drifting away from the reality of the occasion into a land of memories. Here in this high seclusion the Elgar music made an ethereal sound and it seemed as though the players were caressing the notes from their instruments. I was overcome by emotion and proud beyond words of their success, but memories mingled through my mind and I saw the faces of Peter and John and Michael, of Christine, Pamela and Margaret and many, many more all from the past. I knew that they should also be sharing our triumphs for they had each played their part and helped to make all this possible. In that moment I knew that one day I must try to tell the story of the County School of Music.**

**Now here in October 1968 I stand by the stage door of the Musikvereinsaal in Vienna, surely the most famous concert hall in the whole world.**

**The stage manager turns to whisper to me as the players file past, to tell me that this is the first occasion that an amateur orchestra has ever been -allowed to step on this stage to make music - and these are but children, Leicestershire children. So another concert begins and I listen and dream. Soon we shall celebrate our twenty-first anniversary ... surely now, the tale must be told. I see many faces, eager enthusiastic faces, I hear voices, excited voices, and I remember them all, for now is the time to remember.**

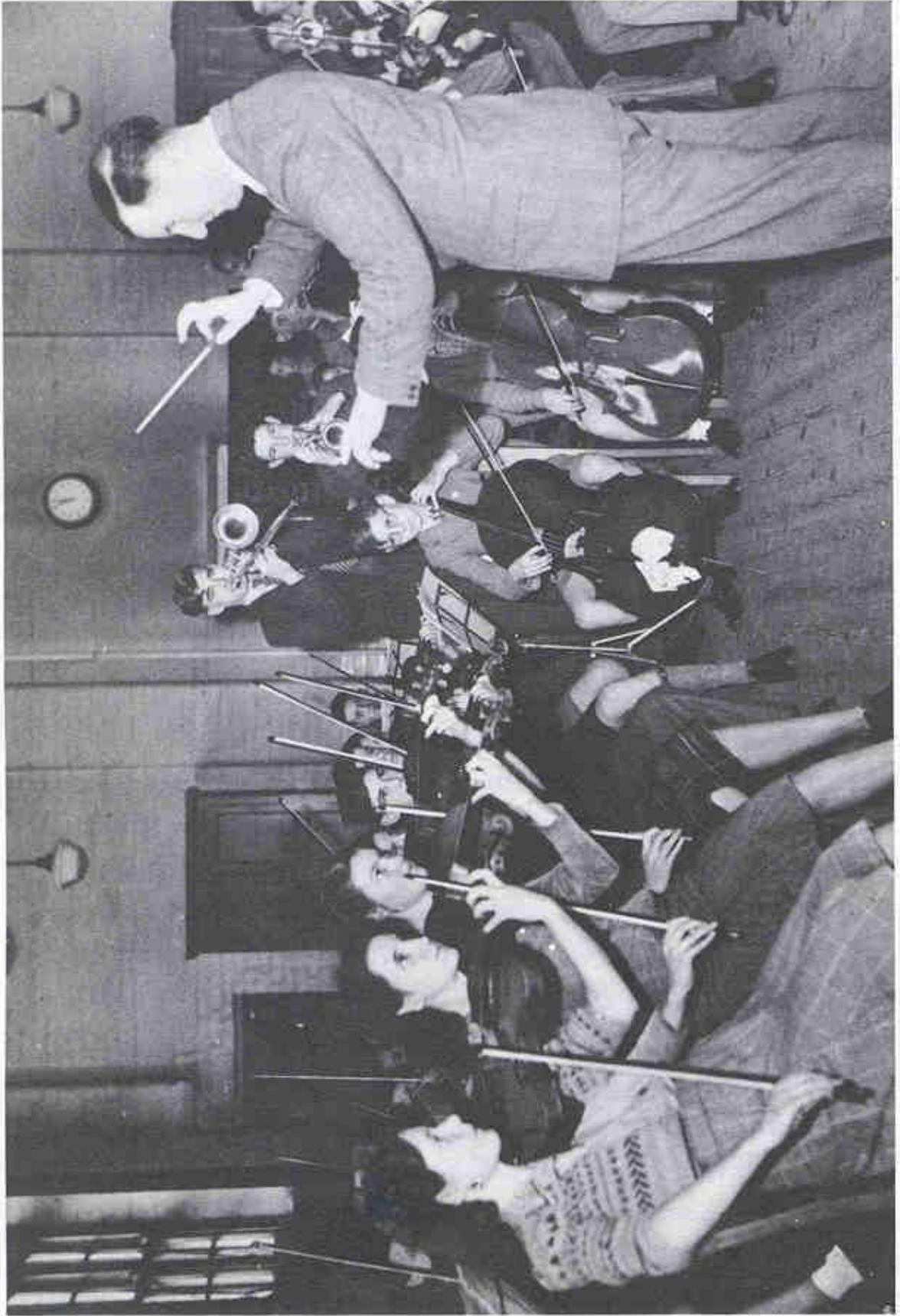
## 1. TOUCH AND GO

Late in an afternoon of November 1947 it became inevitable that Leicestershire would, in the near future, develop a County School of Music; until that moment of time it had been touch and go. Then finally, a new Director of Education asserted himself, had his own way and a first Music Adviser to the County was appointed. I was the new appointment, full of enthusiasm, eager to begin and knowing just what I wished to do - but it all so very nearly never happened. In January 1946 I had returned from the forces with the prospect of returning to work in my old school where, before the war, I had built up a very successful schools' orchestra. For three years in succession we had won the Schools' Orchestral Competition at the Old Queen's Hall in London and I had been very proud; now, six years later, I would have to start all over again. One day in the staff room I casually turned over the pages of the 'Education Times' and noticed that Melton Mowbray Grammar School were advertising for a music master. I sent off a letter of application and the very next day a telegram arrived asking me to go over for an interview.

Now I really had to make up my mind! My present school had a tremendously good reputation and indeed I had grown up there. I went along to see the senior master, who had been the music master when I was a boy. I needed some advice, but he was busy, too busy to talk with me and, somewhat annoyed, I walked straight out of the school and on to a bus to Melton Mowbray. There I met, and was immensely charmed by, the headmaster, Mr. Anderson. He was a truly great headmaster in the old tradition and was to prove a great influence on my way of life. The interview itself was, I am sure, quite unique. After a few preliminary words and details of the school the head went straight to the point. He certainly needed a music master but what most interested him in my application was that I had some reputation as a games player. I was duly appointed, mainly, I must say, because of this sporting ability, and during the next two years I hardly ever left the school grounds; we were constantly making music and playing games. My two brief years at Melton Mowbray Grammar School were probably the happiest days of my life.

During my second year the head became very proud of the school's musical prowess. A large and formidable orchestra, a brass band and a large choir displayed themselves on every conceivable occasion. The staff had to put up with a very great deal and I shall be forever grateful for their endurance. About this time an inscrutable young H.M.I. invited the head teachers and music teachers of the County to meet H.M.I. Mr. Cyril Wynn, The Staff Music Inspector, and his recently appointed successor, Mr. Bernard Shore; they were to talk about the future of music in schools. My headmaster took me along, perhaps to boast a little about our superiority; in any event I soon found myself talking with Mr. Shore whom I had known in my student days and during the war, and who asked me to take part in the talks. The result was that the very next day these three illustrious folk all descended upon Melton Mowbray to hear for themselves what we could do.

Three months later that very same H.M.I. became the Director of Education for Leicestershire and one of his first visits was to Melton Mowbray Grammar School. The date, November 1947, was drawing very near.



Members of the original Orchestra of the C.S.M. in 1948.



Another group of players in the original Orchestra 1948.

## 2. THE BEGINNINGS

Advisers, particularly in specialist subjects, were an immediate post-war development in education. New and unskilled teachers were being rapidly enlisted from all walks of life and the Training Colleges were turning out students, often with only one year's training. Thus there was an urgent need for help and advice in almost every school. I was now Adviser for Music in Leicestershire and as such I presented myself at the County Offices in Grey Friars at the beginning of the Summer Term in April 1948. I do not think that I expected to be met and welcomed on the steps of the Education Department. I think perhaps I did expect that, somewhere, someone would initiate me into the new life ahead and that someone would come along to explain just what was expected of me. This was not to be, however, and I soon realised that I was now very much on my own. It was not that everybody was heartlessly disinterested in my affairs. Indeed, there is, as I now know very well, no more friendly and helpful band of people anywhere than all those concerned with education in the County Offices. Nevertheless, I had to find my own way - to find an office space, a table and a stool, and then to sit and ponder on what next to do.

I had very firm notions of what I intended to do; I believed very strongly that music was one of life's joys and as such it was the teacher's duty to try to arouse enthusiasm for music among children. I was quite sure that the singing lessons as generally practised were not the right means to that end and that children everywhere should be given the chance to play instruments - any instruments - and thus be able to take part in music-making.

This then, I set out to do. I left my office space, abandoned any hope of making myself into an administrator, forgot all about filing systems, form-filling, order forms of any kind and, armed with a variety of instruments in my car, lots of stamina and boundless enthusiasm, I went forth to conquer. I breezed into schools in all parts of the County, seeking to find fellow enthusiasts or trying to instill a desire for music into the many headmasters I met; I soon found schools which were willing for me to practise on them and in no time I was the County's wandering minstrel and teacher of all instruments. I had not spent all the war years in the Royal Air Force without some purpose, and since I had spent most of those years conducting bands it meant that I had had endless opportunity to practise on all the woodwind and brass instruments. I was now the complete instrumental teacher of all stringed and wind instruments and I was now about to perform.

I chose seven schools in different parts of the County - Coalville Grammar, Roundhill Secondary Modern, South Wigston Secondary Modern, Ravenhurst Junior, Birstall Junior, Grove Junior, Melton; and I continued to visit Melton Grammar. I taught throughout every dinner hour, and after school into the early evening. I arranged a teachers' string class which met one evening every week. Over and beyond my orchestra from Melton Mowbray, I found only seven people in the whole County who could lay any claim to play an instrument. Nevertheless, I called these together with the many from Melton - and the County School of Music had begun.

The Education Committee were persuaded to hire the Elbow Lane School in the City of Leicester; this was the nearest school to the 'bus station and all the members of the orchestra were required to make their own way from home to Elbow Lane. The Committee agreed to reimburse the children for the cost of the 'bus journey and Mr. R.W. Swann who was then in the Finance Section of the Education Department, had the bright idea by which, each Friday, I was given the amount of money required to pay the members.

Accordingly each week I was given this sum which I then had to try to change into the appropriate coinage to meet all the demands. My pockets bulged with coins and my every step was accompanied by the chink of shillings and pennies. I was nearer to being a 'bus conductor than to my desired aim. Thus in May 1948 there began the Saturday morning routine, which has continued without pause for these 21 years. There were about 60 players, mostly strings, with only one cellist and very few violas, one flute, one clarinet, one oboe and a host of brass wind. I appointed from our midst a secretary, Christine Jenkins, and a librarian, Brenda Attwell (now Mrs. Fennelly and teaching at the Fairfield Preparatory School in Loughborough) both from Melton and both most efficient in their administration.

My wife became the treasurer, with the difficult task of trying to pay out the children's expenses in the short space of time I could yield at the end of the practice and before there was a general stampede to catch the buses. She was always left minus several pounds when the last member departed, because rapidly, week by week, I added fresh members to the orchestra, just as soon as they could blow or scrape well enough to make a tolerable sound; and the amounts of money we collected from the official source never anticipated such development.

Supply of instruments was my major concern. No new instruments were being made so soon after the war and the only way was to find them second-hand. Fortunately, no other Authority was making such developments and so I advertised in the press, sent notes to parents through the schools asking them to search the attics and beg from friends, and spent endless hours in junk shops throughout the Midlands. I became expert in discovering these places and quite ruthless in arguing the price.

The Authority were equally ruthless when I asked for the return of the money I had spent in buying instruments. They could not understand why I should deal in such an uncivilised way, and much preferred to work through committees and order forms, all time-consuming, and for me no way of acquiring instruments in these impecunious second-hand markets. I became a plague and a nightmare in the lives of the "Treasury Boys", was constantly reprimanded and watched, reported to committees and almost drummed out of the Regiment, except, of course, that as yet I had not managed to find a drum and they would not have known what to do with the ever-increasing array of instruments I had gathered around me.

Life was not easy and the Education Committee shook their heads with grave doubt; schoolmasters who came and heard us playing shook their heads unbelievably at the sound we made. My only friends were the children, who were deriving great fun from it all, but I badly needed a friend and believer.



1st and 2nd Violinists 1950.



#### SMALL GROUP OF PLAYERS 1951

*L to R Back Row:* Terry Carter now in Ireland, Peter Leach now Leader 2nd Violins (Liverpool Philharmonic), Jim Hunt (now Sadlers Wells), Peter Lewis (now Violist, BBC Symphony Orchestra), David Haslam (now Principal Flute and Associate Conductor Northern Sinfonia).

*Middle Row:* Gilian Attewell (Melton Mowbray G.) Papagena in the *Magic Flute*, Ann Rottenbury (Market Harborough) Pamina, *Magic Flute*, Elizabeth Holden (now the very well known singer).

*Front Row:* Rose Betteridge, Coalville G. and now the wife of David Haslam, and Cherry Pinkett.

### **3. THE FIRST FRIEND**

**I have always had faith, and in the darkest moments - which were all too frequent - I still knew that we would succeed. Often, these days, other Authorities ask how to start instrumental work in a county and when I explain how and where to purchase instruments, pitfalls to avoid, the way to recruit and teach children, how to build a School of Music, and then think back to how we started with no means whatsoever, I know that my faith believed in miracles. I remember that soon after I had started the Saturday morning orchestra a musical schoolmaster friend, knowing of my bounding enthusiasm, gave me solemn advice. "Rehearse", he said, "for five years before you attempt to give concerts", and my reply had been that if I waited for five years, or even one year, I should have no orchestra. I had the unshakeable belief that what I was about to do could only be achieved by enthusiasm, and enthusiasm would only be created by doing and performing.**

**By the summer, at the end of my first term in office, I had organised a music course for teachers. I invited visiting lecturers in Bernard Shore, shortly to become the Staff Inspector for Music, Miss Elizabeth Barnard to talk on Junior Music, and the Dalcroze Eurythmic group to perform. I also announced that the Orchestra of the County School of Music would play - and play we did! There are still many teachers in the County who remember the occasion and some who still remind me of it.**

**The course was held at the Roundhill School, Thurmaston, which was at that time the largest and most convenient school for such an activity. It had a most exuberant headmaster, a man who was to become our first friend, Mr. K.F. Veasey, now alas no more, but one who helped us when 'a friend in need was a friend indeed'.**

**Many are the tales that schoolmasters throughout Leicestershire still tell of K.F. Veasey, but I like best to remember him as he quickly entered the school hall for morning prayer, nodding first to right and then to left as he threaded his way to the platform, from thence on to a chair and finally on to the desk set there for the purpose. Now mounted high above his staff and children, he would pause and, with ear cocked, listen to the birds singing outside the windows, answer them in their own language and listen once more for their reply; he would then solemnly call out the number of the hymn. He was always likely to call a halt in the middle of the hymn or even of the prayer, to make a special announcement or to give the result of a school football match.**

**Mr. Veasey could command attention; he was an enthusiast and he invited me to bring the orchestra to Roundhill.**

**Lack of any financial help made it impossible at that time to re-orientate the orchestra on the Roundhill base, but there and then was borne the idea of holiday courses and at the next holiday break the orchestra met for three days at Roundhill. We would begin our practice at 10 a.m. and by midmorning Mr. Veasey would appear to give us a succulent description of the mid-day meal ahead and would re-appear from time to time to appraise our music, to which he would add some fascinating anecdote from his long repertoire. We repeated the Roundhill visits with great success for several years.**

**I shall never forget the debt I owe to K.F. Veasey - the first friend and believer. It was from this first root in the County, at Roundhill, that much of our activity over the next few years was to stem. The school became our bulwark and we now**

had the confidence to christen the young orchestra as the 'County School of Music'. I was proud of the Organisation, Mr. Veasey was proud to be our friend. What more did we need?

What indeed! The woodwind instruments were frequently held together by elastic or string; no present day player would attempt to play with the only reeds we could buy and, in any case, all the woodwind and brass were high-pitched instruments, but these were the only types available with the small amount of money I could beg. I could buy more of them and I wanted many children to become involved. These were to be my disciples, to inspire other children all over the County.

Quantity rather than quality was the first necessity, but quantity is so much easier to achieve than quality and to this problem there is no quick solution. Parents regularly called in and smiled indulgently on our efforts, schoolmasters looked in, and some offered advice. I well remember the present head of the Lutterworth High School, Mr. K.H. Harris, then the music master at South Wigston Secondary School, asking me one day whether I realised that the orchestra was playing out of tune. This was for me almost the end. How could I not know unless my ear was so very terrible. I remember, too, that headmasters, when introducing me to their schools, would always describe me as an enthusiast and, much to my very private dismay, never as a musician. I had a long way to go and much to answer for.

## **Interlude**

**From Sir Michael Tippett, Parkside, Corsham, Wiltshire.**

**The Key of the Door. It's good to have a birthday; especially a 21st birthday. Traditionally on that day we come of age and get the key of the door. Both these propositions are true for the Leicestershire County School of Music. It has certainly come of age. For it has grown from small beginnings to a startling amalgam of organisational ability, numbers of fine instruments, dedicated instrumental teachers and conductors, a campus of good buildings for weekly rehearsals of the three orchestras, and a most successful Friends of the County School of Music. And it now possesses the key of the door; that door through which Leicestershire's children (all those that want to) go towards a career in music or a life-long practise and enjoyment, in the best amateur sense, of this extraordinary and social art. It seems to me, at any rate, an exceptional and exciting achievement.**

**It is exciting (to anyone who works professionally in music) because it succeeds in releasing such hitherto untapped resources of musicality among our country's children; untapped because Education Authorities had in general never considered such activities as necessary or possible. And it is exceptional even within the small, but one hopes growing, body of Local Education Authorities who find the release of this musicality so educationally valuable, in the sheer scope and depth of what is done by Leicestershire's County School of Music within any one year.**

**If all the Educational Authorities of the U.K. reached out to such achievements, then there could be rejoicing indeed. At present, if you are an average musical child, in one area you are enriched, in another you are deprived.**

**The instrumental techniques, for example, are hardly to be learnt later. I am not an educationalist but an active working composer. I am only drawn into such a venture as the 'County School of Music' because I would appear to be needed. Not of course all the time, but for particular things. When I was first asked to be composer-conductor for the big Festival of 1965 I was delighted, but could not see how I could manage the rehearsing with myself in Wiltshire and the orchestra in Leicestershire. So the really impressive, and totally unexpected, proposition was to bring the orchestra to Corsham on a vacation course, where with the generous loan of the local secondary school by the Wiltshire Educational Authority, I could step out of my house on finishing the day's composing and walk over to the School hall where not only the orchestra was all set to play, but a quite fantastic barrage of cables and cameras showed that Television intended to look in on this splendid adventure.**

**I found this week remarkable and memorable. It was so surprising and so rewarding. The week's Festival itself was equally astonishing. I have recovered by now from the astonishment. I have grown much more aware of what is really involved in such a Festival or in a tour abroad; both the splendours and the miseries. But always the rewarding sense of living and lived-through educational experience which the splendours and miseries of these occasions provide for the young people. (And musical experience which they provide me; for it is a give and take). So a special toast to the County School of Music and many happy returns.**

**Michael Tippett**

#### **4. THE EARLY DAYS**

At Roundhill there was a young music master who I knew had the right qualities to help with the County School of Music. Unfortunately he could not play an orchestral instrument, so with a very little persuasion I found him a clarinet and a teacher, and when he had received just four lessons I enrolled him as the woodwind coach on Saturday mornings. This young man was Jack Matthews, whom we now see frequently at the organ during our pageants at the De Montfort Hall and who still enthusiastically teaches the young musicians at his present school in Blaby.

Help was now coming to hand. One day, walking in Leicester, I met an old war-time friend whom I knew to be a very good singer; being a keen Welsh cricket and rigger fan, he was then on his way to watch Glamorgan at Grace Road. I also knew he was the music master at Hinckley Grammar School and a tremendous enthusiast for madrigal singing. I persuaded him to come along on Saturday mornings to conduct a madrigal group. This second helper was Philip Jenkins, now Headmaster at Market Bosworth Secondary Modern School.

I arranged for our first concert to be at Church Langton School, a school that was then just about as far removed from civilised town life as any in the country and where, I judged, the audience would be less aware of our deficiencies. I also knew the headmaster to be a very kindly soul, who could be relied upon to put on a most sumptuous tea. We played a concert in the afternoon to the school and after tea in the evening a second one for the parents. This was to become a ritual for the next few years, and with each concert we ventured closer and closer to the urban areas.

In each programme the orchestra would play four or five pieces - its complete repertoire, in fact. Such pieces as 'A Folk Dance Rondo', 'Gypsy Rondo', and 'Czech Polka' will recall these occasions to many old boys and girls. The madrigal choir would sing very well indeed - and Billy Littlejohn from Melton Mowbray would play a trumpet solo. Billy was a magnificent player whom I had started off when at Melton; we have never had a better trumpeter, and he was our first representative in the then very new National Youth Orchestra.

Our first concert was at the Hanbury School, Church Langton, and the present Rector (Rev. Ash) of the Hanbury Church, situated opposite the school, frequently recounts that the first performance in England of the "Messiah" was in this Church. So we started off in a goodly company; and, if Church Langton only occupies a tiny corner of Leicestershire, it has always been prominent in County School of Music affairs.

As a result of this first concert the school music master decided to introduce instrumental learning into the school and organised a school music festival, which I adjudicated. There I found a boy who played a recorder with such sensitivity that I persuaded him to learn the oboe. It was only a very old oboe, but he soon began to play it extremely well and eventually, when he left school, he entered the Royal Military School and won the Queen's Prize for his playing. The boy was John Hoare; the music master, Mr. Stanley Coggins, now headmaster of Gartree High School, Oadby, and for many years the Secretary and later Chairman of our Festival Committee. The Reverend Ash has continued to be a sincere friend, and I regularly call to seek his advice when a problem evades solution; often, too, a quiet chat stimulates endless ideas.

About this time two new arrivals at the Saturday morning School were to prove invaluable acquisitions. One Saturday morning I noticed a frail young boy standing in the school yard. He remained outside throughout the practice and

my glance was constantly drawn in his direction as he hopped first on one leg and then on to the other; he was obviously ill at ease. After the rehearsal he timidly walked in and stood around until I walked over to speak to him. Could we do with another cellist? he shyly asked. Could we indeed; we had only one who could pretend to play, so the next week this shy boy came to join the orchestra. He could play remarkably well, even though he was barely 12 years old and he became the first cellist, cello soloist at all our concerts, and remained with us until he went on to the Royal Academy of Music and thence into National Service, where I believe he was quite a considerable nuisance. He then came back to join the staff as our first teacher of cello and all other instruments when required. Such was the advent and progress of Malcolm Fletcher.

The other arrival was an equally demure fellow who arrived with a considerable reputation as a boy soprano, He went from music festival to music festival, winning prizes and trophies whenever he appeared and so, although he came to join us as a violinist, it was really his voice that fascinated me because here was another item for our concerts. Now we had a good madrigal choir, good trumpeter, good cellist and a good boy soprano, to support a pretty terrible orchestra. Things were really improving and we could look further afield for engagements. The boy soprano was Keith Smith, who later became a member of the National Youth Orchestra, as did Malcolm Fletcher. He went on to Leeds University and later came back to teach at Guthlaxton Upper School and to help me on Saturdays at the County School of Music.

I might add that the innocent faces of both these arrivals were really deceptive. They invented much of the roguery that still persists amongst the habitués of the County School of Music.

## 5. MORE ARRIVALS

Our second concert was directed to South Wigston Junior School, then in Bassett Street. The Headmistress, Miss M. Evans, was tremendously interested in music, came along to all my music meetings and committees, and had promised to be the secretary of the first concert we were proposing to organise in the De Montfort Hall. It was right that we should play a concert in her school and that we should try to interest the parents so that this school could also start instrumental learning.

Of course, each time this happened it meant that I had to discover more second-hand instruments, repair them, and then visit the school weekly to teach the children.

It happens that in Wigston there is the Glen Parva Barracks, which used to house the Band of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment. At this time a previous Director of Music to the Band had just returned home from abroad, after 13 years, during several of which he had suffered as a prisoner of the Japanese. His son was the clarinet player in the orchestra, and so father came along to hear us. I did not meet him after the concert but his son did bring a message on the following Saturday to say that father would like to meet me. This was arranged and duly we met; father, still in uniform and at a cross roads in his life, wondering about his future. He offered his services, and said with all the majesty that he could command that he would be ready to start at a salary of £1,500. Remember that this was in 1950, when a salary of £1,000 in educational circles was unheard of.

I desperately needed assistance and I spoke to the Director of Education about any possibility of recruiting such help, but things looked very bleak. Peripatetic staff were practically unheard of at that time and in any case a bandmaster's diploma, excellent though it is, was not a teaching qualification. Then the Director thought of an ingenious scheme.

Almost all schools were below teaching strength because of the acute shortage of trained teachers; therefore it would be possible to appoint such a person to the teaching staff of any school as an unqualified teacher and from then on second him as an instrumental teacher in the County. The scheme worked in almost every direction; the new name was added to the staff of Roundhill School and I was able to have a most welcome helper to teach instruments in the County. The only weakness to the scheme occurred when our new member of staff went to collect his first month's pay cheque. This was for exactly £9, so his salary was to fall far short of his expectations. Quite unabashed and without the least dismay, our new recruit elected to carry on even at this meagre salary; and so generations of wind players, many now achieving fame and some who met him at the other end of the scale, will always remember that smoothly serene and enigmatical character, Mr. Neale.

We are all indebted to him and grateful for his complete devotion and dedication over so many years. Let it be said that the Authority made claim that Mr. Neale's Military Qualification should be recognised as a teaching qualification, and in due course this was agreed and became, I believe, the precedent by which all later appointments from the Military Schools of Music were credited as qualified teachers with teaching status and pay. This has been of inestimable value to the teaching of wind instruments throughout the country.

Mr. Neale began his teaching at Roundhill School, Westfield School, Hinckley and at Limehurst Boys' School, Loughborough. In a very short time he had produced a military band at Roundhill. The headmaster produced money to buy instruments, gave the children time to practise on them, and, just as soon as they

could form an ensemble, he had them sitting on the grass verge in front of the school each morning, playing to welcome the children to school and for the benefit of all passing Leicester-bound 'buses.

Mr. Neale spent two days each week at Roundhill and to alleviate the headmaster's conscience he was required to take an odd Geography lesson each day. 'Odd' is the only polite word to describe these lessons, and all the children gaped in astonishment at the revelations that Mr. Neale conjured from his own limitless imagination. He then spent one and a half days at each of the other schools.

Loughborough Limehurst School unearthed a complete set of military band instruments in an A.T.C. unit and we were able to buy these. The day came to give out the instruments to the interested boys, and we tried to pair each boy with the instrument he was most likely to succeed in playing. Eventually we had one piccolo and one pale, speechless boy left. This had to be his instrument. He was a lonely, introvert character and a very poor scholar, who, by the magical accident of receiving this piccolo, managed to change his whole personality. He soon played in such a marvellous way that we persuaded the Authority to transfer him to a Grammar School, where he became and remained top of his form, gained seven 'O' levels, 2 'A's and a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, and has now been for several years one of the outstanding flautists in the country. This was David Haslam.

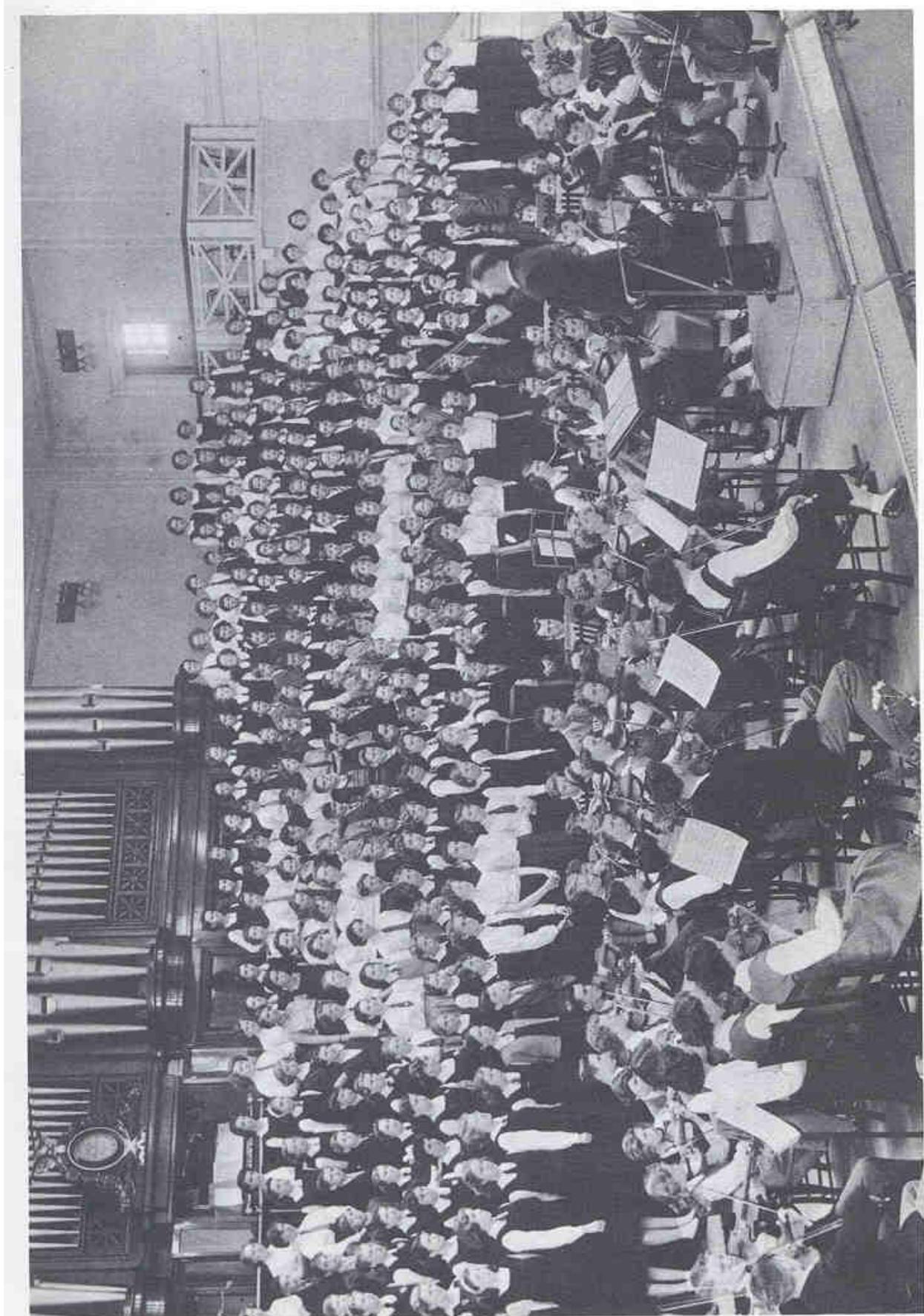
In the same beginner group he had a rival in Jim Hunt who took to the oboe. He had no intention of letting David steal all the limelight; he too went on very successfully to a Grammar School, to the Manchester Royal College of Music and is now an oboist with the Sadlers Wells Opera Company.

For the remainder of the week, Mr. Neale went to Hinckley and the Westfield Secondary School, where the then headmaster, Mr. R.M. Warner, was, and still is, a devotee of brass bands. He already had the beginnings of a band, had a regular weekly visit from a great County Brass Band character, Albert Bennett, and had on his staff a young man recently returned from having been an army captain, now to become a Rural Science teacher. The fact that he had mentioned that he could play the trombone induced his headmaster to put him in charge of the School Brass band, and I duly met him for the first time at one of his evening rehearsals. The band had a most exotic repertoire and its conductor had the longest baton I have ever seen or am ever likely to see any conductor use. He was to be the next person I invited to help me with the County School of Music. He needed no persuasion and has been with us ever since, still the same modest but tremendously efficient Jack Smith.

I well remember the headmaster once sending an urgent s.o.s. requiring me to visit him immediately. As soon as I arrived, he recounted to me in horror and shame an incident in the previous night's rehearsal. Bandmaster Bennett had been conducting the band when in a movement of discomfort a boy had suddenly scratched his head. Just as suddenly and without pause to consider the occasion the bandmaster flung down his baton and yelled - "Let the\*\* \*drop off - you just play" and in the stunned silence which followed the shattered headmaster silently retreated to his study, there to send for me.



The Military Band of The Roundhill School 1951, with the Headmaster Mr. K. F. Veasey and the Conductor Mr. A. E. Neale.



The First Festival Choir and Orchestra 1951.

## **6. THE FIRST TOUR**

**By 1951 we had completed our first Festival in the De Montfort Hall. The area competitive festivals had been organised and were a great success, and enthusiasm was spreading everywhere. We managed to purchase 200 clarinets at less than £2 each from the Royal Marines, and every nook and cranny throughout Leicestershire had been searched endlessly to find instruments of any kind. I spent every lunch hour and each evening after school teaching young instrumentalists to play; and Mr. Neale was also extending his work to more and more schools.**

**After playing in the De Montfort Festival the orchestra was encouraged to play concerts in the towns of the county, and since the audiences were always predominantly parents, our reception was always very good and our conceit became more apparent.**

**I have always believed that a voluntary venture such as the County School of Music, which requires children to give up much of their spare time to practise - never an easy task - and to journey into Leicester each Saturday morning, not returning home till mid-afternoon, can only succeed by its own success. Once one objective has been achieved, the next must appear or the interest and urge will quickly evaporate. I now needed a new challenge and I set myself to solve my problem.**

**The answer quickly came. I must take the orchestra abroad on an exchange scheme, we must play a concert or two in a foreign country, and perhaps we might manage to find a young group of players to visit us. That was my aim and I went along to propose this scheme to the Director.**

**It is only in later years that I have learned what can be the repercussions of such a visit to the Director's office. He was cautious, but curious, towards my suggestion and I heard little more about it until some weeks later when he returned from an educational visit to Essen in Germany. I was summoned to the presence, and with a glint in his eye that I have now learned to assess, he told me of the fruits of his journey. He had persuaded the City of Essen to invite us to spend two weeks there and, to cap his triumph, he had persuaded them to form an orchestra which in return would visit us. Now the inspiration was with us and we worked as never before. We chose more worthy music, stretched ourselves beyond our wildest dreams and prepared for the event.**

**The orchestra from Essen was to visit us early in July and our return visit was to follow almost immediately. We had to find homes for the German visitors, and Mr. Wakefield, an old friend from the Roundhill days and now headmaster of the Birstall Junior School, offered to find the hosts. Everything was prepared. I went along to the port to welcome them and met for the first time their leader, Herr Peter Jansen, and their interpreter, Dr. Otto Wagner. Together we journeyed back to Leicester, to Birstall Junior School, where a huge gathering of kindly folk was waiting to welcome the visitors and to take them into their homes.**

**The age group of our guests was much higher than ours and they had several music students in their midst. The day after their arrival we heard them play for the first time. Their playing was quite superb, of a standard we could not hope to match, and the more we heard them play in and around the County, the more demoralised we became. They were quite the nicest group of people that any country could have sent as ambassadors. Their visit so soon after the war was a triumph, and many of us still maintain our friendship with them. Their performances were given with great dignity, and their interpreter remained**

beside the platform to translate the words of welcome and thanks that poured out at every event they attended.

Now we packed our bags and prepared for the journey to Essen. Looking back after fifteen years of touring throughout Europe we can blush a little at the thought of the preparations we made. Two ladies accompanied us, Miss Blanchard, the Adviser for Physical Education, and Miss Bungard, then music mistress at Coalville Grammar School. They met and planned a dress for the girls, choosing a sky blue material and what I can only describe as a buxom pattern. Add to this that the Loughborough College of Art and Design most generously made bow ties for the boys - rather 'arty' ones in the same blue material - and one can see our initial disadvantage.

We set off, breaking our journey at St. Alban's to have a large organised meal - how naive could one be? - and proceeding by bus to London, where we took the boat train to Harwich and then, very nervously, went on board the boat. From The Hague we travelled on a train which took the next seven- hours and many customs checks before arriving at the Essen Bahnhof.

There was a huge crowd to meet this young English orchestra, almost certainly the first to visit Germany after the war, and whilst I was busy talking to the press and greeting our hosts, Mr. Smith was trying desperately to check our numbers. Finally when he could get near enough to me, he whispered that we were one member short.

We both immediately thought of all the press representatives lurking around and envisaged the front page of the English newspapers. So, while I entertained our hosts and thanked them for their marvellous reception, Messrs Smith and Neale hid in a quiet corner where they could establish who was missing. All ended well when a message came through that one of our boys had awakened from his sleep some stations later, to find we had all disappeared; he was promptly returned to the fold. This was our deputy leader, Peter Leach, from Mountsorrel, who later joined the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, for whom he still plays.

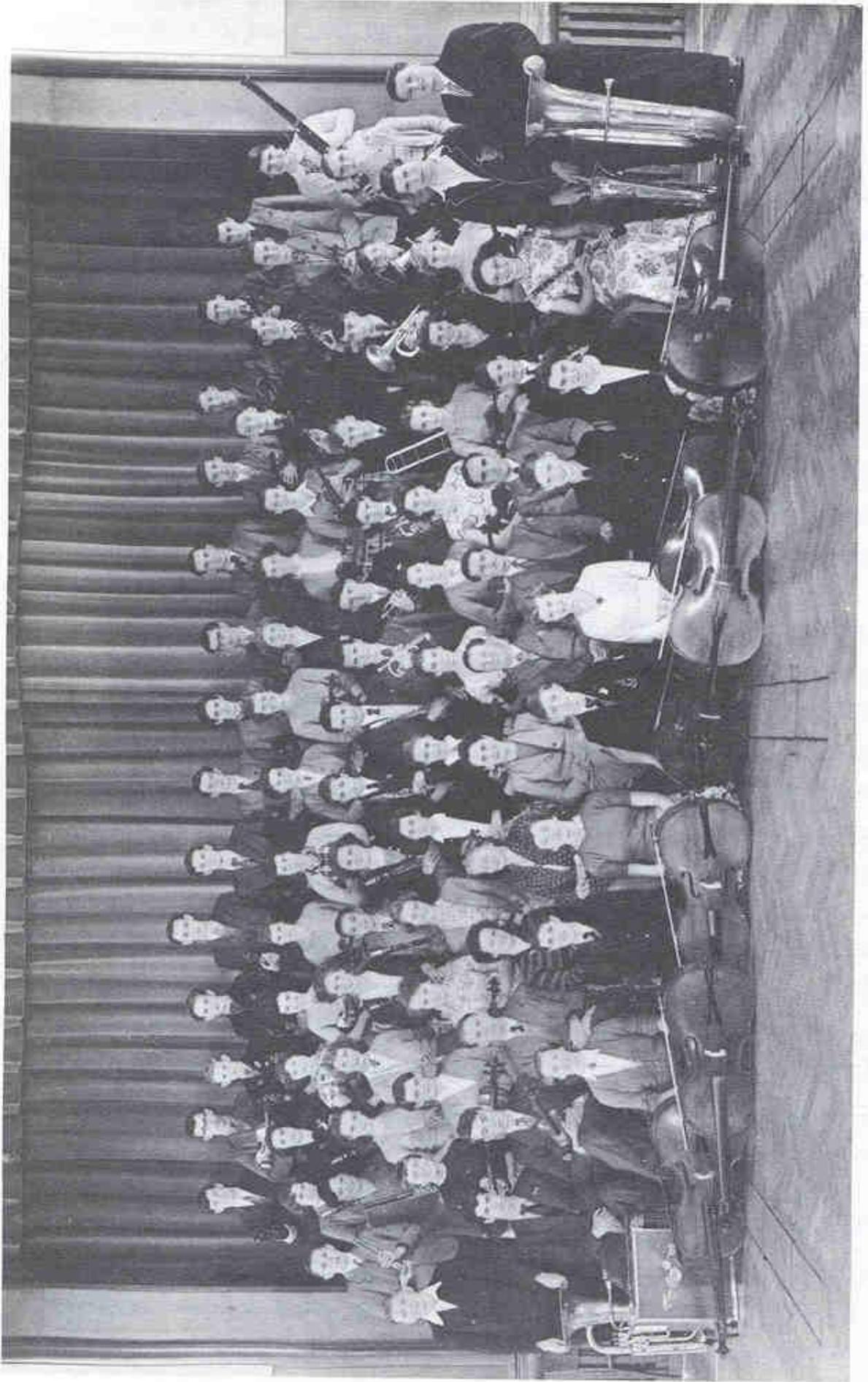
The leader of the orchestra was Peter Lewis from Melton Mowbray, who still comes along to visit us, but who now plays with the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra in London.

We could not match the playing of the Essen orchestra, but we did give our main concert in the principal hall of Essen, the "Saalbau", to an enormous audience. Thereby we gained an experience and a stimulus which did more to create our present level of attainment than anything which has happened since.

When we returned home we had quite a different outlook and could only think that we, too, must play like this wonderful German orchestra from Essen. The whole of our visit had been prepared and fostered by Colonel Elwes, who was at that time in charge of "Die Brucke", an establishment to rekindle relations between the two countries. He stood by us gallantly and loyally, attended our concerts, and some years later came to visit us in Leicestershire - we were honoured by his presence.

One further incident springs to mind before I pass from this event. Miss Bungard had thoughtfully provided herself with a kettle and paraffin heater for the journey, and no sooner were we settled in the train between Holland and Germany than she decided to brew tea in her compartment - all very well and thoughtful, except that a stray foot tipped over the paraffin heater and in no time the carriage was aflame. Sturdily the men folk quenched the flames before Miss Bungard's honour was irrevocably lost.

It was about this time that we first became aware of Alderman Mrs. M.E. Keay B.E.M., who was becoming increasingly interested in the progress of the orchestra and was to become a real friend and staunch ally.



The Orchestra in Holland in 1954.

## **Interlude**

**From Mrs. M. E. Keay, B. E. M. Chairman, Leicestershire Education Committee 1964-1968**

**On the occasion of any 'coming of age' celebrations one's mind first goes back to the birth of the Organisation and then it travels over the succeeding years. At birth the foundations laid are of great importance. Others will have mentioned the great debt we owe to all who, in spite of disappointments and frustration, have worked unceasingly and with loyalty, making possible the health, growth and happiness of our musical family.**

**One instance I would like to record here is the wonderful meeting held in the County Rooms in the very early days, when our much loved Sir Robert Martin, C.M.G., T.D., D.L., J.P., Chairman of the County Council, laid before young and old about to set forth on our very first tour abroad, foundations none could beat. His words, so far as I can remember, were:-**

**'Go forth as young ambassadors, Remember your Creator,  
Love your neighbour as yourself '**

**As wonderful at the age of twenty-one as at one.**

**On that foundation may the County School of Music go from strength to strength.**

**Margaret Keay**

## 7. GROWTH

After our return from Germany music was spreading everywhere on the home front. The De Montfort festival was to become a yearly event. The competitive festivals were now divided into four area festivals at Coalville, Hinckley, Wigston Magna and Melton Mowbray; each had its own committee, and selected winners from each area met each other in a County final to establish the County Champions. The Organisation behind these competitive festivals was, in itself, quite unique. We divided the County into four geographical areas and each held its own festival, drawing its competitors only from within its own boundaries. The resulting winners in each area then met in a final competition to decide the champion area. Each area had its own organising committee and selected members from each of these formed the County Music Committee, whose main task was to choose the music and adjudicators. The same classes and same music were used in each area, and in this way we had a means of inter-competition; we could select the music best suited to our needs and we could keep a watchful eye on the less healthy side of musical competition. We also selected adjudicators whom we knew to have the specialised knowledge we required, and we made a regular practice of inviting Principals and Senior Professors of the Colleges of Music to officiate, in order that they could have a preview of children who might well later become their students. The arrangement suited us admirably and above all it raised standards. Our best players were set against each other in a friendly spirit, we could discuss merits and weaknesses with them, and they gained enormously from each other. This was the point from which quantity slowly began to emerge as quality.

The trophy for the festival had been generously provided by Charles Moore of Wigston, a truly great character. He was quite old when I first met him and it was always a delight to visit his music shop and for him to recount his many adventures in music. I remember one day he gave me a double bass case and as his assistants carried it out to my car he turned to me and said, "Hey lad, they will all be saying, 'Poor old Charlie's gone at last' ". Nowadays Moore's shop in Wigston is a regular calling place for the members of staff of the County School of Music.

The first festival at the De Montfort Hall was an evening to remember. Miss Evans was the secretary and Mr. Warner was stage manager, a post he occupied for many years. We had a choir of 500 and the County School of Music orchestra. The orchestra's main contribution was the Haydn Trumpet Concerto and they also accompanied the singing. One item was allocated to the wind band alone and they elected to play their show piece - "Onward Christian Soldiers". Although by now the band was able to make a reasonably attractive noise, Mr. Neale had a certain gimmick which always entranced the audience. He had trained his musicians to move like robots and when he walked on to the stage they would immediately freeze on their chairs and remain statuesque until, with the merest flick of his finger, he would indicate action. To a man, they would all fling themselves into their starting position and freeze once more. He would then silently raise his baton, and all hell and "Onward Christian Soldiers" would be let loose. It had been agreed that no encores should be taken at this concert and all had gone well up to this point, but when, at the conclusion of its mighty sound, the band again acted with army precision, the audience was overwhelmed. Amidst tumultuous applause, Mr. Neale asked his players to rise and take a bow, and then indicated that they would sit down and play again.

Mr. Warner, as stage manager, almost exploded but there was nothing he could do; the band had won the day.

Mr. Fielding, the headmaster of Shelthorpe Junior School, Loughborough, I found to be a very old friend who had known me when I had been a schoolboy and he a very young teacher. He has been a great friend throughout the years and was always most insistent that Loughborough should play an important part in the County's music. I had been teaching almost from the beginning in his school, and a succession of clever musicians started from there and made their way via the County School of Music into the Royal Colleges of Music. Mrs. Fennelly, the original librarian and later secretary of the County School of Music, was now on the staff, one of the first ex-County School of Music members to return to teach in the County. She was looking after all the young musicians most gently and helping them and encouraging their efforts.

She had one problem child, a girl, who pursued the most outrageous escapades in the area; and countless people in the environs complained loud and often to Mr. Fielding. This girl had one redeeming feature; even at the very tender age of 9 or 10 I could see that she would or could become an excellent violinist. Her name was Marion Turner, and throughout all her schooldays she led a stormy life. Several times she nearly gave it all up, and many more times others would have given her up. Eventually she won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, then won many prizes whilst a student and finally, to my complete gratification, she appeared as the solo violinist with the Halle Orchestra playing the Moeran Violin Concerto in March 1968.

It was Mr. Fielding's insistence that persuaded me to start an area Centre of Music in Loughborough, and we gathered together all the better players from the Loughborough schools each Friday evening and rehearsed together as an offshoot of the County School of Music. This was soon to point the way to the regular area schools of music which now take place on every evening of the week. As instrumental learning spread farther and wider throughout the County, I had to try to enlist part-time assistance, and since we could only pay a very miserable rate per hour it was most difficult to find any willing musicians. I did manage to get one or two helpers but the experiment was not a success. It needs more than a good instrumentalist to convey to children the joy of making music.

I found one teacher who claimed that until a child could play the scale of G in tune he would not show him anything more. Needless to say there were very few successes in his classes. There was the teacher who preferred to play 'pop' tunes to his pupils; he was very popular, but the pupils seldom got beyond "Twinkle, twinkle, little star". I needed characters who could make an impression, and sometimes I found these. There was a young man named Cedric Carnall who, returning from National Service, applied to the Authority for a post as a music master. He was very young, and, I thought at the time, too gentle, but I learned that throughout his army service he had insisted on polishing one of his boots only and had become the bane of his sergeant-major. I felt that he must have character and so he was appointed to Melton Grove Junior School and proved a great success. We then transferred him to Roundhill, where he continued his good work, and finally to Lutterworth Grammar School, where his choir and military band were for many years outstanding in the County. He also joined me at the County School of Music, became Mr. Neale's second-in-command, and many, many musicians throughout the County and elsewhere owe a great deal to his endeavours. The Director of Education had by no means forgotten us. On the strength of our first tour to Germany he sallied forth to Holland to arrange a second tour for 1954 and if I had been surprised by what he had prepared for us in Germany, this was as nothing to the Dutch venture.

## 8. TOURS

We had improved enormously during the year following the German visit and we were quite anxious to continue with a second tour in '54. The Director of Education needed no prompting and visited Holland, where he made contact with the Hague Youth Orchestra who had a phenomenal character in their conductor, Tilly Talboom Smit. I was quite sure we could now cope with a situation such as the German visit, and, with Holland in mind, I had already arranged to take the orchestra back for a week-end concert in Essen - such was our new-born confidence.

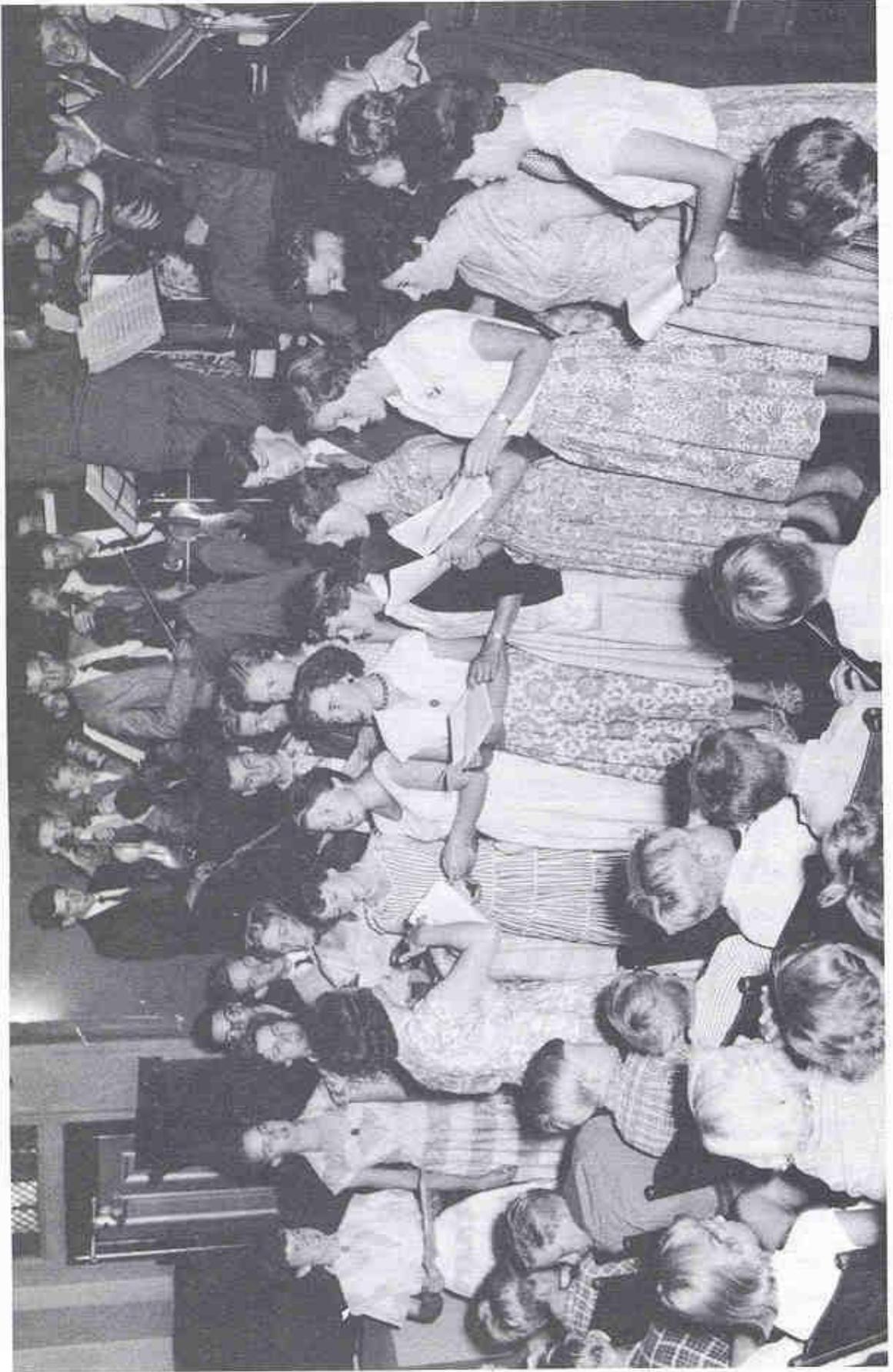
Over the years, County Officials in the Education Department receive from time to time a note which says simply, "Pl spk", and which, decoded, means 'Please speak with the Director of Education'. I have received more than my share of these, and on each occasion I have reported to the office which says 'Director of Education', and have duly re-appeared a wiser, if not happier, being. It was at such a meeting that I learned of the content of our visit to Holland. Our tour was to start and end in The Hague, and each day we were to issue forth, in turn, to each of the main cities there to give concerts. Utrecht, Leiden, Delft, Rotterdam and Eindhoven, in addition to The Hague, heard our music in a wonderful, but nerve-shattering tour.

We were making a tour similar to one undertaken there by the Vienna Boys Choir, and we had neither the reputation nor the experience to meet this challenge. It was during this tour that I learned, for all time, to ignore the reports of the critics, critics who compared us to the famous Vienna Boys, much to our disadvantage. Nevertheless, to all Youth Orchestras everywhere who may hope to emulate our present achievements, let me say that there is no better test of stamina and ability, than to be tossed in at the deep end. If you survive, you have what it takes.

For those members of the County School of Music who made this wonderful journey, let me remind them of the evening in Eindhoven. It was the anniversary of Liberation Day and to mark the occasion every house was decorated; hanging from each door was a miniature parachute with a model soldier attached. Everywhere was floodlit and we, the British visitors, were asked to lay the wreath for the Unknown Warrior.

Tours then became a necessary part of our musical education. The next year we travelled to Denmark and took with us not only the orchestra but also an opera - more of this later. Then, in turn, the tours were to Norway (Oslo), Germany (Hanover), Sweden (Stockholm), Norway (Bergen and Stavanger), Denmark (Aarhus), Germany (Krefeld), Ireland (Belfast and Co. Antrim), Germany (Monchen Gladbach) (Berlin) (Dusseldorf), Denmark (Copenhagen), and then to Austria, including Linz, Eisenstadt, Graz, Leoben, Salzburg and finally Vienna. We have been lucky enough to play in the main concert halls of each of these great cities, halls where the world's famous orchestras have also appeared. We have enjoyed wonderful audiences and tumultuous receptions. Perhaps best of all we appreciate playing to 'Jeunesse Musicales' audiences. Sir Robert Mayer has taken considerable interest in our tours and has provided the inspiration behind many such invitations; and to play to audiences of some two thousand dedicated young listeners (average age 17 - 25) makes a memorable occasion. Memories from each visit spring readily to mind; the brewery in Randers, Denmark, where the military band gave a concert and where Keith Petcher, our tuba player, contrived to drink the most potent beer; on another occasion Keith

performed a similar feat when Michael Farrington had bought for himself a bottle of liqueur to take home, and after breaking the bottle had poured the contents into a Coca Cola bottle, which Keith discovered lying around. in the changing room - the contents were drunk before he fully realised the difference; living in the shadow of the Olympic Ski jump in Oslo; learning just before our departure that our first visit to Ireland had to be cancelled because of Asian'flu - the saddest of all occasions; our second visit in great triumph to Norway - because by then we had achieved some reputation - and playing in the huge Cathedral of Stavanger, where many people were unable to gain admission and the concert was relayed to them outside; the party given by a doctor in Sanders in Norway, where each member of the orchestra was given a number and during the evening numbers were drawn from a hat, the lucky ones receiving most substantial prizes, the final prize offered being a magnificent, brand-new Norwegian cycle which was won by Beryl Pickering; Ambassadorial cocktail parties - more of these later; an invitation to take a small orchestra of forty five to the Krefeld Festival with all expenses paid; radio and television programmes in many of these countries; arriving in Stockholm to find that all the preparations were not completed and that our hosts had been unable to find homes for four members of staff, who finally found temporary accommodation in the Y.M.C.A. for the night and on waking up the next morning found themselves in a wash house, having been removed during their sleep to make room for a new army of customers. Such is often the lot of the poor staff, but they weather it all and we all have a host of memories to live with for the rest of our lives.



The Madrigal Choir in Denmark with Mrs. Odell conducting.

## **Interlude**

### **From Eric Mason, Music Critic of the Daily Mail**

**My warmest greetings to the County School of Music on its coming of age. The seeds so boldly sown in 1948 have borne fruit in what I regard as one of this country's most encouraging examples of music-making by young people.**

**Youth orchestras of great renown and small have blossomed up and down the country during these years - the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain started from an idea conceived in wartime Leicester - and the more there are the better for our musical health as a nation.-**

**Leicestershire's County School, however, works on a different and, as far as I know, unique basis. Moreover, its Schools' Symphony Orchestra draws its players only from present pupils in county schools and does not rely as some do on a stiffening of music students. This, of course, makes the unexpectedly high standard achieved all the more creditable, and the fact that music critics from the national press have taken notice speaks for itself. With so many musical events competing for the very limited space in daily newspapers, Fleet Street critics are not easily persuaded to step outside their regular circuit.**

**The school has been fortunate to have a dynamic musician like Eric Pinkett guiding its work, and doubly lucky in attracting the practical interest of Sir Michael Tippett, who is not only one of our most distinguished composers but a stimulating and refreshingly unstuffy personality.**

**To me the most heartening feature is the orchestra's eagerness to play 20<sup>th</sup> century music; concerts ought not to be solely exhibitions of Old Masters. From my first visit to the De Montfort Hall I specially remember the relish with which the young musicians played the blues in Gershwin's American in Paris and their idiomatic account of Lambert's Rio Grande. On my next visit two years ago they offered a programme consisting entirely of new works. Four of the five had been written for them, surely adding extra excitement to the challenge.**

**The climax was Funeral Games for a Greek Warrior, in which the orchestra played Alan Ridout's strong, colourful music while the hall swarmed with young 'Greeks'. It may not have been great art, but it was fresh and well-made and must have been even more fun to play and dance than it was to hear and see. Other counties could profit by Leicestershire's example, and I hope they will.**

**Eric Mason.**

## **WHAT THE PAPERS SAID**

**Prolonged and enthusiastic applause .... in the Ulster Hall, Belfast last night saluted the Symphony Orchestra of the County Schools of Leicestershire, after a concert of music which would not have come amiss from a senior professional body of players.**

**BELFAST TELEGRAPH: September, 1964.**

**...the opening concert of the Leicestershire Schools Festival of Music at the De Montfort Hall was an exhilarating triumph for all concerned in it and, in particular, for Michael Tippett whose inspiring direction and warm personality evoked playing from his young orchestra that, at times, had a touch of miraculousness about it.**

**R.A.P. LEICESTER MERCURY: May 1965.**

**The Leicestershire Schools Festival of Music last week displayed such an 'embarras de richesses' that I am convinced that no other area in the country provides a comparably successful musical education for its youth. Financial backing, musical instruments, professional advice and tuition are being proffered constantly and enthusiastically. The result is that the county sends out students well equipped to become top professional musicians; its scientists and engineers have an inestimably valuable cultural awareness; and often it has launched a pupil on a career who might otherwise have foundered by the way. Meirion Bowen. THE OBSERVER: May 1965.**

**The Leicestershire Youth Orchestra distinguishes itself by its sheer joy in music-making, its intelligent playing, pronounced rhythmic sense and strict discipline. The young men and women play with a style and a sophistication that would do honour to a good many professional orchestras.**

**MORGENPOST (BERLIN): September, 1965.**

**This concert made no concessions to popular taste but earned for these young virtuosos whole-hearted admiration. Apart from their whole deportment and the technical level of their performance, one must underline the fact that the programme was entirely composed of works by English composers and in itself constituted a useful and justifiable piece of propaganda for British music.**

**LE SOIR (BRUSSELS): January, 1966.**

**Leicestershire seems to lead the way in linking this activity (schools orchestras) with the work and participation of the living British composer, and in propagating the achievement nationally and indeed internationally.**

**William Mann: THE TIMES: May, 1967.**

**The Leicestershire Schools Festival of Music, which was held throughout last week, is perhaps the most ambitious undertaking of its kind in the country, and the education authority must be congratulated for its imagination and initiative.**

**TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT: May, 1967.**

**The concert was rather an exceptional one .. the orchestra was exceptional, too, not only in its size.. but also in the admirable quality of its playing. After the concert Sir Michael Tippett, patron of the festival, owned to me that he had felt the same initial sense of disbelief almost, that an orchestra assembled from schools up and down the county could achieve so satisfying a tone, so high a standard.**

**Andrew Porter. FINANCIAL TIMES: May, 1967.**

**The Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra .... revealed astonishing confidence and technical ability in their concert of contemporary British music at the Fairfield Hall, Croydon, last night. They were steered through their formidable task with avuncular firmness and sympathy by Norman Del Mar.**

**J.R.H. DAILY TELEGRAPH: May, 1967.**

**We always imagine that Austria is the leader of the world in music. And so like a thunderbolt from the clear sky descended upon us an English symphony orchestra consisting of 100 musicians, boys and girls, between 14 and 18, who are 'mere' secondary school children. They cause in us a similar shock to that which the Americans had at the time of the first Sputnik. .... these young people from all parts of the county play with fantastic devotion and enthusiasm.**

**NEUE ZEIT (LINZ): September, 1968.**

**It is one of the outstanding schools orchestras in the world, and has been conducted by such famous artists as Sir Adrian Boult, and presented its concert here under Norman Del Mar. As they perform the most difficult contemporary items, no other schools orchestra is likely to compare with them in the near future and it is quite evident that they have grown up with modern music and feel quite at home with it.**

**KURIER (VIENNA): October, 1968.**

**It is a little unusual to see on the platform of the Mozarteum about 100 young musicians; it is certainly a pleasure, if the auditorium is packed full of young people between 15 and 25, and finally it is an absolute joy if on the stage their performance is outstandingly good and gives off sparks which inflame enthusiasm in the audience. These factors were operative when .. the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra performed under Norman Del Mar.**

**DEMOKRATISCHES VOLKSBLATT (SALZBURG): Oct.'68.**

**Amazement was caused by about a hundred fourteen to eighteen year olds in a well rehearsed musical team, steeled by musical tours, to whom without any hesitation could be entrusted the entire symphonic repertoire of any city: young people who replace the blood and tears of playing with skill and good humour.**

**ABEND ZEITUNG (MUNICH): October, 1968.**



Playing in Denmark 1955.

## 9. DIGRESSIONS

By far the greatest problem one has to meet and to overcome is that of maintaining the level of attainment year by year. It is a tremendous challenge to find, when we arrive back from a tour in September with the applause and praise still ringing in our ears, that thirty of the players are leaving immediately to go on to the Universities and Royal Colleges to study music, and yet, within the next two months we have to prepare for and give our next concert. We have to contend with a new programme and thirty new, inexperienced players, and yet our audience will think only of hearing us play at our best.

This is a challenge we like to accept. One has to learn how to deal with the problem, and at the present time we have equipped ourselves with a progression of three orchestras and a marvellous staff to deal with them. Early each year I account for all those who will leave the following year and then we set about deciding who shall be their replacements; with these we work for hours each week so that they shall be worthy to step into the vacant places. The Senior orchestra is replenished from the Intermediate orchestra, and this in turn finds replacements from the Junior orchestra, which recruits from the schools. Thus we go on year by year and there is always an incentive for the young, worthy players to climb higher and higher.

In the early days when, on occasions, I have known that the following year the orchestra would lose several key players and that their replenishments would still be immature, I have set out to cover such a weakness by producing an opera. The first opera was produced in 1955 when we decided upon the "Magic Flute". Throughout the years, there have always been good choirs in the County; I recall Coalville Grammar with Miss Bungard, Kibworth Grammar with Terry Dwyer, Lutterworth Grammar with Cedric Carnall and the Junior Choirs of Broomleys with Mrs. Odell and Melton 'Grove' with Miss Wilford. From these schools and others we produced the chorus and cast.

Helen Brennard (Loughborough) and Olwin Thompson (Lutterworth) shared the role of the Queen of the Night. Desmond Kershaw, now teaching at Anstey Martin School was Sarastro and Ann Rottenbury (Market Harborough) and Elizabeth Watchorn (Melton Mowbray) played Pamina. Papageno and Papagena were played by Michael Pipes (Sileby) and Gillian Attewell (Melton Mowbray), and the three ladies were Elizabeth Davies, Elizabeth Holden and Rowena Styles. Miss Bungard, Mrs. Odell and Mr. Jenkins trained the singers and a new Drama Adviser in Alfred Bradley, now with the B.B.C., produced. We toured the County with the finished production, and eventually set off with it and the orchestra to Denmark.

It was a hot summer and as we spent our few free moments at the wayside cafes in Denmark, Alfred would ruefully complain that every time he blinked he missed seeing one of the passing Danish beauties. We played the opera in the Aarhus Hallen, the largest hall in the city, to an audience of three thousand, and such was the enthusiasm that we were requested to return the following week for a repeat performance. This we did to a second full house.

We sang the opera in English and the majority of the audience could follow this very well, but when in the second performance Papageno forgot his words for a brief moment he was able to convey his dilemma to me in the vernacular and we were able to fill in the music until he recovered. I also remember a late stage entry by Keith Smith which at the moment caused near panic. Over the years since then, Keith has often given me his version of what happened, but I am never convinced.

The highlight of this tour was provided by the B.B.C. They decided to send a team with us to make a programme about the whole adventure, and about the opera in particular. James Pesteridge, Bill Hartley and Stephen Maddocks accompanied us, making tape recordings from the moment we boarded ship. We decided to make the long journey overland to Denmark, since we could not find a boat to take us with all our scenery and instruments. On reaching the Hook of Holland, all our scenery and heavy equipment was placed in the rear of the train and we prepared for a twelve hours journey.

In the middle of the night the rear end of the train was uncoupled from the front portion, and Messrs. Smith, Neale and Self (the Deputy Music Adviser) set off to transfer the equipment to our end of the train. It was just unfortunate that the temperamental train driver chose that moment to restart our part of the train, and the last we saw of these colleagues for many hours was three frantic men running down the railway track carrying between them two timpani. Few of the children were aware of this catastrophe - they were fast asleep in the luggage racks of the train.

We produced a second opera a few years later, and again we toured the County. After each performance I would re-appear the next day, re-pack the costumes and scenery onto a trailer behind my car and proceed to the next centre. This went on and on, and I became more and more tired. One day I was making such a journey when, half-way down a hill, I found my brakes were not functioning and I careered over a busy main road into a garden in front of a house. Luckily my car hit a pliable tree and the front end finished in the air, suspended on the tree - the show went on, and we finally took the opera, "The Bartered Bride", to Hanover. At another time we produced three one-act operas - "The Drunkard" by Gluck, "The Impresario" by Mozart and "The Telephone" by Menotti.

Another unforgettable tour was undertaken in January 1966. To mark the 25th anniversary of "Jeunesses Musicales" we were invited to undertake a week's tour of Belgium, giving six concerts, the first four of which I conducted, before we were joined by Sir Michael Tippett who conducted the remainder. It was snowing continuously and terribly cold. As always we played as well as we knew how, and by the time we reached Brussels were just a little weary. On the Friday we assembled at the Flemish Television studios to make two films with Sir Michael. We were filmed throughout the day as we played away, pausing only briefly at mid-day for a light snack. Towards the evening I kept up the players' spirits as they toiled on and on under the blazing television lights, by promising that we would go straight on to the Ambassador's party, to which we had been invited, and that, once there, I would permit them to drink whatever was offered. At 6 p.m. we set off for the party and were met in great style. Footmen appeared as from nowhere and, immediately, they were relieved of their charged glasses by our parched youngsters. This apparently went on and on whilst I was busily engaged in answering questions about the orchestra asked by other guests. Finally, Jack Smith quietly suggested to me that we should offer suitable excuses and return to our hostel. Stealthily we tried to muster the children, and at last got them on to our coaches and retreated to the hostel with a party of highly charged and somewhat intoxicated children. It was difficult to get them to sleep. We found one young lady standing in a bowl of ice-cold water, sadly reciting a tale of her father's indulgence in a nightly pint of beer. Finally about 5 a.m. all was quiet and all were asleep.

The next day was to be the last and greatest concert in the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels, and a rehearsal with Sir Michael was arranged there for 10 a.m.

**I had to go along and explain the dilemma to Sir Michael, and finally we gathered together at noon and rehearsed - tired young musicians with heads such as they had never before experienced, but still fun of fight. That night to a packed audience they gave one of the most thrilling concerts in the history of the County School of Music, and the Ambassador said that this orchestra was the best export sent by Britain to Belgium.**

## **Interlude**

**From Bryan Kelly, 3081 W The Berkshire, 4201 Massachusetts Avenue,  
Washington DC 20016.**

**My Dear Friends in Leicestershire,**

**I've often wondered why 21 should be a significant number in terms of maturity. Who gave it the mysterious association - Pythagoras perhaps? I feel that I came 'of age' when I became 28; you with your energy and enthusiasm surely arrived before the official date? Anyhow, convention dictates 21, so - many congratulations!**

**I shall always be grateful to Alan Ridout for having introduced me to you all. Memories of happy times flood back to me as I write this, many miles away in the U.S.A. Do you remember that first concert in the Roman-arena-like hall in Dusseldorf ? The round lady who rose from her seat in the gallery, (just before you started my piece) and announced in hysterical staccato German that 'I', the composer, was sitting there next to her. I don't know who was more surprised by this show of oratory - the audience or me!**

**Speaking no German, I found solo trips to restaurants a bit of a nightmare, but sitting with you all and allowing Norman Del Mar to conduct us through the menu was certainly a neo-musical gastronomic delight.**

**It was a great pleasure for me to write my 'Sinfonia Concertante' for your Festival and also to have the privilege of rehearsing it with you on the Isle of Man vacation course and then directing it in Leicester. It was surprising to find that the difficulties in the piece (I think I am right in calling it difficult) had been mastered because of the dedicated help of the instrumental teachers and the hard work of the players.**

**I hate musicians who take themselves too seriously (most of them do) but I always feel with you that fun and hard work are happily united. I know that under Eric Pinkett's inspired direction you will go from strength to strength. Good luck for the future.**

**Yours ever,**

**Bryan Kelly.**

## 10. CHALLENGE

Success, it is said, breeds success; it also brings its problems, not the least of which is that the success of a few should, and must, be spread to many. It would be quite possible to contain the work of a County School of Music within the limits of one orchestra and be successful. This provides music for the chosen few, but neglects the many who could acquire a love of music if only the opportunity were provided. I was quite sure what we should do, and of the way in which we should progress.

We had now built an orchestra which was becoming a successful venture; more and more teachers, parents and children were anxious to share in the pleasure, and so gradually the teaching staff was increased and the instrumental learning spread into more and more schools.

There is no difficulty in persuading children to learn to play an instrument, and over the period of the first five or six lessons there is no difficulty in maintaining their interest, but after that comes the real test of extending the enthusiasm, through the painful, into the tedious and then later to all that is pleasurable in music.

This was the first real challenge to our progress. We had to interest all those learning, and stimulate them to work harder and harder by showing them all the paths to progress. We had to provide these paths of progress. We met each Saturday, had regular concerts and went abroad once a year, but there were many children who could not take part in this, and I knew they could so easily become frustrated unless I could extend the opportunities.

First I decided by necessity to spread the area schools, and so what had by then proved to be a successful venture in the Loughborough area was extended to Melton and then to Ashby, until finally we reached a position whereby seven area schools were functioning in the five school days of the week. This works as follows:-

Monday	Melton Mowbray, (Grove Junior School)	4.30-7.00
	Oadby (Gailree High School)	4.00-6.30
Tuesday	Hinckley (Upper School)	4.00-6.30
Wednesday	Wigston (Guthlaxton School)	4.00-6.00
	Coalville (Upper School)	4.30-6.00
Thursday	Ashby (Girls' Upper School)	4.00-6.00
Friday	Loughborough (Limehurst Girls' High School)	5.00-7.00

As this all began to unfold it became necessary to zone the work of the staff so that, for example, on a Monday the schools in and around Melton were visited by the peripatetic teachers who gave class or small group tuition, and the more successful members of these classes were then invited to attend the evening session of the area school, where they could be teamed up with all the better pupils from schools in the area and so work at a higher level. They were able to play as an orchestra, to sight read and to have individual lessons from all the members of staff who gathered there.

We still pursue this method today in the area schools, although we now can give even more detailed attention and can indulge in much more sight reading, which is such an essential need of every musician and which can only be practised when groups are gathered together.

We were not without our critics who from time to time came to point out our weaknesses. One very prominent schoolmaster explained to his fellow headmasters that we might well expect applause and praise whilst we confined our efforts to our own County and in particular with parents as the audience,

but that we could only prove our ability if we played elsewhere. It was a challenge and we set to work harder and harder.

Two early concerts out of the County were held in successive years at Burton-on-Trent, where the orchestra was engaged to accompany the local choral society in the 'Messiah' and 'The Creation'. In each case the society engaged an eminent conductor and the orchestra joined forces with him and the choir in a penultimate rehearsal. On the first occasion it was Leslie Woodgate, and then the second time Stanford Robinson, who wielded the baton, two fiery characters who made no concessions to the orchestra's youth.

A challenge is forever there to be taken up, and as we improved so we needed more time for concentrated practice and the harder the work the more one needs to relax if the effort is to be sustained. I knew I had to create a new situation.

Why not take the orchestra to the seaside for a week's rehearsals under ideal conditions, with an attractive setting for work and plenty of distractions during leisure? Why not indeed? But how, without vast resources?

Then I saw the answer; we must borrow a school as near to the sea as possible, take our own beds and bedding, persuade the local canteen staff to come in to cook, then hire buses, gather together all our equipment, staff and children and set forth. It all sounded most straightforward when I explained this to the Director, and the Norfolk Authority readily agreed to lend a school at Cromer; but it was much more difficult to persuade busy ladies to cook from 7 a.m. until late in the evening for some hundred hungry children. Neither was it easy to find so many safari beds and blankets, - nevertheless it happened, and has continued to happen ever since.

The routine at these seaside courses has always been that the children themselves present a musical morning service at 8.15 a.m. then breakfast at 8.30 a.m., and rehearse from 9.30 a.m. until 1 p.m., with a mid-morning coffee break. The afternoons are free for games and general relaxation, and then after tea there are further rehearsals for two hours. These holiday courses provide the backbone for the whole year's work; we find hidden talent, resolve many individual weaknesses and get to know the younger members better.

Above all, a team spirit is created, which grows year by year.

Even all this had its limitations and with so many children all over the County needing this encouragement, it soon became apparent that area schools and one visit by the orchestra to the sea was not enough. We started a second orchestra, and this meant that we would no longer need to trail young inexperienced players on the back rows of the first orchestra. All to the good, except for this second orchestra, which in its early days consisted of the very young and those not good enough for the first orchestra. The playing sounded rather like that, too. Malcolm Fletcher became their first conductor and he was soon joined by Jim Haworth, an avid reader of Westerns. He promptly christened the orchestra "Trappers' Creek" and this name stuck through the early painful days. They gave their first concert at Ibstock Church, and this was the first orchestral concert that Malcolm had conducted. It was so arranged that he would announce the items and that after four pieces by the orchestra Mr. Haworth would take over to conduct Military Band items. Duly, towards the end of the fourth piece, Mr. Haworth and the wind players waited in the porch for the next announcement. However such was the state of Mr. Fletcher's nerves (due mainly to trying to keep the orchestra together) that he announced that the evening's programme was now ended, and a very startled vicar had to hastily take up his post and voice thanks for what must surely be the shortest concert ever to have been presented. Those were the days; and it was really terribly hard work to make this second orchestra play well because we had not nearly enough talent in

depth. It was however the only way to progress; gradually it took shape and we began to take pride in its performance. It, too, needed a holiday visit and so we changed the seaside visit of the first orchestra to Easter time, and the second orchestra now go away during the summer holidays. Every holiday course gives us all tremendous pleasure and no little satisfaction, as we hear the orchestra's progress day by day. There are many funny moments, although some do not appear so at the time. In the past, before there were any lady members of staff, we had to search hard to find ladies to accompany us to look after the girls. There have been occasions when children have been marched to the beach, and an over scrupulous lady has followed behind the party to see that no hands were being held. On one famous occasion I remember, there was a most excessive number of children reporting sick each day, culminating in one child approaching me to ask to be excused on the grounds that he had 'conjunctivitis'. I asked what this was and he replied that Miss .... said that he had it. I investigated and found that our lady helper was an over enthusiastic Red Cross worker in her spare time - and here she was, practising on the children with a dormitory full of patients. Two orchestras each Saturday stretched the staff to the limit; nevertheless it soon became apparent that we must produce a third. So many very young people were beginning to play well, that they too needed a challenge and they also needed special care because of their tender age. So the third orchestra 'of 'Tinies' was created; these spend part of their Saturday rehearsal playing technical exercises, and partly playing as an orchestra. They are able to listen to the more senior orchestras playing, and they find each other a challenge and a stimulant. They, too, have a week of rehearsing together; for this purpose we borrow one of our own County schools for the last week of the summer term, and with the staff they live together and practise for one whole week.



*The Queen of Night: Helen Brennand and The Three Ladies, Elizabeth Davies, Rowena Styles and Elizabeth Holden.*

## 11. THE STAFF

As a regular visitor to schools over many years, I can, I believe, sense the atmosphere and character of a school almost on entering the building. Some glow with warmth, others have quiet dignity and some are almost jubilant. There are also those which are quite cold. All this has little or nothing to do with the building, because I can think of some of the most decrepit which contain tremendous atmosphere. It has something to do with the way wall space and space generally has been used and also with decor, but above all it stems from the children one sees around. It is in their eyes and their movement and in the sound of their voices.

We in the County School of Music have no building of our own, although we do take complete possession of the Birstall schools at the week ends and in holiday periods, but we do have an atmosphere of our own and there is a spirit and a loyalty which glows through all our work.

I feel this every time I take up my baton to conduct a concert. I have never the least fear that the orchestra will give any less than their very best. Indeed such is their confidence that the harder the challenge, the more they rise to the occasion. The real strength of any school lies in its staff and they, together with the headmaster, provide its character; and the atmosphere one feels and senses emanates from them. We in the C.S.M. are particularly well blessed with a staff who are in themselves characters. Characters to liven any scene. They work endless hours with their pupils, beyond normal schools' routine, and enjoy the tremendous enthusiasm and wonderful results that their efforts stimulate.

A class teacher who remains with the same children throughout the week has the very difficult task of evading boredom by repetition, but the staff of the C.S.M., seeing their pupils, in the first instance, only once a week, have only this brief encounter in which to completely captivate their interest.

Year by year the staff has increased and at every fresh interview I have to explain to the applicants that the life of a peripatetic teacher as we know it is most demanding. Seldom do we finish teaching before 7 p.m., and there are Saturday and holiday rehearsals always to contend with. It is necessary to be dedicated.

After the arrival of Mr. Neale, first there were part-time teachers; of these Mr. Jock Samson stayed to eventually become a full time violin teacher for nearly 15 years, and then returned to his native Scotland to teach and to become the conductor of The Dunfermline Municipal Orchestra. Mr. Samson must surely hold the record for the number of children he has taught to play the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy".

During this same period, Mr. Vaughan Parker trained all our cellists and established a very worthy succession of players. They needed to be, for he suffered no weaklings, and on many Saturdays I had to revive some distressed child who had met with his wrath. For all that, he was respected by all and we were tremendously sorry that he could never be persuaded to become a full time member of staff. He did however produce our next arrival, Mr. Malcolm Fletcher. Malcolm arrived back fresh from National Service and the Royal Academy of Music, both of which he had, in part, contrived to run simultaneously. I could not give him full time teaching of the cello, nor would that have been good for him, so he taught beginners to play the violin and others to play the clarinet, and any other instruments that came along.

I was not a little perturbed to find, at times, when I visited his classes, that an odd child would be attempting to play the violin placed between the knees. This happened, I found, because, whenever Malcolm needed to demonstrate a

particularly difficult passage of music, he found it easier to do so with the violin in this position. Needless to say he soon remedied this idiosyncrasy.

Another of his habits, which I suspect he had caught from elsewhere, was to give his pupils pet names; it added a friendly intimate note to his lessons, but on occasion when one of his more sophisticated pupils appeared he had been heard to greet them with, "Hello Gorgeous", it all delighted his young friends, but sometimes dismayed a speechless headmistress.

Malcolm had been a cellist in the orchestra almost from the beginning and returned to us to take up his first teaching post; then, in 1964, when the Senior Orchestra visited N. Ireland to play a series of concerts, I was asked by a far-seeing official from Antrim whether I could recommend a suitable candidate for the position of Music Adviser to Antrim, which they hoped to advertise. I had no hesitation in suggesting Malcolm Fletcher; in due course he was appointed, and by now he has started in that county most of the things he appreciated here. Especially is he proud of the Antrim County School of Music.

The next appointment to the staff was a Lancastrian, an ex-army Director of Music, who was about to retire from the Warwickshire Regiment. Jim Haworth quietly set about his new job of teaching wind instrumentalists throughout the County. It was more than a year before we began to appreciate him for the tower of strength he has proved, and for which young wind players everywhere in the County are grateful. His droll sense of humour catches the attention of his pupils and enlivens many a staff meeting.

He tells every new arrival to the staff that it took him a year to understand what it all meant, and leaves them in no doubt that they too will be bewildered and bemused for quite a time. He has now taken possession of the Intermediate Orchestra and he is mighty proud of all its ability and potential. He arrives back from a school holiday, greets his young friends, and then says feelingly to members of staff, "Boy, am I glad to be back again!". Much as he loves the children, I think this remark is somewhat coloured by his distaste for home gardening.

He has many hobbies, photography, sailing, motoring and reading, and he has the most amazing collection of Westerns and Micky Spillane thrillers. This accounts for his equally amazing vocabulary of phrases which he uses to explain, to pupils and orchestra alike, the way music should be played. During all this time, from the very beginnings, I had been teaching all the advanced violinists, and this I enjoyed; I still get tremendous pleasure in the teaching I am able to fit in. Year by year, however, the strain became heavier and heavier as I tried to do all this and at the same time look after the everyday work of being a County Music Adviser, showing young teachers how to improve their work, organising courses and concerts, attending committees and meetings in connection with anything and everything musical throughout the County.

At last the time arrived when we could appoint a teacher specifically with the idea of teaching the talented violinists. I had little hope that we should succeed, because I really needed a very fine violinist with experience and teaching ability. An application arrived from Aberdeen, from a gentleman of mature age, a professional violinist of the highest standing in that part of the world. I saw from the large variety of newspaper cuttings that he sent that here was no mean ability, but I could not see that he would give up all this adulation and a lovely home close by the sea, and at this time in life come to Leicestershire. I suggested this to him in a letter and by phone, but he was quite adamant that if I offered him the appointment he would come, and sure enough he did.

How many lives have been altered and bettered by this act. How many children have found untold pleasures of which they never dreamed and how many head

teachers and staff have received Mr. Lambert Wilson's opinion of how they should run their school. How many times I have followed in his wake to explain to a bewildered and sometimes irate head teacher that Mr. Wilson was only concerned for the good of his young flock and if, in his harangue, he had totally discredited and derided their methods of teaching Latin, Maths, English - everything, in fact, other than music, - then he had not really meant to be so forthright. A new character had arrived on the scene, to rival Mr. Neale as the Chief County Ogre, but like Mr. Neale he was to become a real asset to the County.

By now he has cajoled and bulldozed his way into the affections of parents, children and, yes, even head teachers, and he has arranged for himself the most unique timetable. One day he calls to pick up at their home a couple of children at 7 a.m. so that they may arrive at school and have a lesson before school begins. He arrives at a home on a Sunday morning to give an extra lesson, and invites children round to his house for lessons on Sunday evening. He spends hours writing his own music to suit the needs of his pupils, and the young ladies in the Education Office have an almost endless task in reproducing the countless copies he requires.

He is an avowed agnostic, but at several schools he gives his lessons in the Divinity Room, and he is a tremendous success with parents, staff and children at a particular Catholic School; and all this, I think, is having effect. So much so, that recently he has taken to presenting one of the morning services at our holiday courses. Strangely enough, he himself delivers the sermon and we are all most impressed.

Mr. Leslie Howe became a member of staff two years later, although he arrived as a music teacher at Welland Park School, Market Harborough, several years before. Mr. Howe had spent his life in music, mainly as a Music Director in Plymouth, and then suddenly he decided he would like to enter the teaching profession. He had the courage to set out to obtain a teaching qualification and then to buy two caravans and offer to set up house anywhere where some Authority would offer him a teaching post. He came to Market Harborough, stayed at the school for five years and was an enormous success. When the opportunity to become a full time peripatetic teacher arrived, he joined the staff of the C.S.M., and now not only does he teach the violin and viola but, being a harpist, he has taken on the task of producing young harp players.

Peter Matson took the place of Malcolm Fletcher when he left for Ireland, and, with the more recently appointed ladies, represents the young staff as opposed to the formidable array of staff already mentioned. In a quiet way he has assumed responsibility for the cello section and is eager for its success. Until recent times there had been no lady members of staff, a condition which led us to suppose that this was the reason for there being more girls in the orchestra than boys.

Margaret Mugglestone was our first appointment and she stayed until her marriage. Margaret had been one of the original members of the County School of Music and a one time leader of the orchestra. She will remember the time when I took her home after a rehearsal, along with the Deputy Music Adviser. How I misjudged the island on the approach to Coalville and the car rolled over and over. I climbed out unhurt in great dismay and was never more relieved than when I saw the D.M.A. and Margaret appear through a gap in the side of the car.

Jose Chandler came to us from the Royal Manchester College of Music on the recommendation of the Principal, when I was desperately looking for an oboe specialist teacher. Jose is also a good games player and this adds to the vigorous healthy side which I like to cultivate amongst our young musicians. We would

suffer no beatniks amongst the children and we organise games whenever possible. Jose makes a formidable opponent in football matches.

Desire Yorath came from teaching at Dartington Hall; previous to that she had played the viola with the Belfast Symphony Orchestra and had been a student at the R.A.M. She has been a tremendously zealous worker and although I am very sorry that she is no longer a full time member of staff, I am delighted that she has elected to stay in the County to teach in one of our very musical junior schools, and is still a part-time member of staff and will continue to teach at the Saturday morning school.

Miss Dodwell wrote to see if we could find a vacancy for her to teach the cello. She had been for many years the Senior English Mistress at the Nottingham Girls High School and yet was prepared to give up all this and a most successful career, to do what she loved most of all - music. She came even though for the most part she had to teach the violin and even woodwind instruments, but by now she has found her way into attracting more and more cellists into her teaching timetable. The cello section has never been so well endowed.

A very recent arrival has been Mr. Edward Batten, who comes straight from the 1st violin desk of the B.B.C. Northern Orchestra, where he played for many years. He was in earlier years a student at the Liege Conservatoire of Music and spent much of his early life in Holland. He obviously has much to offer our young instrumentalists and I can only suppose and believe that with all this wealth of teaching staff, we have the ability to keep improving, even on our present standards.

The most recent appointment to the staff will take up his duties at the beginning of Anniversary year and I am delighted that Geoffrey Tomlinson, the music master at the Gartree High School, Oadby, has accepted the appointment. He is an old boy from the very earliest days of the C.S.M., has much talent to offer that we can readily accept and he will take control of the Junior Orchestra.

Over and beyond the full time staff we have further part-time valuable assistance from Mrs. Hewes, who, as Marie Findley, was a violin member of the original orchestra in 1948. Keith Smith takes charge of 2nd violins in sectional rehearsals on Saturday morning, and Haydn Hopkins, music master at Wigston All Saints Juniors, has been teaching cellists almost from the beginning. Geoffrey Nicks helps the Junior Orchestra, and Geoffrey Bond comes along to look after chamber music groups.

All of this means there is a vast amount of organisation and administration required in order that Saturday rehearsals shall move along smoothly. There are three very capable secretaries in Malcolm Chisholm (one of our earliest flautists in the C.S.M.), Jack Smith, music master at Ferneley High School Melton Mowbray, and Peter Hallam, Hinckley Upper School (a horn player in the original Roundhill Band with Mr. Neale); and all is superintended by the other, and original, Jack Smith.

## 12. GOVERNORS AND FRIENDS

As, in the early days, I had found a first friend in Mr. Veasey and as, in the ensuing years, I had come to feel more and more the strength of the Director behind our efforts, so I began to realise that a meticulous Organisation such as ours must have friends, and friends in many places. The Director at all times lent powerful support, but he was building a new educational system in the County and could not be in all places at all times.

In 1954 I suggested to him that the County School of Music should have its own Board of Governors.

He readily agreed and immediately set about providing us with a most august body of County dignitaries. Ald. Aris of Coalville became the chairman, and there were Ald. Mrs M.E. Keay (Stoughton), Ald. A.G. Hilton (Birstall), Ald. W.T. Orson (Melton) and Ald. A. Smith (Mountsorrel), Ald. V.W.T. Pearce (Syston), together with Mr. Richard Bishop representing the University, and a little later they were joined by Mrs. N.M.E. Eady (Market Harborough) and Mrs. D. Atkins (Hinckley). Each was elected in his or her official capacity but all chose to serve because of their love of music. In providing ourselves with a background and with voices to speak for us in councils and committees we had also found astute and lively minds ready to defend any cause, but always looking to see that what we did was worthy of the County they represented.

The Governors were a great step in the right direction. By their advent we found ourselves drawn nearer to the centre of County affairs and when from time to time there has been a County Banquet or Cocktail party it has been inevitable that a small group from the C.S.M. will be playing away in a secluded corner, eyeing roguishly the more lively moments of a councillor's life.

The Chairman of the County Council, Sir Robert Martin, always had a deep and encouraging interest in these young people and proclaimed their prowess on every conceivable occasion. He made a point of seeing the party off on each foreign tour to wish them well on their journey and to remind them of all the niceties required of young Leicestershire ambassadors, and when he was succeeded by Col. Lloyd we found a new friend to encourage our efforts, one who has found time to fly over and be present at many of our overseas concerts, and this is a real inspiration.

It was at the commencement of one of our early journeys, when all the children gathered at St. Margaret's Bus Station to be packed together with their luggage into the buses provided, that another step in the right direction was set in motion. We had no funds of our own at this time and had no resources to call upon so, in order to keep the cost of these journeys within the limits of every parent, we simply had to try to get as many children as possible into each bus. The anxious drivers would fill the boots with luggage and then down the passageway inside the buses would be heaped all the surplus luggage, together with instruments of every size and variety. The children would be seated three to a seat and some would be hoisted on top of the luggage. As we slowly heaved our way from St. Margaret's under the anxious gaze of parents, the overwrought driver would implore us all to bend low and keep our faces out of sight until we had left the town. We were never stopped and I never heard of a driver losing his licence, so perhaps even in those days the police were our friends.

After the buses had departed, the parents would congregate and discuss their anxieties, and as a result a letter was received by Sir Robert Martin suggesting that parents would be only too pleased to get together to find out how they could help to provide more adequate means for the C.S.M., and, in particular,

to provide more buses on occasions such as they had witnessed. A meeting was called between Sir Robert, the Director, myself and many parents, and out of this a new body was created, a body of well wishers formed mainly amongst parents, who were to set out to provide means for whatever occasion should arise. They were to be known as "The Friends of the County School of Music", their first president was Sir Robert, the first chairman Dr. D.F. McGregor and the first secretary Mr. W. Flemming from the University. Mr. H. Payne was the first treasurer and he still remains in that position, although by now the chairman is Mr. D. Mobbs, Mrs. and Mr. Wheatley are the secretaries, and Colonel P.H. Lloyd, C.B.E. T.D. J.P. D.L., now the Chairman of the Leicestershire County Council, has succeeded Sir Robert Martin as President.

From a small group of keen parents these 'Friends' have by now become a large and tremendously efficient society, dedicated to the welfare of the C.S.M., and year by year they make large sums of money by their Annual Fete and raffles, coffee parties, persuasion during the intervals in concerts and by an annual subscription. They have provided pedal timpani, a harp, contra bassoon, tubular bells, tuba, and several smaller instruments, and at all times they seek to provide the means whereby no child will ever be debarred from taking part in the tours abroad by lack of money. When a projected tour is likely to be terribly expensive, as the visit to Vienna or Berlin, or possibly to America, then they redouble their efforts.

The Friends meet regularly to discuss their affairs and these meetings have steadily grown in size and character. From the early impartial gatherings of statement and shy response has emerged a warm social atmosphere; in turn I am able to tell of all the future activities of the C.S.M. (something their own sons and daughters always fail to tell) and I can discuss all the points which interest Friends. I can hear at first hand any little weakness in our organisation and can learn of problems which might otherwise never be noticed.

To some extent the Friends will always be a changing group and predominantly at any one time the vast majority will consist of parents whose children are taking part in the C.S.M. This is as it should be, but there are stalwarts who remain in spite of their children passing on to other spheres, and they, I believe, are as fond of the organisation as we are of the C.S.M. There is no doubt in my mind that no better thing has ever happened to the County School of Music than the advent of "The Friends of the County School of Music".

## **Interlude**

**From D. W. Mobbs, 77 Welford Rd, Wigston**

### **"The Friends"**

**What an inspiration our founder members had when they christened our organisation the "Friends" because this is what we try to be to the County School of Music in every sense of the word. We have grown far beyond those small beginnings at St. Margarets Bus Station and now number 587 people of goodwill towards music. Not all by any means are parents of children in the orchestras, not all live within the County of Leicester (such is the fame of the orchestras) but all are bound together with the purpose of assisting the youngsters. This help takes many forms, transport in times of need, preparing teas before concerts and coffee on Saturday mornings right through to, substantial financial aid. I was amazed to look on the platform at a recent concert and to suddenly realise that on view were £1000 worth of instruments purchased by the "Friends". Considerable help has also been given for the overseas tours, this year for example £650 towards the Austrian trip. It is fitting too that as the School celebrates its 21st Birthday we too have an anniversary - our 10th. We are both progressing together, we like to think we have made a deal of difference to the School and we look forward to the future in the sure hope that even greater achievements are in store.**

**D.W. Mobbs**

### 13. VISITING CONDUCTORS

It has always been in my mind that, whilst I would be the strength around which the County School of Music would be built, I could also become its weakness. Especially if I limited it to my own point of view and to no other beat than mine. Nothing, in all that I do in the County, gives me greater pleasure than conducting the orchestra, and I am equally happy when I am able to do this with the Intermediate and Junior orchestras. I do know, however, that an orchestra can become so accustomed to a conductor's movements and habits as to be lulled into content. I enjoy being invited to conduct other organisations and I know that the new impact that I am able to bring on such occasions certainly produces its effect; an orchestra must always be alert and on its toes. I wanted the very best and most eminent conductors to come along to conduct at the County School of Music, but I had no desire to wait until we were good enough for their attention. I had to find opportunities to produce conductors as we travelled along the path of progress. The very first of such conductors came along before I was prepared and much to my embarrassment.

As I have said earlier, I produced the orchestra, after being in existence for only three months, at a Music Course I organised. H.M.I. Mr. Bernard Shore, the newly appointed Staff Music Inspector, who, prior to the war, had been the leading violist in the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, came to see what we were doing and asked if he could be allowed to conduct the orchestra. I wonder whether any of those who tried so hard to play well for him will remember? He did, however, come again to a Saturday rehearsal at the time when we were preparing the 'Magic Flute' and again conducted the orchestra. This time I was quite proud of their achievement. From then on I was always looking for the opportunity, and constantly wondering from whence I could find any money to pay any unsuspecting conductor I might lure into our fold.

After our return from playing the 'Magic Flute' in Denmark, the B.B.C. came to make a programme of the music and the Head of Music at Birmingham B.B.C. at that time was John Lowe. He showed interest in what we were doing, and I knew him to be most expert as the conductor of the B.B.C. Choirs. I therefore proposed that he should come and conduct the orchestra, together with a mixed choir in the De Montfort Hall. He was very willing and all I now needed to do was to produce the choir, book the De Montfort Hall, learn the music and then induce enough people to come to the concert to pay off all the expenses and all would be well. This is how many such ventures have managed to take place. One has to be brave, or foolish, to attempt to do it, but when it comes off all is well, everyone is delighted, I breathe more freely and know that we have taken a further step forward. It is also true that each such step makes the next one easier.

The next conductor to cross our path was Douglas Cameron, Professor at the Royal Academy of Music, who from the beginning of the National Youth Orchestra had been responsible for the training of the cello section. Several of our boys had played in this section, some were his pupils at the R.A.M. and he was interested in what we were doing. Here was an opportunity to use his knowledge and experience, knowing that he would have more than a measure of interest in the cello section.

By this time the habit had established itself and our next visitor, George Weldon, conducted a very lively De Montfort concert. Then came Sir Adrian Boult to conduct the orchestra in a programme containing Beethoven's 5th Symphony, together with a mixed schools choir and orchestra performing Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens'. Sir Adrian arrived, accompanied by Lady Boult, who is dedicated to

his welfare, and with calm and quiet dignity succeeded in conveying to the orchestra his own serenity and deep feeling for the music he was conducting. Malcolm Arnold followed Sir Adrian, and rehearsals were of a completely different nature. His jovial and cherubic countenance simply glowed with delight. He talked, joked and laughed heartily almost the whole time, but not even the slightest mistake went by unnoticed and we were all extremely aware of his uncannily keen ear. We have always been attracted to his lively music and by now we have played most of his music. On this occasion he conducted his own overture 'Tam O'Shanter' and 'English Dances', and also 'Till Eulenspiegel' by Richard Strauss.

I have already mentioned Leslie Woodgate and Stanford Robinson, both fierce taskmasters who commanded the most exacting attention from the orchestra the whole time and certainly suffered no mistakes, without showing, and indicating to the unfortunate culprit, their displeasure. Each of these conductors played a part in the training of the orchestra and our next visitor proved to be of similar exactitude. Rudolf Schwarz came to conduct in 1964 and we soon realised that he would not allow any deviations in the intonation of the strings, and any misreading of the rhythmic pattern was to him a grave offence. He was a perfectionist of the highest order and an unyielding taskmaster, but for all that a great and most sensitive musician. Throughout all these years and alongside the growth and improvement of the orchestra, there was also a rapid musical development within the schools. This had been seen first in the annual concerts in the De Montfort Hall, which later evolved into spectacular pageants, and in the enormous and almost uncontrollable growth of the County's Competitive Festivals. There were five of these, taking place annually in the spring and in areas throughout the County. They served the vital purpose of raising standards of ability through competition, just as the pageants raised the interest and imagination of all who viewed and took part, by the mixture of music, mime and movement in colourful costume. Both were essential links in our musical progress but the time came when we were ready and prepared to take a further step, and to abandon them in favour of a County Festival of Music. This, the most significant step of all, I will write about later, but it brought Sir Michael Tippett into our orbit to spread his magic, and through him it also introduced the conductor, Norman Del Mar.

Mr. Del Mar is the first professional conductor to tour with us abroad; he went with us to Dusseldorf in 1966, and in 1968 accompanied us on the strenuous and almost unbelievable tour, starting with a concert in Fairfield Hall and proceeding concert by concert through Linz, Eisenstadt, Leoben, Graz, Vienna, Salzburg and Munich, wonderful concerts in each of the cities' fabulous concert halls and with radio broadcasts from Graz, Vienna and Munich. Norman Del Mar never tires of working towards perfection and never fails to raise the standard of playing to magnificent heights. His demands are constant and his impeccable beat unfathoms for us the most intricate rhythms. If in the beginning I had always envisaged what a visiting conductor could add to our needs, then this is achieved at every appearance of Mr. Del Mar and I am ever grateful.

## **Interlude**

**From Norman Del Mar, Witchings, Handley Common, Herts.**

**I shall never forget my first introduction to the Leicestershire Schools Orchestra: the programme in itself was enough to make a professional adult orchestra quail, with its list of formidably difficult contemporary British works and including several specifically commissioned by the orchestra's visionary administrators. There were the rows of young people, desk after desk of strings and of all ages down to quite tiny children at the back; while at the other end of the scale were the older players, fully sixteen years old perhaps (!) such as the thoroughly accomplished timpanist who also acted as a kind of section leader to another row of pretty girls - Celia fearlessly flourishing her enormous cymbals, Anne, Wendy and Margaret, bright eyes shining, all bouncing with rhythm and vitality and absolutely spot on, when handling complicated rhythms on side drum, tambourine or whatever.**

**Unusually too, the orchestra seemed to be comprehensive, with all the most unlikely instruments; for as I discovered during the weeks that followed, should I suggest an addition, were it a double bassoon, a large gong, or celeste, that too was there next time I looked round. A harpist was needed, so one was procured and taught it specialty for the occasion.**

**All the players for this and its two (no less) feeder orchestras were, as I was soon given to understand, recruited from the single county of Leicestershire and not even including the county town.**

**They had been so well prepared that it was easy to forget for the moment, when I began to rehearse, that these were no students; why, they had not even begun their training; indeed many of them never would train. But I quickly realized that it would be unrealistic to expect everything to be technically mastered with assurance, and to show alarm at the obvious initial lapses, whether of intonation or ensemble would merely be demoralizing. I resolutely held fast therefore to my principles of treating them in a professional manner, without making patronizing allowances or compromises of standard. For although an orchestra of young people like this has the disconcerting trick of looking with blank faces straight in front of them when being rehearsed, come the performance it never ceases to amaze one how much of it they can actually bring off. As the German technician of a radio station said to me after recording, of all pieces, Walton's fiendishly tricky Portsmouth Point Overture, while listening he had at times actually forgotten that this was not a professional orchestra.**

**All praise to Eric Pinkett and his Director of Education, Stewart Mason for their tenacity and dedication not only in forming such an orchestra but in keeping it alive and flourishing over all of 21 years, especially when one remembers that such a span carries with it something like seven complete changes of personnel with all the heartbreak such changes bring, when for example, the crack players of horns or oboes leave school and have by definition to be replaced. Here it is that the quality most necessary is that of being able to foresee not just ability but future potential, sometimes in the most unlikely candidate, for the unnerving role of leading cello or first horn as it might be, and of course, leader of the orchestra, positions which require not just musicianship but character. I often wonder whether it isn't Messrs Pinkett's and Mason's genius in this respect almost more than in any other which have enabled the orchestra to go forward as it has done from strength to strength, culminating this year in a prodigious European tour, playing before such severely critical audiences as those of Vienna, Salzburg and Munich. This was a thrill indeed and I am told that the**

concerts provoked the unwilling admission from the Austrian and German branches of Youth and Music that they, in those most musical of all nations 'have nothing to compare'. So, in saying Many Happy Returns I need only couple my congratulations with unbounded admiration. I suppose a large proportion of my new friends I will inevitably not see again, but I am excited to know from encounters with some of their now older colleagues, how many I shall, on the contrary, certainly see in the musical profession; and this as the direct consequence of experience and opportunities which they have enjoyed during the valuable formative years in this splendid organisation.

**Norman Del Mar**

## 14. OLD BOYS AND YOUNG LADIES

It is somewhat difficult to calculate how many young musicians have passed through the County School of Music. On average 30 leave each year to go to the Universities and Colleges of Music. Some leave in the normal course at the end of their school term and some of course fall by the wayside, either by the call of school work or because they become frustrated by lack of success. If we presume that about 50 leave the orchestra each year, and the original orchestra of 75 has now grown into the 350 regularly attending the Saturday school, then it would seem that some 1,500 children have so far taken part in the County School of Music. There are very few faces that I have forgotten; many still visit us whenever they are in Leicestershire, and there are at the present time thirty six of them playing in the leading professional orchestras. In earlier times we used to muse on the future of some of the talented members of the orchestra, thinking, perhaps hopefully, of the day when they would occupy places in the famous orchestras. Now we realise how time has passed and whenever we watch a British orchestra on television, there, sure enough, we can see one or more of the Old Boys or Girls. Recently the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra made a tour of America, and a 1st violinist, cellist, trombonist and bassoon player were all prominent ex-members of the C.S.M. orchestra.

As I write the last sentence, I recall an Easter Course held at the Garendon School, Loughborough. A father came along to see why we had not invited his son to take part, and after discussion I asked him to bring along the child to play to me. He was a clarinettist and very shy, but with considerable promise, and we might well have overlooked him. He stayed on the course and became a very good member of the orchestra, but we always felt that the clarinet -was not quite his instrument. We suggested he changed to the bassoon but both he and his father were extremely doubtful, as well they might be, because he was an advanced clarinettist and this would mean almost starting again.

He was persuaded to have a go for six months; he has been a bassoonist ever since and now when you may look in the programme of a Royal Philharmonic Concert there you will see Principal Bassoon - John Price. John will remember our visit to Stockholm, how he was rushed to hospital on the day before our return, had an appendix operation and was left behind to recuperate as we left to return to England. I also remember that he was very fond of the leader of the second violins at that time (Diane Lawrence) and she is now his wife.

A year or so ago I was walking through the London Underground to catch a train when I spotted a poster advertising a concert by the Northern Sinfonia and there underneath was written - Conductor, David Haslam. David also toured America with the orchestra as conductor, and now he is associate conductor to Rudolf Schwarz, in the orchestra. He also married one of the young ladies of the orchestra and chose the girl who sat beside him in the orchestra for many years - the first clarinettist, Rose Betteridge. As one might expect, and much to his pride and delight, Mr. Neale is godfather to their children.

By now there are members of the County School of Music in many professions; there are Doctors, Solicitors, Clergymen, Air Force Pilots, Policemen, B.B.C. Engineers and Studio Managers, Journalists and Actresses that I can readily recall. There are countless schoolmasters and school mistresses, and many are building their own reputations in our county: Geoffrey Tomlinson at Gartree High, Keith Smith at Guthlaxton, Roger Munns at Loughborough College School, Beryl Sankey at Heathfield, Stuart Wainwright at Ashby Ivanhoe, Max Stanford at Castle Rock and, at Longstade, the Deputy Head, Colin Newby, was amongst the very early members, and Jane Attfield was one of three outstanding

clarinetists who were friendly rivals together in the wind section. One of the others was Angela Malsbury, who married her school music master, David Pettit. David joined us for an all too brief period, helped regularly with Saturday rehearsals and finally departed with Angela. Pat Sharpe, the third member, played the clarinet with the most beautiful tone, and performed with the orchestra for many years, then went on to Manchester Royal College of Music, where she met a former county trombonist in Steve Wortley, and they too are now married and play in the Liverpool Philharmonic.

From the early days of the Madrigal choir there have been many singers in our midst. The three ladies in the 'Magic Flute' were Rowena Styles, Elizabeth Davies and Elizabeth Outridge, and Nanette Jones later took one of their places. Elizabeth Outridge has, by now, become extremely successful and well known as Elizabeth Holden, the contralto, but she will well remember her less successful moments with the oboe. Desmond Kershaw, now teaching at Anstey Martin School, was a very worthy 'Sarastro' in the same opera and amused us all, throughout many tedious journeys, with his performances of such songs as the 'Hippopotamus' and the 'Gnu'. Jean Hammond, soprano, of Ashby (violin), and Helen Attfield, contralto, from Lutterworth (viola), are both making good headway in the concert world, and there was Ann Rottenbury and Michael Garnett, both from Market Harborough, both singing professionally in the operatic world; and looking back farther still I well remember Anita Clarke who always charmed our audiences in the very earliest concerts. She was the very first timpanist.

Some have gone overseas to make their names. Malcolm Fletcher in Antrim has persuaded both Terry Carter (cello) and Timothy Odell (violin) to join his staff. Brecon Carter (violin) is playing in Australia, and David Banton (viola) is making his reputation in America. Pamela Seager (bassoon) is teaching music in Jamaica, and Alan Cunningham is slowly building, with infinite patience and with endlessly dedicated hard work, an orchestra and County School of Music fashioned on ours, in Sierra Leone.

The era of Brecon Carter, John Stein, Marion Turner, Rolf Wilson, Alan Hutt, Christopher Pass and, by no means least, Nigel P., saw more roguery and practical joking than the staff could cheerfully withstand. The last night of any course was all "hell let loose" for Malcolm Fletcher. He would lose his bed, his trousers and all his dignity during their escapades.

Who will ever forget the day at Cleethorpes, when I offered prizes for the most individualistic deeds performed during one restful afternoon? One boy was arrested! This he achieved by taking away a dog, (with the owner's consent), and then sent an urgent call to the police to say where and when the dog thief could be caught - and he was.

Another boy reported himself lost, with loss of memory and apparent reasoning powers, to the Town Official who, provided with a tent on the sea front, proudly claimed to solve visitors' problems. How could anyone solve the problem of such a terror, who showed no mercy and provided a bewildering afternoon of incoherent meandering, to one dumbfounded official. One boy was missing when tea-time arrived and only returned later in the evening. He had hitched a lift across the Humber and back, from Cleethorpes to Hull.

Lest any anxious parent has read this last paragraph with alarm and apprehension, let me say all ended well and I have never repeated the experiment. I suppose Nigel suffered most of all from all this; I accepted that there was no practical joker to outmatch him and I gave him the complete blame for everything. He suffered my wrath, both mentally and physically. Of necessity he had been a member of the orchestra since he was eight years old. He regularly

fell asleep in those days at rehearsals and concerts, and yet after so many years still, I think, loves the County School of Music as much as I do.

Rolf Wilson arrived in the wake of his father, straight from Aberdeen and with an almost unfathomable Scottish accent. He had the most perfect technique, had no idea what timekeeping in an orchestra was all about and so would frequently put his violin down in abject despair. He had the most charming smile, a mercurial temper, and stayed to show everyone how to play the violin.

Heredity, would you say?

These are but a few of the many names which have left a mark on the County School of Music, but I shall never forget the gorgeous warm tone of Leon Downey playing the viola, the sheer, limpid, sweet sound of Joan Clamp's oboe or, casting from one end to the other of our evolution, the amazing technical brilliance of Billy Littlejohn (trumpet) and David Pugsley (clarinet), the lovely tone of Peter Lewis (violin) and Jimmy Watson (trumpet). There have been fine flautists like Jennifer Slingoe and Christine Whitfield, outstanding oboists as Eileen Noon and Diane Wheatley. From Lennie Clarke onward there have always been capable teams of horn players, and one remembers Leslie Welsh, Cynthia Payne and Vicky Braithwaite, which brings to mind that very excellent trumpeter, Diane Henderson. Throughout our existence trombones have been of the very highest order, from the early pupils sent by Mr. Bennett from Burbage and on to the present time; there have been such names as Keith Swanwick, Stuart Wainwright, Alan Hutt, Christopher Pass, Malcolm Baum, Jim Wortley, Roger Harvey, John Turner, Martin Slipp and many more. Many, many more, whose faces I can still remember very vividly, as I can still recall a concert in Holland way back in 1954.

We were just about to start the first item, which I was describing to the audience, when I noticed the door at the far end of the Hall open, to admit one young man carrying his raincoat over one arm, with his instrument, (a horn) complete in case, dangling from the other. He entered the centre aisle and proceeded towards the platform. I turned to the orchestra and raised my baton just as he mounted the stage and was about to pass me. Out of the corner of my mouth I hissed "Go away", and sure enough he reversed and trod manfully back through the audience to the opening phrases of our music. I often wondered what the audience made of this incident! Did they realise this was just a late arrival who had the nonchalance to think this was the right and proper way to take his place and who carried himself with true British sang-froid in the moment of truth. To each and everyone I would say that, but for you, yes every one of you, the County School of Music could not have become what it is today and I shall always remember and cherish the times we have spent together.



Sir Michael Tippett conducting the Orchestra.

## **Interlude**

**From R.A. Pugsley,**

**"R.A.P.", music critic of the Leicester Mercury**

**In congratulating you on your twenty-first birthday (you have long since "come of age") I do so with just one tinge of regret. For it so happens that I have recently terminated a six years' association with you as the parent of one of your young musicians. It was an experience that neither my wife nor I would have missed. The closeness of the contact gave me a revealing insight into the effects of your imaginative educational ideas.**

**As a parent, too, one learned that in the fulfilment of concert tours abroad, the orchestra, like the Army, usually moves in the small hours. Among all the other memories are those of dark and semi-conscious rendezvous in the cheerless landscape of Leicester St. Margaret's bus station!**

**Combined with the duties of critic, the parent-son relationship created a somewhat delicate situation frequently aggravated by Eric Pinkett who liked to introduce me mischievously as a writer on music whose son, in the interests of favourable publicity, had been diplomatically promoted to principal clarinet. But, in fact, the favourable publicity began some time before the personal link was formed. The first occasion was the Leicester De Montfort Hall Memorial concert which was held to honour the name of Sir Robert Martin, who had been Chairman of the County Council for so many years. Sir Adrian Boult conducted and it was proved beyond doubt that your first orchestra was now well equipped to sustain a full-scale programme in a major concert hall in public.**

**This really, was the birth of the Leicestershire Schools Festival idea and the beginning of the orchestra's rapid rise to international fame. In a relatively short time my own evaluation of Leicestershire's young musical talent was corroborated by the weightier authority of the London critics and Continental critics.**

**The significant thing about their playing is that its impressive standard is the product not of a body of instrumental specialists, but of a group of ordinary schoolchildren most of whom are destined for careers other than in music. Only a relatively small percentage of them go on to music colleges. There is no place for preciousness or precociousness at Birstall where, on Saturday mornings, three hundred children rehearse in your three orchestras. Here, the heady draught of exceptional musical talent is leavened by the fundamental and serious business of getting on in a democratic, co-educational society. Music is the reason for their being together and music becomes for them a way of living.**

**But they learn, too, that there are other things in life besides music. It is salutary experience, for example, when some gifted but not too worldly-wise young virtuoso descends aloofly from his ivory tower to find that his girl-friend has transferred her affections to a handsomer though less musically endowed rival. Life, however, has to be lived and the show must go on. And like others of similar experience (particularly on foreign tours where the rate of romantic exchange seems inexplicably to increase) he steels himself to play like an angel even though, like an instrumental Pagliaccio, his heart is broken.**

**One has only to watch the course of a young orchestral beginner to appreciate how quickly attitudes are changed by the Birstall tradition - how swiftly the process of maturing takes place. But its influence, too, radiates outwards from the C.S.M. centre to advance the musical outlook of countless more children than those who play in your orchestras.**

Today, in Leicestershire schools, the old idea of music's being an irksome impediment to the smooth flow of learning has disappeared. Through twenty-one years of patient indoctrination and selective staffing it has now become possible for Eric Pinkett to move freely within the borders of this pleasing hunting county without the fear (once expressed to me) of being shot by one or other of a handful of diehard headmasters.

Within the orchestras themselves, one of your most successful and bloodless revolutions has been the overthrowing of an erstwhile passive resistance to music of the twentieth century. Your young musicians are now on terms with the new without neglecting the traditional, which they are able to view, I am sure, in a fresh light.

Much had been attempted and valuable ground gained before that significant moment in history when you persuaded Mr. (as he then was) Michael Tippett to become your patron. This was one of your master strokes - most people would say the master stroke. It's shrewd timing, viewed in retrospect, almost suggests astrological guidance. Sir Michael arranged shortly afterwards for the sixtieth anniversary of his birth to focus the spotlight on himself and his music and, then, to become a Knight.

For the members of the Leicestershire Schools Orchestra the initial confrontation was awesome. Here in their midst was one of the foremost composers of the day. But then to work. Sir Michael, shirt-sleeved for action, took up his baton for his first C.S.M. rehearsal, still secretly wondering (as he later admitted) whether he had done the right thing in identifying himself with young musical Leicestershire. One hundred instrumentalists, on their mettle, soon put doubts aside and, soon, Sir Michael became their enthusiastic advocate. Their respect for him is deep and understandable. But what pleased them was the discovery that this world-famed composer was a man of great charm who spanned the age-gap between them naturally and effortlessly, a man of extraordinary and infectious enthusiasm and, above all, a man young in heart and possessing a keen sense of fun.

As a creator and an eloquent communicator of ideas he was able to plant in the hearts and minds of his new young friends an in-felt awareness of the nature of music that no text book can, on its own, convey.

Other composers came to Birstall to conduct their music and to exert, unconsciously, the influence of their personalities - among them, of course, Alan Ridout, who was the first to compose especially for the Leicestershire Schools Orchestra. Frequently, too, during the past three years the orchestra has received invaluable training from Normal Del Mar, part of whose reputation is owed to his lucid interpretation of contemporary music.

And so the young instrumentalists developed an ear and an instinct for idioms that were once strange and remote. "Contemporary", musically speaking, is something they now feel in their bones; so that, today, they are renowned for their ability to tackle complicated scores with confidence, understanding and intelligibility. Little wonder, then, that an Austrian critic recently described them ( and with penetrating aptness in view of their patron) as "These children of our time".

**R.A. Pugsley**

## 14. FROM PAGEANTS TO FESTIVALS

Side by side with all the instrumental development in the County, and indeed very much in step with its progress, an awareness of and a desire to make music has been born and has flourished. To kindle this desire, there were first the Combined School concerts in the De Montfort Hall and later the Pageants in all their moments of glory, in a blaze of colour and to the echoing sounds of music.

We devised every scheme that vivid imaginations could crystallise, and one certain headmaster, (R.M. Warner), who for years had borne the brunt of stage managing, in a moment of overwrought emotion said, "We've done everything but put these Pageants on ice"! But enthusiasm waxed and I was always tremendously thrilled to see schools way out in the corners of the County, devise similar Pageants of their own. So did the habit of music spread. I was often criticized by the "pure in heart", who said, quite rightly, that the show came first and the music suffered in consequence. Perhaps so, but we were by no means ready to take the ultimate step.

We held competitive festivals in all parts of the County and had an Inter Area Final Competition between all the local winners. These Festivals were of untold value in helping to raise standards of ability amongst all our young musicians. The competition was fierce, there was an eagerness to win, and all taking part could not but improve by the amount of practice they needed to do, if they were to stand any chance against their equally keen rivals. We were accused of making it all into a rat race, but this bias was for the most part in the minds of those who envied the progress. Nevertheless pageants and competitions were but stepping stones to the eventual day when we would inaugurate the "Festival of Leicestershire".

I had long dreamed of the day when we would be able to promote a week of music-making of the very highest order, using all the resources of the Leicestershire Schools and of course involving the County School of Music. At long last, in 1963, I became convinced that we had now reached the stage when the quality of our music making could stand the test and, devoid of the glamour and colour of pageantry and the quiver of tension of competition, we would now provide music as a means and an end. The Music Committee considered my proposals, in some cases not without misgivings, but nevertheless with enthusiasm, and we agreed to discontinue the competitive Festival and to pass over the organisation of any future Pageants to the Primary Schools. From that moment we were committed to producing the first 'Festival of Leicestershire'.

Our aim was quite clearly to raise the quality of music within the County to the highest peak within our abilities and, equally clearly, if we were to succeed we needed to concentrate these abilities and our ideas into a single line of thought. We needed a theme along which we could project, and quite quickly we decided it should be "The Composer and His Music".

We had for some time past been introducing more and more contemporary music into our yearly programmes, and quite clearly the younger generation accepted and enjoyed it. Here was a chance to make closer contact and we set about the task of trying to bring living composers and their music into our midst. We would ask them to write music especially for us and then invite them to come over to explain and conduct this music at our festival.

Magnificent, brave ideas, but we had no funds for such an enterprise. We had faith however, and we set up a system of patronage which would provide a main source of income; we prepared a letter and awaited the results, but above all else we needed an Artistic Patron, some figure around which all our ideas could flower and flourish. There was the Bath Festival, and one immediately thought of Yehudi Menuhin, and there was Aldeburgh and Benjamin Britten; could it possibly be, I wondered in a moment of extreme hopefulness and enthusiasm, that the Leicestershire Festival could become synonymous with such a name? If so there could only be one name; and in that same hopefulness and enthusiasm I wrote to Sir Michael Tippett. The reply came quickly, and marked the most momentous point in the whole 21 years of the history of the County School of Music.

Sir Michael indicated that he would be delighted to become our Patron, that he had heard something of what we were doing, would like to know more and would certainly

like to take part. Since that time it has become possible for the whole of the musical activities of the County School of Music to move from the fringe to the centre of musical culture. Sir Michael composed the Prologue and the Epilogue for the Festival and chose most aptly to base the Prologue on the tune, 'Sumer is icumen in', and the Epilogue on the tune, 'Non Nobis Domine' by Byrd, which has been sung as a grace by countless members of the County School of Music over many, many years.

Sir Michael was to conduct the orchestra in two main concerts in the De Montfort Hall; in the second of these his cantata, 'A Child of our Time', was to form the main part of the programme. The question of rehearsals became a first anxiety. Sir Michael's home in Wiltshire is 140 miles away and he was immersed in composition; we could not possibly expect him to travel to Leicester each Saturday for rehearsals. There could only be one answer; we must go to him, and so we arranged to borrow the Corsham schools during the Easter holidays and took up residence there.

Sir Michael came to rehearsals to conduct the orchestra, quickly came to terms with the members and introduced his own brand of friendliness. He laughed uproariously at our mistakes, and we all joined in, such was the atmosphere. He would halt the orchestra with a random wave of his arms, gently sigh, then gaze from under questioning eyebrows at the players. He would divest himself of tie and pullover and then proceed to explain exactly what had been the composer's intentions and why he had so written the music. Then, again taking up his specially prepared baton, he would continue to coax and cajole the music from his spell-bound orchestra, - and all this happened whilst a busy team of camera men, technicians and producers from A.B.C. Television, complete with equipment, who had also taken up residence in Corsham, prepared a programme of the event. We all, every one of us, children, staff, parents and friends know Sir Michael Tippett to be our best and dearest friend.

The Festival was established; Sir Michael conducted his own cantata, 'A Child of Our Time', and the Concerto for Double String Orchestra, and a new symphony especially written for us by Alan Ridout (a former student of Sir Michael's) received its first performance. A national competition organised to attract student composers to write orchestral works especially for the Festival, proved successful; and one whole evening was given over to music composed by local musicians. Old boys and girls returned to take part in the many concerts throughout the County and, all in all, the Festival theme provided new experiences and opportunities and awakened new enthusiasms. We were happy to continue the theme into the second Festival two years later, and our ambitions persuaded us to commission six new works; William Mathias and Bryan Kelly produced orchestral works, Alan Ridout wrote the music for a most original and unusual Dance Drama, on the theme of 'Funeral Games for a Greek Warrior', Anthony Milner wrote a new anthem for the Inaugural Service in the Cathedral, and Wilfrid Mellers and Brian Bonsor composed choral music. The first Festival, in spite of the most excellent patronage, left us heavily in debt and so it became necessary to find other means to pay for these new works. I wrote endless letters to local industrialists suggesting that they might care to share with us the pleasure of fostering new music. Some sent a token cheque and some invited me round for lunch or for coffee and showed the most encouraging interest.

I visited Petfoods at Melton Mowbray for the first time, and the experience was like driving into London Airport and then entering the carpeted reception centre; they were most kind, and readily agreed to provide the whole amount required to pay for Bryan Kelly's 'Sinfonia Concertante'; in so doing they caused Bryan to resolve that henceforth his pet Siamese cats would always enjoy the Melton speciality, 'KIT-E-KAT'.

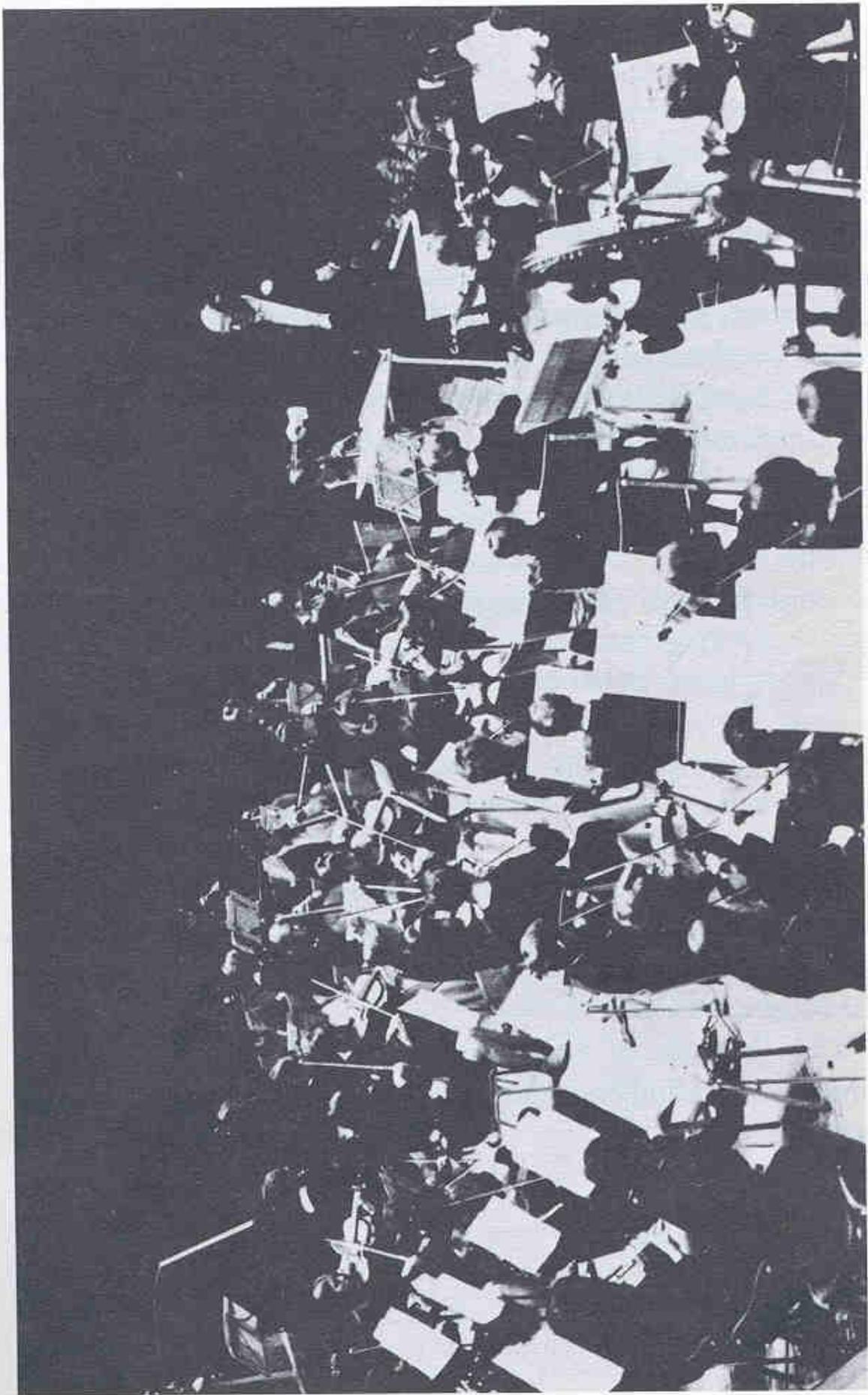
I found similar sympathy when I visited Symingtons at Market Harborough (the Corset Manufacturers), who provided the money for William Mathias's composition, 'Sinfonietta', a dance suite. I am however quite sure that he could find no suitable use for their product. Sketchleys, the Dry Cleaners, were most generous, as were Tubes Ltd. of Desford and the Ratby Engineering Co. Ltd. The Bishop of Leicester made himself completely responsible for the fee for the Anthem, and the Governors of Hinckley Upper School made a handsome donation. Mr. Eske of Rolleston Hall, by his individual generosity, completed our financial needs, and in the eventual performance he was so

touched by the orchestra's ability, that he insisted on giving to me, there and then at the concert, £50 to buy stockings for the girl members of the orchestra.

The orchestra made exciting new contacts with composers of original thought; each of these composers came along to rehearse his works with the orchestra and to conduct the first performance, and each provided a rare new experience for the young musicians.

This second Festival reached a new climax in our history when we repeated the Festival's final concert in the Fairfield Hall, Croydon, with Sir Michael and Norman Del Mar sharing the conductor's role.

The Festivals of Leicestershire have clearly provided new golden opportunities and for the future there are endless possibilities.



Fairfield Hall, Croydon: May 10, 1967.  
Norman Del Mar conducting the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra.

## **Interlude**

**From Alan Ridout, Burgate House, Canterbury.**

**GREETINGS TO THE COUNTY SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
ON ITS 21st BIRTHDAY.**

**Since first hearing the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra some years ago in a concert which included a work of mine, I have watched its growth and ripening with increasing admiration. The enthusiasm and far-seeing support of Leicestershire people, the devotion of the orchestra's coaches, and, above all, the steadfast ideals and practical industry of Eric Pinkett have joined to create an important and spirited influence.**

**May it long continue to sustain and inspire all who come in contact with it.**

**Alan Ridout**

## 15. VISITORS

During most summer holidays, I encounter somewhere in Leicestershire young people from other countries, who are over here renewing acquaintance with one or other of our young musicians with whom they had first become friendly in one of the overseas tours. We then revive memories together, of happiness shared over many years and in many places.

There are regular visits to the Saturday morning rehearsals by overseas visitors, some out of the past, but many to learn more of what they have heard and to find out at first hand what it is all about. There have been seminars from America, from Sweden and from Norway; they have listened to the music, probed in and around, asked questions and visited our schools. Successions of visitors, growing larger year by year, have come from many parts of the world, from Greenland, Australia, Kenya and Afghanistan, from Berlin and even from Japan; all of which endows the Saturday school with colourful variety and endless surprise. Parents peep in quite regularly, and I wish more of them would come, to see and understand just what their children are up to. Some parents, quite a number, visit us at the holiday courses; some even make these occasions into their own holiday, attend rehearsals and over a cup of coffee find opportunities to talk over problems and ambitions with members of staff.

Old boys and girls pop in frequently, and this I find most encouraging of all - that they still feel the attraction of the County School of Music, and can and do return to sit amongst the present members, to chat with the staff and to feel, once more, the old magnetism - this makes it all, to me, very worthwhile. David Haslam still quietly walks in about twice a year and usually manages to pass on words of wisdom to young flautists; Leon Downey, who has been with the Halle Orchestra for a number of years, breezes in, takes up his old place amongst the violists. Peter Lewis brings his wife and children; Alan Cunningham arrives from Sierra Leone to tell of his experiences in moulding, in that country, his own particular version of the County School of Music. Sometimes I find Susan or Avril or Russell sitting, playing away amongst the violins, and Christine or Colin or Richard playing with the wind. They all make a very happy family.

Recently, at the end of a concert in the Fairfield Hall, Croydon, as we were taking our places in the buses to proceed on the long, long journey to Vienna, one of our former members came over to talk with me and she said, "When I come amongst you all again, I realize what a unique spirit there is, something I have never met before or since". Yes, this makes it all very worthwhile.

Musical visitors to the school and to the County are ever welcome, their interest is stimulating and their help and advice of the greatest value. Sir Keith Falkner, Principal of the Royal College of Music, came to hear us at the first Festival. Frederick Cox, Principal of the Royal Manchester College of Music, is always interested in our activities and came over as 'Guest of Honour' to the Friends' Dinner in 1967. Myers Foggin, Principal of Trinity College, London, has adjudicated at the competitive Festivals on two occasions, and Frederick Grinke, Professor of Violin at the Royal Academy of Music, has trained many of our young violinists, has been to adjudicate at the Festivals and has also played to us. Janet Craxton, the wonderful and friendly oboist, came with her husband, Alan Richardson, to one of the Easter Courses at Corsham (Sir Michael's home) to give lessons to the oboists and to give, with her husband, an enchantingly intimate recital. Lady Barbirolli (Evelyn Rothwell, the oboist) came to play a concerto with the orchestra, as did the pianists Denis Matthews and Norma Fisher. Ambrose Gauntlett (Royal Academy of Music) has been to train the

cellists and Trevor Williams (Leader of the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra) to work with the violinists.

Alan Ridout, in the wake of Sir Michael, has become a very good friend; his cheery, Schubertian countenance always beams with pleasure as he listens to the orchestra. After first writing a symphony for us and then producing the Dance Drama, he more recently sent to me two new works, to be played for the first time during the twenty-first birthday celebrations, one 'A Symphony for Wind Instruments' and the second 'A Psalm for Strings'. He has also written a 'Concertante Music' for us, but perhaps I should mention this in the next chapter. Alan introduced Bryan Kelly to us. Both are "Professors of Composition" at the Royal College of Music. We first played and enjoyed Bryan Kelly's 'Cuban Suite' and were delighted that he consented to write the new work, which he dedicated to us, for the second Festival. Earlier I had been along to the Royal College of Music to talk over the projected new work with Bryan and found him to be a most assiduous leg-puller. Even in the short space of time we spent in the College Sanctum over a cup of coffee, he was slyly poking fun at the varied antics of the most august professors.

He accompanied us on the Dusseldorf Tour in 1966 and also stayed with us during the Easter visit to the Isle of Man in the following year; on both occasions he conducted the orchestra in performances of his own works. He amused the orchestra by relating to them the tale of one of his adventures as an Associated Board Examiner. In his roguish way, he pointed out that since most of the orchestra regularly took part in these examinations, it would be well if they learned how to gain extra marks from the examiners.

It appeared that just before joining us in the Isle of Man, Bryan had been making an examination tour of the Associated Board, and at one of the centres a boy clarinettist had come into the examination room and had set up his music stand so that his back was towards Mr. Kelly. In order to see more of what the boy was doing, Bryan leaned forward in his chair, so far forward that the chair shot from under him and he himself fell underneath the examiner's table.

Meanwhile the boy continued to play, so Bryan warily peeped from under the table and at a strategic moment slowly and silently crept back on to his chair. At the end of the examination Mr. Kelly, once more the dignified examiner, offered a word of apology for the disturbance, but the boy stoically professed to be completely unaware of any distraction. "For such tact", said Mr. Bryan Kelly, "I awarded him three extra marks".

There have been many articles written about the County School of Music; these have appeared in magazines and musical manuals in several countries and their authors have been our guests in the County. So, too, have members of BBC and ITV staffs, who have wandered in and around the rehearsal rooms gathering material for their programmes; they have all mingled very freely with the orchestra and have added to the glamour.

At each of our concerts there are the critics, and these differ according to the place and significance of the programme. The critics who have reviewed our London concerts in Fairfield Hall and the Guildhall adopt the attitude that 'If you consider yourselves good enough for such occasions then you must accept the appropriate criticism', and this is a challenge we readily accept. There is no charity and we would not wish for it.

For many years the Leicester Mercury hardly noticed our existence and this did not help, because quite obviously young musicians thrive on praise. Then, gradually, they showed interest and reports began to grow. Their very excellent music critic, R.A.P., became more and more aware of our worth. His coverage of all our concerts was complete and his accounts of our prowess glowed with

praise. I am sincerely grateful for all his interest, and I am quite sure that he is equally grateful for the progress from tyro to virtuoso of his son David, in the orchestra. Perhaps in this way we have been able to show how much we have appreciated all his valiant efforts on our behalf.

There was the national critic who came to the first Festival, arrived at rehearsal and demanded that we should rehearse the cantata, 'A Child of Our Time', immediately, so that he could get on his way. This we were unable to do, and as he waited his wrath accumulated. He stayed to the end of the rehearsal and then disappeared. His article the next day was violently unfavourable and he expressed the opinion that young school children should never attempt such a work, but he had surely missed the point that these same school children had experienced the never-to-be-forgotten thrill of learning and performing this great work under the composer himself.

At the same Festival another critic from a national daily paper stayed on after the concert, in a back room of the De Montfort Hall, to write his article. He became fully absorbed and did not notice for quite some time that he had been locked in the hall. He became quite frantic until finally he found the telephone and managed to make contact with the secretary. He uttered veiled threats that his article might be differently coloured, according to the state of his mind, depending on whether or not he could be liberated to catch his train.

Of course, these are the very rare exceptions and I know that much of what we have been able to achieve has been made possible by the lively interest, friendly criticism and sturdy reporting by the music critics of the national daily and Sunday newspapers their articles have stirred and stimulated every member of the orchestra and staff to further and greater efforts, and there is no greater reward than to receive their "Well done" at the end of a long difficult struggle trying to achieve the standard of playing required for public performance.

These are some of the visitors we encounter week by week on Saturday mornings at the Longslade and Stonehill schools; their presence and interest is invaluable; may they long remember the time and the place.



Alan Ridout rehearsing with the Senior Orchestra at Longslade Upper School (1967).

**Interlude**  
**From Dr. William Mathias,**  
**University of Edinburgh.**

**Greetings to the County School of Music on its 21st Anniversary! It gives me much pleasure to know that I contributed a small part to the story by writing the "Sinfonietta" for you in 1967. I retain the happiest memories of my visits to you in that year - particularly of the great enthusiasm for music on the parts of tutors and players alike, engendering as it did something of the atmosphere of a musical "crusade". One could go on to recall the exciting standards of performance achieved by young people still at school etc., but I should prefer to write of three things in particular which, it seems to me, you have succeeded in proving:**

**1) that far too little is expected from a musical point of view from young people by most Authorities. In Leicestershire music is made, not talked about - a challenge has been thrown out to young people in terms of high and adventurous standards in performance. The challenge has been fully accepted because it is in the nature of youth to accept challenges.**

**2) that young people don't really require the condescension of "sub-music" written for apparently educational reasons - they respond rather to the genuinely creative.**

**3) that (and perhaps most important of all) young people have a natural affinity with the music of our own time. What could be more natural? - the present and future of music in this country is theirs. I recall with pleasure that concert in the 1967 Festival which consisted entirely of five new works (including my "Sinfonietta") written especially for the occasion. Many Authorities might have previously regarded such an undertaking as extremely difficult, if not impossible - may they learn from you that it is not so, given the desire to issue challenges coupled with the will to work towards their realisation. Your achievements to date could not have been made without dedicated work and careful planning over the past 21 years. But to judge by the past, you will not be content to rest on your laurels - indeed I know that you continue to look to the future. Please therefore accept my very good wishes for the next 21 years, and for the exciting developments in your work which they will surely bring.**

**Yours sincerely,**

**William Mathias.**

## **17. RECENT AFFAIRS**

**In all these many years there have been a variety of secretaries to the Festivals and Pageants; they have all given endless time and devotion.**

**With the advent of the 'Festival of Leicestershire', the name of Jack Richards, head of the English Department at Gartree High School, Oadby, became freely mentioned as being likely to carry on the tradition, and he was duly elected to the office.**

**Mr. Richards had however one extra attribute; he loved writing letters, especially propaganda letters.**

**Every BBC and ITV producer and director received shoals of his correspondence. He explained every reason why they should send battalions of T.V. crews and equipment to record for an eagerly awaiting nation all our many virtues. All the national press were cajoled, and he attempted to recruit and enlist to our cause every person of musical eminence and every local tycoon.**

**In this way he gathered many fine and rare autographs, his name was entered in the "Notorious" column of many secret files and we gained a questioning publicity and a hesitant interest by the television companies. Mr. Richards never gave in and never despaired; he continued with his essays and received much good-natured banter from all of us.**

**Then, quite suddenly, at the beginning of 1968 all this changed and his efforts were rewarded. First came an invitation from B.B.C.2 Television for us to take part in a 'Music International' programme, showing the progress of music in England. The technicians, camera crews and director came along and set up their equipment during the Christmas holiday course at the Longslade School, and whilst we carried on the business of learning all the new music which was to form our programmes for the year, their lights poured down upon us and we slowly melted in the heat. Both the Senior and Intermediate Orchestras were filmed and Sir Michael, who was ill at the time, insisted on making the long journey from Corsham so that he could take his part in the programme with us. Almost immediately after this event I received a telephone call from Sue Turner, the Rediffusion Television producer, now with Thames Television. She had the script of a new and original musical story for children, in which the narrator tells a thrilling tale and the orchestra, by their music, and in their roles as instrumentalists, provide the characters. Miss Turner declared herself to be a confirmed fan of the County School of Music since hearing us play in the Fairfield Hall in 1967 and was now resolved to use our young musicians in this programme. Early in February she arranged for her team to come over to Birstall for a preliminary rehearsal, and very early one Sunday morning she arrived with Robin Ray, the author and narrator, and Herbert Chappell, the composer and conductor, to meet the twenty five members of the orchestra selected for the event.**

**She provided a most sumptuous lunch, and they were all so delighted with the players and the progress made during the rehearsal that two other members of her team were sent in search of wine. Bottles galore filled the tables, and not a little filled the young musicians, and in the afternoon the rehearsals continued in mellifluous calm. The second phase was to take the party of musicians to the Rediffusion Studios in Wembley to make the programme. We were all housed in a large Edwardian Hotel, of which the entrance hall was strangely reminiscent of a waiting room at St. Pancras Station. It projected this same atmosphere, and in several of the bedrooms the central heating pipes steamed and puffed away like tired trains.**

Rehearsals occupied the whole of the afternoon of our arrival and continued throughout the following day; then in the early evening all was ready for the making of the film. Lights flashed, we became entangled in countless snake-like cables, the air buzzed with anticipation, the clapper-board snapped and action commenced. The programme, called 'Dead in Tune', was a memorable success and we gathered new friends and experience.

In quick pursuit of these television episodes came an invitation to take part in the making of a film, which, apart from ourselves, involved the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra. The film has been made and on November 5th received its premiere in the Presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother at the Curzon Cinema, London. It is called quite simply 'Music!' and will later be seen throughout the cinema circuits. At last the seemingly fruitless letters of Jack Richards were providing a rich reward for the years of ceaseless endeavour in the County School of Music.

Another, and perhaps even greater triumph, was the making of the record. Everyone who makes music loves to perform, and the larger the audience, the more one is stimulated to excel. Likewise, it is a tremendous thrill to be allowed to broadcast to untold audiences, and even more thrilling to be seen and to see oneself on television and film. In earlier times I tape-recorded the orchestra at intervals of time, but the results almost invariably exaggerated our shortcomings and filled me with despair. However, secretly, I had often wondered whether one day we might not be able to make a commercial gramophone record. The chances were extremely remote, no gramophone company would ever consider making a record of us playing music that the famous orchestras had already done so very much better. This I knew, and I also knew that only a most exceptional circumstance could provide the opportunity.

I saw the possibility after the second Festival. We had new music, especially written for us; Sir Michael had conducted a piece of his own at the Festival, 'The Prince Charles Suite', a piece commissioned for the Royal birth, and this had never been recorded. We also had in our possession a Divertimento by Malcolm Arnold which was still in manuscript and which had been played only by the National Youth Orchestra apart from ourselves. The opportunity had arrived and I had no intention of missing it. I arranged interviews with several companies and set off for London. Each showed considerable interest, but above all PYE were prepared to make the record immediately, and this was the moment for the record to appear. Such was the birth of a new 'Golden Guinea' record.

It now became necessary to choose which of all our available music would best fill the record, and after some thought and discussion with Sir Michael we decided to use the Arnold Divertimento, the Mathias Sinfonietta and Sir Michael's Suite. This left just six minutes of time to fill the record. Sir Michael was firmly convinced that some of Alan Ridout's music should be on the record, because his music was so essentially right for the orchestra, but all the music we had of his was far too long. I spoke to Alan to see whether he had a piece of the right length and his answer was typical - if we needed six minutes of music then he would sit down and write it for us. All this, and recording time was just five weeks away.

Day by day he sent completed portions of the score and we toiled away, writing out parts and then learning; all in good time everything was prepared, and we had learned his new "Concertante Music". Over and above all of this, Sir Michael, William Mathias and Alan Ridout all agreed to conduct their own work in the making of the record, and since Malcolm Arnold was unable to come, I was overjoyed to conduct his lively work. So a new and quite unique record was

made. The results were astonishingly good, the sales equally pleasing, and the critics were unanimous and loud in their praise.

Two television programmes, a film and a record, all within the space of six months meant hectic struggle and intensive rehearsal, and this has been the general pattern during the whole twenty one years. The struggle began with the first tour and each new achievement urged and compelled a complete dedication. Playing in the Royal Festival Hall in 1955, later in the Cathedrals of Oslo and Stavanger and in the 'Palais des Beaux Arts' in Brussels, all to packed audiences, were all memorable occasions that everyone who took part in will remember for the rest of their lives, but they were nerve racking occasions for the staff and myself, and real tests of the orchestra's ability and stamina. This year they added a new experience when we were invited to take part in the City of London Festival, to play a concert in the Guildhall in July. Sir Michael found time to tear himself away from the composition of his new opera, which is now in the penultimate stage, and conducted the 'Enigma Variations' by Elgar, Delius's 'Brigg Fair' and his own 'Little Music For Strings' in historic surroundings. A most important part of the training of these young musicians can only be achieved by playing in small groups and this we organise during all rehearsals of both the Senior and Intermediate Orchestras. Only in such small groups can each player learn to be self-reliant; to read his music with confidence and play his part fearlessly.

Again, it is necessary to find an outlet for all this learning, to send a string quartet or a wind quintet out in front of an audience, each member knowing that if he should mis-read his own part, the whole piece will collapse. This small group work has provided several new spheres in which to display our music. Whenever a school has decided to give extra attention to music or whenever a new school has been opened, I have always tried to present an evening of music for parents, when talented young musicians from the County can show what can be achieved and when I can describe to the parents how and why it is so worthwhile.

These same young musicians are always invited to play at Civic Occasions and many times we have played our music in the 'Minstrel Gallery' of the old County Rooms, and at the same time cast our glances down upon visiting celebrities and local worthies. Then, again, whenever there is a County Banquet or Cocktail Party, we are invited to provide the background music and at such times we must discard our "Third Programme repertoire" for more appropriate musical comedy selections. This is all good fun, we enjoy seeing polite dignity unfold and unbend sip by sip, and we always know that after the merry-making comes our turn.

I remember that probably the first of these small group 'soirees' happened in Woodhouse. The Director of Education decided to invite a friendly group of dignitaries, including the Lord Bishop of Leicester, to a summer cocktail party at his house and of course we were invited to provide the music. For a while we played, glasses tinkled and there was general chatter, then came an interval and Mrs. Mason provided the musicians with 'Punch Bowl'. This we drank under the benevolent gaze of the Bishop and company, then other guests began to ply the various members with further wine, and Mr. Neale discovered untapped sources which he disclosed to the players. I can only add in defence that never has any small group played so well and with such abandon as this happy group displayed in the second part of their programme.

But of all this activity a more recent development has added immense delight and new dimensions. It began when I was sitting next to the Rector of Chprch Langton at a County Music Committee meeting. During a lull in the proceedings

he whispered to me that it might be a good idea to take our music into some of the stately homes. This immediately attracted my attention and a few days later I made my way down to the Rectory to chat this over with the Rector. Here was an opportunity to make chamber music in the atmosphere, under the same conditions, and in the very same salons for which it was composed. We made a trial run at Church Langton; this seemed most apt, since the idea had started with the Rector and, thinking back sentimentally, this was where the very first concert took place. The whole idea has by now proved enormously successful; we make periodic visits to the stately homes, we play, there is talk, and wine flows. The audience is elegant, polite and often enthusiastic; perhaps here and there one notices a vacant glaze, but that might equally be caused by the wine. We enjoy every moment and catch a glimpse of another way of life - happy, happy days.

## **Interlude**

**From Helen Standage, London Weekend Television, Harrow Road, Wembley, Middlesex.**

**Greetings to the Leicestershire Schools' Orchestra.**

**A Happy and Eventful 21st Anniversary.**

**It has been so delightful to work with you again this year when your contribution to "Roundhouse" has brought forth admiration both from the young audience there and the 'oldies' who are my mentors too. Mr. Pinkett, I know, would much have preferred that I used the whole orchestra, or at least hidden half a dozen of you behind a 'flat', but for once I had really to defy him. Not an easy task.**

**"Roundhouse" with its two small pieces of music was a far cry from '65 when I had a week with the entire orchestra in Corsham for "Tempo". That was an exciting and decidedly hectic few days. I chickened out of staying with the School and commuted from the village pub, which had a frantic time housing Producer, Director, Editor and various people from Tempo, a film unit and a large conference of people doing an electronics course in Corsham! It was a super time though, with filming section rehearsals in the morning, orchestral rehearsals in the afternoon and learning to play croquet in Sir Michael Tippett's garden. I was very bad at it!**

**The music was marvellous, a rousing version of "Cockaigne"; a fascinating piece of percussives from Alan Ridout's 2nd Symphony, and most memorable of all the slow movement of the Tippett double concerto. How well I remember the work that went into the phrasing of that first lovely cello passage. I didn't know the work before, but it's been in my collection ever since, and is almost worn out with playing.**

**The week finished with a splendid concert which went on rather late and included Sir Michael's 1st Quartet, in his honour. I covered myself with glory as on leaving with my Producer and, I think, one of your staff on board, I gaily backed my car very hard into a concrete post. This met with gales of derisive laughter from all the members of the orchestra who were seeing us off to the village.**

**I've only worked with you twice but it's been great fun. I do hope it will be many times again in the future.**

**A very happy Anniversary, and my best wishes for the next 21 years.**

**Helen Standage**

## 18. EPILOGUE

As I write these last pages of this story, I am travelling back with the orchestra from the most gruelling, yet the most memorable tour of our history.

Two weeks ago we set out on the journey, first to call in at the Lime Grove studios of the BBC to be filmed and recorded for the programme 'How It Is', which was to be transmitted later in the day; thence to the Fairfield Hall to rehearse throughout the afternoon, and later to play our concert in the evening. After the concert we travelled on through the late evening, finally to reach Dover and there to sleep.

Then it was on day by day through Brussels to Cologne, to Frankfurt and from there to Passau, where we climbed halfway up a mountain to stay for the night in a 15th century Castle, now a youth hostel. On again to Linz and a welcome respite from travel. Two concerts to cheering audiences and marvellous reports in the morning editions, but we must press on, and so to Eisenstadt, where musical history crowded in on us.

Our concert that evening was in the hall of the Palace of the Esterhazys - Haydn's home, where he, as the court musician, composed and played all his symphonies; and we played on the very same spot. Time here was all too short, and on we went the next day for a concert in Leoben, and on again for the next concert and a broadcast from Graz. It was now Saturday, eight days after the start of our journey, and that night we were to reach our ultimate destination - Vienna.

On Sunday we rested, but Monday came all too quickly and with it more rehearsals and a concert and radio programme in the Vienna State Radio Hall. On the next day we gave a further concert in Vienna's most famous concert hall, the home of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, where previous to this our concert, no amateur orchestra had ever been allowed to play; and for our concert the magnificent hall was filled to capacity and they cheered and cheered. Then it was time to leave Vienna, and Salzburg was to be the next stop. All the way the scenery was simply amazing; we could not possibly let tired eyes remain closed, and then Salzburg, indescribably beautiful and quite the place to have given to the world a Mozart. We played in the Mozarteum Hall, the hall where he made music; but still time pressed and by 8.30 the next morning we were again on our way, this time to Munich, where we discovered that the hall in which we were to play, and indeed the room in which the boys changed, was the very one in which Neville Chamberlain and Adolf Hitler had signed the 1938 'Peace in Our Time' pact.

There we made a further programme for Bavarian Radio, but there was still no peace for us. The concerts were over, we had been feted and cheered, the combined press were eloquent in their praise. 'Bravos' and 'Grandioso' had been shouted to us from the balconies and at a reception at the British Ambassador's house, the head of the British Council, who had instigated the whole tour, described us as 'The greatest youth orchestra in the world'. All this was balm to our ears and solace to weary souls and bodies.

We had slept in eleven youth hostels in four different countries, we had carried our luggage with us on each occasion, twice high into the mountains, and we had sung ourselves hoarse as we travelled and travelled across Europe.

Now we are resting in our coaches, no more singing, most are asleep and as we pass through the Black Forest I am busily writing.

Has it all been worthwhile? Well, when they are awake ask any one of them; they will all agree it has been the greatest experience of their whole lives, and I know it will live with them for ever.

I think back to that tour of Holland in 1954, when the critics had said, "These are no Vienna Boys Choir". Now I can relax; we will certainly never be a Vienna Boys Choir, but all Austria has stood back in admiration to proclaim the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra. We have come a long way - and now in this next year 1969, we shall celebrate our 21 st birthday and by the time these words are read the festivity will be with us. There is a lot to be done before then. Thirty players will leave at the end of this journey to start new lives in the Colleges of Music. New faces from the Intermediate Orchestra will somewhat shyly join the remaining orchestra at the next rehearsal, and then we shall begin our rehearsals all over again, so that the next time we perform no one will realize that things have changed; and, indeed, we shall expect that the next performances will be even better.

My mind travels back to the celebration of the 10th anniversary, when we invited the Essen Orchestra with its conductor, Herr Jansen, to be our guests, and as we sat all together at the final party, the Director of Education turned to me and said, "What shall we have achieved at the end of another ten years?" I was quite astounded to think that the end of ten years should only be half that to be expected after twenty years. Well, we are now all ten years older and we set out those ten years ago to prove that it could be done.

What of 1969? First we have concerts at the Worcester Arts Festival, and then at Melton Mowbray (most appropriate in the anniversary year). Then we have been invited to spend a week-end in February in Southport to give two concerts, and in March we have been invited to play in a "concert of outstanding performances", presented by the Schools Music Association in the Royal Festival Hall. There will be our own Festival and week of celebrations, with concerts in the De Montfort Hall by both Senior and Intermediate orchestras in May, and then in June we are invited to take part in the Bath Festival. There, with Sir Michael conducting, we shall play, 'Putnam's Camp' by Charles Ives, 'Quiet City' by Aaron Copland, 'The Rio Grande', a cantata by Constant Lambert, 'Rhapsody in Blue' by Gershwin and a new work by Sir Michael, written especially for this our anniversary. During the year we shall perform 'The Rio Grande' with at least four different choirs, two of which will be German choirs in Berlin and Hanover, but at the Bath Festival and our own Festival the choir will be formed from Leicestershire Schools, from Ashby Girls (Miss Bungard), Ashby Boys (Mr. Gill), Longslade (Colin Newby and Jane Attfield), Lutterworth (Cedric Carnall ) and so once more we shall link up with old friends and ex-members of the C.S.M.

Richard Rodney Bennett is to be the guest pianist during the performance of the 'Rio Grande' and of the 'Rhapsody in Blue', and along with Sir Michael he will accompany us on our visit to Berlin in September. Richard Rodney Bennett is acclaimed as the foremost young British composer; we hope that he will grow to enjoy being with us and that before long he too will write a work for us to perform. Alan Ridout has already sent two new compositions, 'Symphony for Wind' and 'Psalm for Strings', which will be performed for the first time during the year. The Intermediate Orchestra will provide all the nostalgia for the year; they will dominate the first concert in the De Montfort Hall in the Festival week and they will play music with which our past has been associated. Later in the year they will make the journey to Essen that we first made in 1953, there to recapture some of the delights and memories that one or two of the older members of staff and myself still treasure.

Have these 21 years been worthwhile? They have provided me with an endless pattern of work and endeavour, ceaseless anxiety and moments of despair, overwhelming frustration at times, and challenge, challenge all the time.

**They have also provided happiness and friendship in untold measure, all the joys of success and moments of triumph, the knowledge of so many lives which have been influenced and those lives which have been recreated by the events. All of this that I have told, and much more, has happened in the coming of age of the County School of Music. Few, if any, who have taken part, can feel that their lives have not been enriched by the experience and some owe everything to the contact. Parents know this very well and many have themselves learned a fresh appraisal of music by their own close associations with the school. The staff have equally shared in all the joys and tribulations; they have worked long and untiringly in the cause of all these young people, and I am sure that they do not regret one moment of that time, for we too have all gained in the experience. Some of the staff have gone on to other towns and lands, there to strive to emulate our efforts here. Other members are now carrying on the tradition in schools where they are now responsible for the music, schools in all parts of Britain and far off places, too; and in years to come many of the present young will in turn lend their hand to helping future generations, whilst more and more will steadily find their way into the famous orchestras of the world. For me it has been a complete and rewarding life and if I could have my years again I would wish only for a repeat performance, for I believe it all to be worthy of an encore. Soon the 21st birthday will be history, but the County School of Music will go on and on, ever striving to do better and better, but above all seeking to preserve that spirit of comradeship and loyalty which is peculiarly its own.**

**Non Nobis Domine**



BBC: Lime Grove Studios: Sep. 20, 1968.

The Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra performing the overture *Candide* by Leonard Bernstein for the programme 'How It Is'.

## POSTSCRIPT

I have always felt that an educational system which ignored the arts was like a man without one of his limbs. It is not that they are more important than anything else - obviously that is not so. And certainly no such misconception could be levelled against Leicestershire which has probably done as much as any education authority in the country to advance the teaching of mathematics in schools and has always paid particular attention to the provision for science, pure and applied, and indeed has had a major share in bringing into being the first University of Technology to receive its Charter. The struggle rather has been to raise the status of the arts from that of - I won't say of Cinderella for she of course became the Princess - but, to use a more contemporary analogy, of a neglected au pair girl to that of a full member of the family.

One of the most striking features of the revolution that has been taking place in the primary schools is the way the arts, from being separate and rather second class subjects (looked upon as a trifle of permitted light relief from the serious business of dealing with any subjects which however mistakenly could claim to start with the letter R) have now become an integral part of the whole life of the school. They are no longer something separate but penetrate into all subjects if one can any longer use that term of the learning process which the primary schools are eagerly developing. They are growing into as essential a part of expression as literacy and numeracy, and it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish one from another as they all permeate each other. While this can scarcely be said at a later stage where the means of breaking through subject barriers become ever more intractable, none the less the arts are steadily gaining more recognition as something necessary to the total life of the school.

So far as music went the first step in all this was the appointment of a Music Adviser. This was done very soon after my own arrival on the scene and I well remember the occasion for it was an unusual one. I was laid low with 'flu a day or two before the interviews, and the members of the appointing Committee very bravely agreed to come to my home to conduct them there. Plugged with antibiotics and aspirin I tottered downstairs. Eric Pinkett was almost in as bad shape, coughing and spluttering his clogged nasal responses. Through this barrage of germs the Committee reached their momentous decision and subsequent events have shown how perspicacious they were.

There was a striking difference in the way Eric Pinkett set about his job as soon as he was appointed from what one might have anticipated. The normal routine would have been for him to spend a long time paying single advisory visits to a large number of schools. Instead he at once concentrated on a very small number, going in regularly and taking his coat off to teach. In this way he was able to establish nuclei of enthusiasm, if not in such a short span of excellence, which served as examples to fire the imagination of others.

Of course the instrumental side of music presents particular problems which singing and the visual arts scarcely pose. For it involves the acquisition of a whole series of special skills, depending upon the particular instrument as well as upon the general musical ability of the pupil. To provide the necessary instruction beyond an elementary level over such a wide range of expertise is obviously beyond the capacity of the permanent staff of each individual school and though to some extent these skills can be group-taught individual lessons become an essential element sooner or later. The only way to tackle this was to have a number of travelling teachers who could each visit a large number of schools. From small beginnings a wonderful team of 'peripatetics' has been built up. It was a slow and gradual process. A new development of this kind could only

be justified by clearly establishing the need, and the only effective proof of that was a positive demand from the schools. Single handed at first, but indefatigable, apparently tireless and with his knack of firing children with enthusiasm, Eric Pinkett was able to establish that demand. While these travelling music teachers are never promised anything but toil and sweat, certainly tears are no part of the recipe. I have never known a body of people who 'labour night and day' so good humouredly. It is of course Eric Pinkett who sets the pace and persuades everyone it is fun. Those who can't keep up soon drop out to follow less arduous pursuits but those who remain form a team which I regard as one of my greatest privileges to be associated with.

One of the most astonishing things about Eric Pinkett is the depth of his resourcefulness. He has always got the next move in his mind and he never clings on to any particular mode once it has served its purpose. And so we never get set in our ways and we never rest on whatever laurels come our way. There is always over the brow of the hill a more exciting, more spectacular peak to climb. And always the will to climb it is there. This book describes this happy journey - twenty one years of it - but the end is still, and I hope will always be, out of sight. I have so many happy and momentous recollections over the last 21 years but there is no space to list them here. But what a great day it was when past members of the County School of Music after finishing their higher education in music started coming back to teach in our schools - till now, as well as the music specialists in secondary schools, we have an ever growing number of musically trained class teachers in our primary schools too. We have seen over these years the musical life of the schools of the County at every level getting richer and richer - and at every level the programme becoming more ambitious and more creative. However the most rewarding aspect of it all to me has been watching the individual members of the orchestra growing in maturity and self confidence, in their own right as people as well as in their musicianship, under the spell the orchestra casts over those who serve in it. The other day I came upon some notes my wife wrote after one of the foreign tours a few years ago and I quote a few lines which are as applicable today as they were then –

'I have always noticed the incredible transformation from a group of weary, travel-stained young people to a well-trained disciplined orchestra, shining hair, clean shoes and confident anticipation as they file in to take their places on the platform. Quite demure but sparkling somehow and ready for off. They would never, you feel, let the side down, though from the bus you wonder if they can possibly gird themselves for a concert in the Ruhr after setting off from Denmark at midnight - and what a send-off, with the host families either in tears or racing alongside the buses seeing their guests off as far as they can - and travelling all next day - yet it was the best and most successful concert of all. You are impressed by the infectious community spirit which prevails - they are all members of an orchestra, an orchestra with a reputation, and no matter where or what the occasion they are going to play their best.'

I suppose I have been asked to write this postscript because of my office. I cannot divest myself of that but I would like to think it is also because I have personally shared in so many of the adventures of the County School of Music, as has my wife too. For we have slept in schools in the West Country, the South Coast, the East Coast, the West Coast, Wales, Scotland, the Isle of Man and visited many European countries, sometimes in advance and sometimes in the wake of the senior orchestra. Most years a major proportion of my leave has been spent this way, and sometimes my wife and I wistfully wonder what it would have been like to bask on the Costa del Sol instead. But we both know that if we had it all over again we should not choose otherwise than we have.

**For when it is in the hands of these young people from the schools of  
Leicestershire we know - 'Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie.'**

**STEWART MASON**

## OLD BOYS & GIRLS MAKING MUSIC

David Banton	Viola	American Orchestras
Brecon Carter	Violin	South African Orchestra
Terry Carter	Cello & French Horn	Peripatetic Teacher Antrim Ireland
Bill Clarke	Viola	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Lennard Clarke	French Horn	Freelance
Joan Clamp	Oboe	B.B.C. Orchestra Bristol
Ann Collis	Percussion	B.B.C.
Alan Cunningham	Violin	Building a C.S.M. in Sierra Leone
Helen Dalby	Cello	B.B.C. Orchestra Bristol
Leon Downey	Viola	Halle Orchestra
Michael Farrington	Violin	Music Adviser Preston
Malcolm Fletcher	Cello	Music Adviser Antrim Ireland
Judy Gandy	Violin	City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
Robert Glenton	Cello	Freelance
Arnold Goodyer	Violin	City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
David Haslam	Flute	Northern Sinfonia
Bobbie Howes	Percussion	Mozart Players
James Hunt	Oboe	Sadlers Wells
Alan Hutt	Trombone	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Stuart Johnson	Violin	Halle Orchestra
Richard Kirkland	Violin	City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
Peter Leach	Violin	Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra
Peter Lewis	Violin/Viola	B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra
Angela Malsbury	Clarinet	Soloist
Rosalind Malsbury	Cello	Freelance
Peter Nutting	Violin	B.B.C. Orchestra, Birmingham
Timothy Odell	Violin	Peripatetic Teacher Antrim Ireland
Nigel Pinkett	Cello	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
John Price	Bassoon	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Pamela Seager	Bassoon	Peripatetic Jamaica
Pat Sharpe	Clarinet	Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra
John Stein	Violin	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Marion Turner	Violin	Soloist & Jacques String Orchestra
Diana Wheatley	Oboe	Freelance
Rolf Wilson	Violin	Covent Garden Orchestra
James Wortley	Trombone	Scottish Symphony Orchestra
Steve Wortley	Trombone	Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

### SINGERS

Helen Attfield (Viola)	Contralto
Jean Hammond (Violin)	Soprano
Elizabeth Holden (Oboe)	Contralto
Gillian White (Austria) Viola	Contralto

All now well known Artistes.