



EDWARD ELGAR

Music for Powick Asylum

SOMMCD 252



INNOVATION CHAMBER ENSEMBLE (Players from the CBSO)
BARRY COLLETT conductor

Supported by The Elgar Society
with funds from the Kay Trust in
memory of Kathy and Margaret
Kay, and Elgar Works.



ELGARWORKS™

FIRST RECORDINGS

- [1] Menuetto
- [2] – [3] Andante and Allegro
for Oboe & String Trio
- [34] – [38] A Singing Quadrille

- | | | |
|-------------|---|--------------|
| [1] | Menuetto | 4:22 |
| | Andante and Allegro for Oboe & String Trio * | |
| [2] | I Andante sostenuto | 2:48 |
| [3] | II Allegro | 3:15 |
| [4] – [8] | Die junge Kokette (The Young Flirt) – Five Quadrilles | 6:43 |
| [9] | Maud – Polka | 4:57 |
| [10] – [14] | L'Assomoir (The Bludgeon) – Five Quadrilles | 6:09 |
| [15] | Nelly – Polka | 3:11 |
| [16] – [20] | La Brunette – Five Quadrilles | 7:15 |
| [21] | La Blonde – Polka | 4:46 |
| [22] – [26] | The Valentine – Five Lancers | 8:33 |
| [27] | Duett for Trombone & Double Bass* – Allegretto | 1:19 |
| [28] – [32] | Paris – Five Quadrilles | 6:21 |
| [33] | Helcia – Polka | 3:12 |
| [34] – [38] | A Singing Quadrille – Five Quadrilles | 8:42 |
| [39] | Fugue in D minor for Oboe & Violin* – Allegro comodo | 1:09 |
| [40] | Blumine – Polka | 4:17 |
| | Total Duration: | 76:59 |

Items marked *: music not written for Powick Asylum

Recorded at CBSO Centre, Birmingham, on 30 & 31 July 2013

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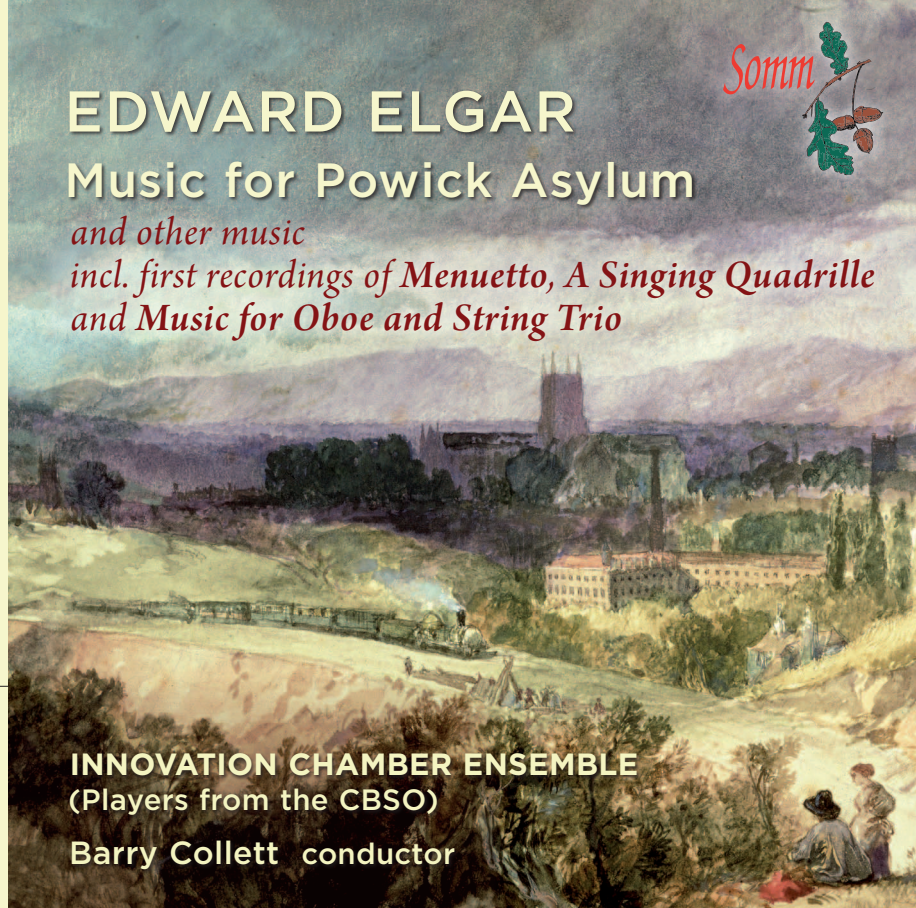


EDWARD ELGAR

Music for Powick Asylum

and other music

*incl. first recordings of Menuetto, A Singing Quadrille
and Music for Oboe and String Trio*



INNOVATION CHAMBER ENSEMBLE
(Players from the CBSO)

Barry Collett conductor

EDWARD ELGAR

Music for Powick Asylum

and

Andante & Allegro for Oboe & String Trio

Duett for Trombone & Double Bass

Fugue in D minor for Oboe & Violin

Innovation Chamber Ensemble (Players from CBSO)

Barry Collett conductor

[1] **Menuetto** (*First Recording*) 4:22

Andante & Allegro for Solo Oboe & String Trio *
(*First Recording*)

[2] Andante 2:48

[3] Allegro 3:15

Die Junge Kokette

(The Young Flirt) – Five Quadrilles

[4] Quadrille 1 1:26

[5] Quadrille 2 0:49

[6] Quadrille 3 1:36

[7] Quadrille 4 0:58

[8] Quadrille 5 1:54

[9] **Maud** – Polka 4:57

L'Assomoir

(The Bludgeon) – Five Quadrilles

[10] Quadrille 1 1:24

[11] Quadrille 2 0:50

[12] Quadrille 3 1:21

[13] Quadrille 4 1:24

[14] Quadrille 5 1:10

[15] **Nelly** – Polka 3:11

La Brunette

– Five Quadrilles

[16] Quadrille 1 1:34

[17] Quadrille 2 1:25

[18] Quadrille 3 1:27

[19] Quadrille 4 0:58

[20] Quadrille 5 1:51

[21] **La Blonde** – Polka 4:46

The Valentine

– Five Lancers

[22] Lancer 1 1:31

[23] Lancer 2 1:22

[24] Lancer 3 0:44

[25] Lancer 4 0:49

[26] Lancer 5 4:07

Duett

for Trombone & Double Bass *

[27] Allegretto 1:19

Paris

– Five Quadrilles

[28] Quadrille 1 – Châtelet 1:13

[29] Quadrille 2 – L'Hippodrome 1:19

[30] Quadrille 2 – Alcazar D'Été 1:41

[31] Quadrille 4 – La! Suzanne! 0:57

[32] Quadrille 5 –
Café des Ambassadeurs 1:11

[33] **Helcia** – Polka 3:12

A Singing Quadrille * (*First Recording*)

[34] Quadrille 11:41

[35] Quadrille 21:22

[36] Quadrille 31:30

[37] Quadrille 42:24

[38] Quadrille 51:45

[39] **Fugue in D minor for Oboe & Violin ***
1:09

[40] **Blumine** – Polka 4:17

Total playing time 76:59

* Items marked with an asterisk are not related to *Music for Powick Asylum*

[2] – [3]

Victoria Brawn *oboe*

Zoë Beyers *violin*

Louise Williams *viola*

Richard Jenkinson *cello*

[27]

Duncan Wilson *trombone*

John Tattersdill *double bass*

[39]

Victoria Brawn *oboe*

Zoë Beyers *violin*

Music for Powick Asylum – Elgar Complete Edition, ed. Andrew Lyle

A Singing Quadrille – Elgar Complete Edition, ed. Andrew Lyle/Barry Collett



Edward Elgar, c.1880

When in January 1879, the twenty-one year old Edward Elgar was appointed Bandmaster at the Worcester County and City Pauper Lunatic Asylum in the nearby village of Powick, the Asylum had been in existence for over twenty-five years: it had opened in August 1852. From early on, and particularly under the second Superintendent, Dr James Sherlock, music played a part in the rehabilitation of the patients. The Band for which Elgar was responsible had its origins in a brass band, founded only four years after the Asylum opened, with instruments bought out of Asylum funds. The therapeutic effects of the Band's activities had been extolled by Dr. Sherlock in his 1857 Report: *"The weekly amusements have been continued as heretofore, and with the same beneficial results: no other means of recreation have been observed capable of realising a similar curative influence and their value is enhanced by the large proportion of the Patients who can participate in them."* This participation involved dancing to the music of the Band rather than playing in it.

Elgar succeeded his local violin teacher Frederick Spray as Bandmaster and held the post until late 1884, when he left; no reasons have been found for his sudden departure, but increasing fame and other demands on his time, together with the termination of his engagement to Helen Weaver may all have contributed. Elgar's duties at the Asylum involved teaching the players in the Band, writing dance music for the weekly Friday entertainments at the asylum and conducting the Band on those occasions.

The Band consisted of members of the Asylum staff and some of Elgar's local Worcester contacts, playing piccolo, flute and clarinet, two cornets, euphonium and bombardon (a bass tuba), up to eight violins in two and occasionally four



MS of *A Singing Quadrille* – opening pages

parts, occasional viola, cello and double bass with piano; a maximum of 19 players. The music he wrote, while not containing masterpieces, is skilfully written for what he once described as an “eccentric orchestra” and is often very demanding of his players. The music is cast in the mould prescribed for each dance, but within this restriction, Elgar composed catchy and delightful tunes.

Before he took up the post, Elgar seems to have submitted a *Menuetto* [1] as a kind of audition piece: it is a re-scoring of a rather Schubertian dance which he had already composed for flute and string quartet and arranged for the wind quintet in which he played bassoon. This is the first recording in its Powick orchestration.

Once he had been appointed, over the six years of his Bandmastership Elgar composed four sets of Quadrilles and a set of Lancers (each consisting of five dances), together with five Polkas. Additionally, there may be other dances which have been lost, as well as *A Singing Quadrille* [34] – [38] where Elgar uses well-known nursery rhymes and other tunes, rather than writing his own. This work remains only in sketch score, and was not included in the part-books from which the band played: it is also recorded here for the first time.

All the surviving dances have evocative titles. The earliest dance, one of three sets of quadrilles from Elgar’s first year at Powick, is *Die junge Kokette* [The Young Flirt] [4] – [8]. He dedicated it “with permission to Miss Jessie Holloway”: she was the daughter of the Asylum Engineer, and played piano for the entertainments: much later she was appointed organist at the Asylum. The scoring here is very solid, as if Elgar was unsure of the skill or regularity of attendance of his players.



A young Elgar
(centre) with
bassoon.

L'Assommoir [10] – [14] from the autumn of 1879, takes its mis-spelled title from a novel by Émile Zola, whose *L'Assommoir* [The bludgeon] Elgar read, and he may well have identified with this tale of the tribulations of lower middle-class trades people. The first dance of this set was the only piece of Powick music to appear in print during Elgar's lifetime – albeit only the first 8 bars in a piano reduction for an article in the *Musical Times*. Elgar's friend, the violinist W.H Reed drew attention to the characteristic offbeat surprises in this section. The clarinet, accompanied by pizzicato strings, has a rare solo in the third quadrille, and Elgar reworked the fifth dance as *The Wild Bears* movement of his *Wand of Youth Suite No. 2*.

The last set of quadrilles from 1879 is *La Brunette* [16] – [20] dated 21 September, and dedicated to the Clerk of the Asylum, George Jenkins “with every feeling of regard & esteem”; Jenkins played violin in the Band. Note the “squeeze-box” effect in the trio of Quadrille No. 4!

1880 was a similarly fruitful year. Elgar's only set of Lancers *The Valentine* [22] – [26] was ready for 14 February: the first violins are given a gentle work-out in the first trio of Lancer No.2, and there is a harmonic surprise in Lancer No.3. The final dance of the set is a complex structure, with three trio sections, which recall earlier dances in the set, all framed by an Introduction and Coda.

By the end of May 1880, Elgar had completed his first polka, *Maud* [9]. The title may refer to Maud Baldwyn, the daughter of another music-seller in Worcester, and a piano prodigy. Pulsating violins introduce a fanfare on the cornets, and an Elgarian offbeat “crash” before the piccolo is featured in the main polka tune. The coda contains some of the most demanding writing for the violins.

Elgar dedicated a second set of quadrilles to Jessie Holloway, *Paris* [28] – [32], following his first trip abroad – with his future brother-in-law Charlie Pipe – to the French capital in August 1880: four of the *Paris* quadrilles have French titles. The cornets feature prominently in these dances, with the first player introducing French tunes *La! Suzanne* and *La Femme de l'Emballeur* in the fourth and fifth quadrilles.

After this two-year burst of creativity, Elgar's remaining time at Powick produced only a single polka each year. It may be that having built up a stock of dances, these were regularly recycled. From October 1881 comes the polka *Nelly* [15], one of Elgar's pet names for Helen Weaver, to whom he was to be engaged. Elgar attributed this dance to his brother Frank "Thos. Fras. Elgar" to encourage him to write music: listen out for the piccolo's decorative curlicues and the cornet tune in the Trio which makes a grand re-appearance in the coda.

October 1882 is the date of the polka *La Blonde* [21] dedicated surreptitiously to "H J W im Leipzig gewidmet". Helen Weaver was studying music in Leipzig at the time and at the very end of 1882, Elgar joined her there for a few hectic weeks of new musical experiences. Uniquely, *La Blonde* employs a trombone as the bass brass instrument, rather than the expected bombardon, and some of the violin figuration near the end resembles Wagner's writing in the *Tannhäuser* overture.

The following October, 1883, Elgar wrote his penultimate polka *Helcia* [33] – named after a species of Andean orchid – where Elgar exploits the possibilities of dividing the violins into four separate parts: this polka and *Nelly* are the only two dances with a separate viola part. In the coda is a striking chord sequence, re-used in the introduction to *Sabbath Morning at Sea* in *Sea Pictures*.

By April 1884 Elgar's engagement to Helen Weaver had been broken off, and in May he wrote what was to be his final dance for Powick, the polka *Blumine* [40] which he ascribed "von Eduard Wilhelm". It is dated 22 May, which would have been Wagner's seventy-first birthday had he not died in January the previous year. This final dance is one of the finest of the set, with a wistful first section contrasted with more energetic music, and a typically broad tune for the Trio.

After Elgar left Powick, his music for the Asylum seems to have been ignored: there are no records of it having been played there subsequently. Ken Russell's 1962 television film *Elgar* included some shots of the old Asylum buildings (now mostly demolished), and also featured a partial performance of the polka *Nelly*, possibly the first time the music had been heard for over eighty years. But the real champion of the revival of this repertoire is the conductor on this recording, Barry Collett. Despite some resistance by those who thought this music unworthy of a great English composer, Collett and the Rutland Sinfonia performed the Powick music in the Chapel of the Asylum itself in 1988, and in London and Rutland the following year, before recording all the dances. Collett's sterling efforts restored this forgotten repertoire to the public eye and ear, and continue with this new recording, the first to use the Elgar Complete Edition, which I edited.

The Band at Powick was essentially an amateur one. Players were rewarded with gratuities each Christmas, but giving no guarantee of availability for every rehearsal and performance. The piano part therefore stands not just in its own right, but also as a short score, with melody lines and some counterpoint indicated on extra cue-lines. This recording uses the piano more as a continuo instrument, allowing the subtlety of Elgar's scoring to be appreciated.



Elgar learned a great deal from his time at Powick, as well as earning about £33/00/00 per year. It was his first regular paid job and gave him some early conducting experience. He was an accomplished violinist, but at Powick, he learned about woodwind and brass instruments and how to write effectively for them.

The earliest of the other three short works on this CD is the *Andante and Allegro* [2] and [3] for oboe and string trio. It dates from the mid-1870s and was probably written for Elgar's brother Frank, who was a fine oboist, for performance at the Worcester Glee Club: the oboe part is headed "Xmas music". The *Andante* features a serene cantilena worthy of Bellini over continuous semiquavers from the violin followed by a scherzo-like *Allegro* with much rhythmic ingenuity.

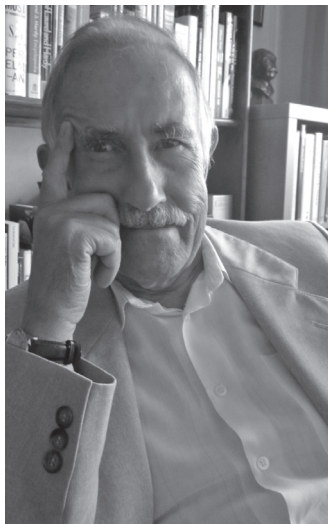
The short *Fugue in D minor* [9] was another present for Frank, who shared a room at the back of the family music shop with the violinist Karl Bammert. Elgar left the piece in their room in 1883 after he had spent half an hour there, smoking his pipe!

Elgar presented the little *Duett* (sic) *for trombone and double bass* [27] as a wedding present for Frank Weaver (brother of Elgar's one-time fiancée) on 1 August 1887. The Weavers ran a shoe shop opposite the Elgar Music Shop on High Street in Worcester, and Frank was an amateur double bass player: Elgar himself may have played the trombone part.

Andrew Lyle © 2014

opposite: Edward Elgar, c.1882

BARRY COLLETT was Director of Music at Rutland College until his retirement, and since then he has pursued an increasingly busy lecturing schedule, especially for the Elgar Society, the W.I. and the W.E.A. In 1975 he founded the Rutland Sinfonia, and conducted all its concerts for the first twenty six seasons, in a wide range of works from Purcell to premieres of new music. Under his baton the orchestra worked with top professional soloists and played at many prestigious events and festivals. In his twenty six years as musical director he conducted, as well as opera, oratorios, cantatas and a wide symphonic repertoire, all of Elgar's orchestral music, a feat recognized by the Elgar Society with the award of honorary life membership.



He has made 11 recordings both as conductor and pianist, and in particular his premiere recordings of Elgar's lesser-known pieces have been widely acclaimed. His book *Elgar Country* was published in 1981 and since reprinted. He has also edited volumes of Elgar's songs and violin and piano pieces for publication, and written many articles for the Elgar Society Journal. He has recently received the Elgar Medal, the Elgar Society's highest award, for his pioneering work in researching and performing the composer's lesser-known works.

INNOVATION CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

'Amazingly rich and well-articulated sound quality is a significant feature of the Innovation Chamber Ensemble...The superb interaction between the I.C.E. players in general is admirable making it possible for them to capture and convey every mood they might choose...' (Birmingham Post)

The Innovation Chamber Ensemble was formed in 2002 by Richard Jenkinson and other principal string players of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to make a unique ensemble who strive for performances of the highest calibre. Due to its versatility I.C.E. is able to perform in venues that would be impossible for the ensemble's bigger cousin.

I.C.E. was launched in September 2002 with concerts firstly in its orchestral home of the West Midlands and then at the Wigmore Hall in London. The concert at CBSO Centre, Birmingham was recorded by Blue Rhythm Records and subsequently became Classic FM's CD of the week. This live recording entitled 'ICE...on Fire' has also been broadcast on BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 2 and local radio stations. The preparations, rehearsal and performance in Canterbury by the Innovation Chamber Ensemble was also featured on BBC4 Television and the creative Channel Network. Articles about the group's concerts have also appeared extensively in the music press as well as local and national press

The group's repertoire is diverse including Baroque works by Bach, Vivaldi and Wassenauer (including a recording for SOMM), standards of the repertoire by Dvořák, Tchaikovsky, also including Twentieth Century works by Bartók, Britten,

Stravinsky, Schoenberg, and Richard Strauss. I.C.E. is also firmly committed to the works of living composers and the first recording featured works by Canadian composer Robert Farnon and a new 'cello Concerto by Paul da Vinci. I.C.E. have also commissioned new works by Colin Twigg (*Echoes of Eternity for cello & strings*) and Ivor McGregor's *Septet*. I.C.E is committed to giving new works multiple performances; *Echoes of Eternity* has been performed in Birmingham, Suffolk and at the 2007 Deal Festival.

Since 2005 the group has expanded its activities to include wind and brass players from the CBSO making a special feature of the chamber arrangements of big symphonic works. Performances have included Mahler *4th Symphony* in Birmingham, Shrewsbury and Buxton, Deal, Fishguard, Newbury and Petworth Festivals. Bruckner *7th Symphony* in Birmingham, Deal and Petworth Festivals and Mahler *Das Lied von der Erde* in Canterbury Cathedral. New arrangements by Richard Jenkinson have been made for the group of works by Wagner (*Wesendonck Lieder* and *Siegfried Idyll*) and Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* which have been performed at various festivals across the country.

The Innovation Chamber Ensemble has made several recent recordings for SOMM. These include *Six Concerti Armonici* by Count Unico Willem van Wassenauer and this one: *Music for Powick Asylum* by Edward Elgar. A series of British piano concertos (also for SOMM) with the pianist Mark Bebbington is also planned for 2014.



INNOVATION CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

VIOLIN 1

Zoë Beyers
Robert Heard
Martin Cropper
Helen Griffiths

VIOLIN 2

Giles Francis
Jane Wright
Shulah Oliver

VIOLA (*doubling VIOLIN 2*)

Louise Williams

CELLO

Richard Jenkinson

DOUBLE BASS

John Tattersdill

PICCOLO

Liz May

FLUTE

Tony Robb

OBOE

Victoria Brawn

CLARINET

Chris Richards

CORNETS

Jon Holland
Andrew Stone-Fewings

EUPHONIUM (*doubling TROMBONE*)

Duncan Wilson

TUBA

Graham Sibley

PIANO

Alistair Young

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Richard Jenkinson



The original house at the centre of Powick Asylum in 1988 (now converted into flats). The asylum was closed in 1989 and the rest of it demolished. Photograph: Barry Collett

The music used in this recording is from the Elgar Complete Edition, published by the Elgar Society Edition Ltd., an Elgar Works company, distributed by Elgar Works.

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President: Julian Lloyd Webber FRCM



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