

A Musician of Renown

**The Life and Works of
George Frederick Linstead
(1908-1974)**

A Centenary Tribute

by

Christopher Powell



**Dr. George Frederick Linstead, BA, DMus, FTCL, FRCO, ARCM
(1908 - 1974)**

© Christopher Powell 2007

The Author

Christopher Powell studied with George Linstead in the 1960's whilst a student at Sheffield University. At school he was taught by Brian Manners who had also studied with Linstead in the Department of Music just after the Second World War. Both were also private pupils of George Linstead. On leaving Sheffield, Christopher Powell became a Research Student at Emmanuel College, Cambridge where, as well as undertaking musicological research, he supervised well over a hundred undergraduates in the Music Tripos for various Colleges of the University of Cambridge. In 1973, he moved to Cardiff as Lecturer in Music at the Welsh College of Music and Drama (now the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama). He was on the music staff at RWCMD for the next twenty-five years holding a number of posts including Head of Academic Studies and Associate Director of Music. He retired on his fiftieth birthday and now spends his time between his homes in Cardiff and Nice. He also returns regularly to Sheffield.

CONTENTS

Preface . . . . .	. 6
Introduction . . . . .	. 7
Chapter 1 Family and Childhood . . . . .	. 8
Chapter 2 Early Days in Sheffield 1917-1927 . . . . .	. 12
Chapter 3 Serious Musical Studies 1928-1940 . . . . .	. 16
Chapter 4 The Professional Musician 1932-1939 . . . . .	. 22
Chapter 5 The War and its Aftermath 1940-1949 . . . . .	. 29
Chapter 6 The 1950's . . . . .	. 36
Chapter 7 The 1960's . . . . .	. 41
Chapter 8 Finale . . . . .	. 46
Chronology . . . . .	. 49
Selected Works . . . . .	. 53
Bibliography. . . . .	. 55

Preface

This study is intended as a general introduction to the life and music of one of Sheffield's most important musical figures. In it, I have adopted a mainly chronological approach and tried to place George Linstead's music in the context of his life and career. Linstead's life is of interest not only as that of a composer, but as an example of the career of a working musician of his times. A list of the many jobs he undertook gives an indication of how a freelance professional musician earned his living in the middle of the twentieth century: composer, conductor, organist, pianist, accompanist, choirmaster, university lecturer, WEA lecturer, examiner, piano teacher, organ teacher, correspondence tutor, author, reviewer, critic, compiler of programme notes. His life also illustrates how a talented musician who left school to work in a shop - like the famous Sheffield choral conductor, Sir Henry Coward, DMus (Oxon), who began life as a cutler - was able to develop his skills and gain a plethora of qualifications in music without ever attending full-time a college or university. A list of Linstead's three external degrees and five diplomas in the order in which he gained them, shows what was then possible: AMusTCL, ARCM, BMus(Dunelm), FTCL, DMus(Dunelm), ARCO, FRCO, BA(Hons).

I wish to acknowledge the help I have received from many libraries and individuals. The Linstead family - especially Stephen, the composer's son - has given a great deal of time and unstinting support to the project from the start. Brian Manners, who sent me to Sheffield to study with his former teacher, George Linstead, provided me with a superb musical foundation whilst at school; his support over many decades is much appreciated. I am also deeply indebted to W. Bro. John Ward who enthusiastically supported this work and provided detailed information about Linstead's masonic career. I am also very grateful to Islwyn Evans, the distinguished Welsh choral conductor, who transcribed one of Linstead's anthems and recorded it with his choir.

My friend and former colleague, Tim Raymond, kindly discussed Linstead's compositional style with me, which helped to focus my thoughts in this area. The librarians of Sheffield University, Hallamshire College and Durham University have readily answered my queries and saved a great deal of my time, which is also acknowledged and appreciated.

C.P.

Cardiff, 2007

Introduction

Shortly after George Frederick Linstead's death at his home on 28th December 1974, the Sheffield musical historian and author Eric Mackerness, described him in these words: 'George Linstead was in himself a chapter in the history of this City's music'.¹ Mackerness also stated that he felt what he had written the previous year of Linstead's career and his contribution to music in Sheffield in his book on the history of music in Sheffield² was totally inadequate and that he hoped one day someone would put together a memoir on a musician of such wide-ranging talents. This centenary monograph is an attempt to fulfil Mackerness's wish. In the early 1970s, Mackerness tried to get Linstead's name on the Honours List³ and, even as late as 1997⁴ put his name forward for inclusion in future editions of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. However, by this time Linstead had been largely forgotten outside Sheffield and his name was not even included in the sixth edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* published less than ten years after his death.

Things were very different in the 1950's when Linstead was sufficiently highly regarded as a composer to warrant an article on his life and works in the main musical dictionaries of Britain, France and Germany: *Everyman's Dictionary of Music*, *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, *Larousse de la Musique* and *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Each of the articles on him begins with a similar but somewhat misleading statement: that he was a Scottish composer. It is true Linstead was born in Scotland - in Melrose in Roxburghshire on 24th January, 1908 - but this was his only connection with Scotland. His parents were both English and by the time Linstead was three years old they had returned to England, to Doveridge in South Derbyshire, where Linstead lived until he was nine years old. Then, in 1917, he moved with his widowed mother and siblings to the City of Sheffield, where he spent the rest of his life.

¹ In a letter to Stephen Linstead, the composer's son, dated 7th January, 1975.

² E.D. Mackerness, *Somewhere Further North - a History of Music in Sheffield* (London, 1974).

³ Letter to Stephen Linstead dated 15th February, 1975

⁴ Stated in a letter to Stephen Linstead, dated 18th August, 1997.

Chapter 1 Family and Childhood

Linstead's father, Frederick Albert Linstead was born in Hockham, Norfolk in 1859 and brought up there.⁵ Some time in the early 1870's he moved to Barleythorpe Hall near Oakham in Rutland to work for the Lonsdale family.⁶ The Lonsdales were Masters of the Cottesmore Hunt and when Henry Lowther's son Henry succeeded his uncle as the 3rd Earl Lonsdale in 1872, he built lavish kennels and stables at Barleythorpe. It was probably at this time Frederick Linstead came to Barleythorpe Hall. Henry Lonsdale died in 1876 and was succeeded by his eldest son, St. George Henry. Frederick Linstead continued working for him and is listed in the 1881 Census as being a Head Servant. The 4th Earl died in 1882 and was succeeded by his younger brother, Hugh Cecil. Frederick Linstead continued on his staff becoming Head Groom/Huntsman.

In 1890, Frederick Linstead married Catherine Elizabeth Harvey, George Linstead's mother. Catherine Linstead, née Harvey, was born in 1863 at Vinehall near Mountfield in East Sussex, the daughter of Caleb and Mary Harvey. She was brought up in Ore near Hastings, which is where she and Frederick Linstead were married. It is likely they met at Barleythorpe where, perhaps, she had also been employed as a servant. There was quite a gap in time before their first child was born in 1895, so it is possible they were separated in the early years of their married life, because their other children followed in fairly quick succession. Shortly after his marriage, Frederick Linstead left his employment with the Lonsdales and moved to Melrose in Scotland. Perhaps it was a while before he was settled and his wife was able to join him. However, they had both settled in Melrose by 1895 when Mary, their first child, was born. In all, Frederick and Catherine Linstead had seven children: Mary Francis born in 1895, Constance Ruth in 1896, Dorothy in 1898, Catherine Harriet in 1900, Marjorie in 1902, Charles Caleb in 1904 and George Frederick in 1908.

From the information provided in the census records and on birth certificates, it appears Frederick and Catherine Linstead moved between Melrose and Great Bowden in Leicestershire several times between 1898 and 1904. They were in Melrose for the birth of their second daughter in 1896, but by 1898 they had moved to Great Bowden for the birth of their third child. However, by 1900 they were back in Melrose again when their fourth daughter was born but are shown as living in Great Bowden at the time of the 1901 census. By January 1904, when their first son, Charles Caleb, was born, they were back in Melrose again and they were still there for the birth of their second son, George Frederick in 1908.

Frederick's employer in Melrose is not known, but he was certainly an aristocrat keen on hunting. Frederick Linstead was an expert on the breeding of horses for hunting. His most likely employer seems to have been the 6th Duke of Buccleuch who lived at Eildon Hall outside Melrose - the Buccleuch Hunt met at Melrose. It is probable Frederick Linstead moved there shortly after his marriage in 1890 and it seems he stayed there - apart from several short breaks in Great Bowden in Leicestershire at around the turn of the century - for the best part of twenty years, until about 1911. The moves back and forth

⁵ See Census records for 1861 and 1871.

⁶ Barleythorpe Hall had been purchased for Henry Lowther by his father William, 1st Earl of Lonsdale, as a hunting box.

between Melrose and Great Bowden may be explained by his employer owning estates in both places and moving his staff from one to the other; however, there seems to be a much more plausible explanation, given Frederick Linstead's trade as a stud groom (non-domestic).

John Henry Stokes of Great Bowden in Leicestershire was the most famous horse breeder in Europe.⁷ His account books read like the *Who's Who* of his times. He supplied horses to the English and Irish aristocracy as well as to the crowned heads of Europe. Clearly, there was no one better qualified to develop Frederick Linstead's skills as a stud groom than Henry Stokes. Either Linstead went to work for him at various times around 1900 to develop his skills as a stud groom, or he was seconded by his employer in Melrose for the same purpose. However, the third and most likely explanation for the family's trips back and forth between Melrose and Great Bowden is that on his visits, Frederick Linstead was bringing his Scottish employer's horses south to John Stokes for breeding purposes.

Stokes's early life was spent in Rutland and since he hunted with the Cottesmore he would certainly have known Linstead's first three employers, the Dukes of Lonsdale, all of whom were Masters of the Cottesmore. Indeed, he must also have become acquainted with Frederick Linstead at the same time, long before the latter moved to Melrose.

Stokes used the show circuit as a shop window for his horses and won enormous sums at these competitions. Between 1901 and 1903, when Frederick Linstead was almost certainly working for, or with him, three of Stokes's horses, Red Cloud, Tennis Ball and Royal Flush won the Gold Challenge Cup from the Hunter Improvement Society. John Henry Stokes took an active interest in the village of Great Bowden, many of the buildings there were built by him, and the Village Hall first served as a reading room for the education of his grooms who would thus be better equipped to talk to his wealthy clients. Doubtless, Frederick Linstead benefited from this facility. Stokes's skill as a horse breeder lay not only in his knowledge of horses and bloodlines, but in his ability to match a client to a horse.

Tragedy struck John Henry Stokes in 1903 when he was accidentally shot in the face whilst out shooting rabbits. He decided to sell his business and go to the continent to recuperate. The sale of his horses took place in November 1903 and raised the enormous sum of nearly twenty thousand pounds. The Linsteads' final return to Melrose may well have been linked to the closure of Stokes's business.

Why Frederick Linstead and his family left Melrose and moved to Doveridge in Derbyshire is unknown, but their youngest son, George Frederick, who cannot have been more than three years old at the time, in later life clearly remembered the journey from Scotland by train. In Doveridge, it is possible Frederick Linstead's new employer was a member of the Cavendish family, Henry Anson, 4th Baron Waterpark who was then living at East Lodge, having leased his family seat, Doveridge Hall, to Lord Hindlip. It is, however, more likely that Frederick Linstead's new employer was the leaseholder of

⁷ Lois Edwards, 'John Henry Stokes an Edwardian horse dealer' *Leicester Historian* No.40 (2004) pp.26-27.

Doveridge Hall, Charles, 3rd Baron Hindlip. Firstly, there was a family connection with his previous employer in Melrose: Lady Hindlip's aunt had been married to the 5th Duke of Buccleuch, they were the daughter and granddaughter of the 2nd Marquess of Bath. Secondly, the Cavendish's were at that time rather strapped for cash because the income from their Irish estates was much depleted, which is why they had leased Doveridge Hall and moved to East Lodge. It is therefore unlikely they would have employed a specialist stud groom at that time. The Linstead family possess a postcard addressed to 'Miss Linstead, Doveridge Hall', but this simply indicates that one of the daughters was employed as a live-in servant there for, while he was in Doveridge, Frederick Linstead and his family lived in a house in the High Street, on the opposite side of the road to the School.⁸

When the Linstead family moved from Melrose to Doveridge is not known, but it must have been in the early months of 1911. Their second son George Frederick was born in Melrose in January 1908 and in later life could remember the move by train from Scotland to Derbyshire, so it cannot have occurred when he was a baby. In 1911, when he was three and old enough to remember things, there is a record of one of the Linsteads' daughters, Dorothy, having been confirmed in Doveridge Church. So it is likely the family moved south early in 1911. The following year, 1912, the same daughter, Dorothy, became a live-in servant to the Vicar of Doveridge, Rev. Charles Hamilton, M.A. at Doveridge Vicarage as is revealed by a Saving Account book in the family's possession.⁹

After the family's move to Doveridge, the Linstead children attended the National School that had been built in 1841. A photograph of the pupils, taken in 1914, shows the six-year-old George in the front row with his elder brother Charles in the back row.¹⁰

When the Linsteads lived there, Doveridge was a small village with about 700 inhabitants, through which ran the main road from Derby to Stoke-on-Trent via Uttoxeter. Uttoxeter is only a couple of miles from Doveridge and is easily accessible on foot because there is a footbridge across the River Dove. The closeness of Doveridge to Uttoxeter is, perhaps, a clue to the reason Frederick Linstead, a stud groom, moved there in about 1911. Uttoxeter still has its famous National Hunt racecourse that was re-established in 1850 and the whole area is famous for horses and hunting.

Doveridge Hall, owned by Lord Waterpark but then occupied by Lord Hindlip, was a noble brick mansion built in 1763 that enjoyed commanding views of the surrounding countryside (it is now demolished). The church, where four of the Linstead children, Catherine, Marjorie, Charles and George sang in the choir, is dedicated to St. Cuthbert.¹¹ Chiefly in the Early English style, it stands on the top a hill below which is a large churchyard that runs down to the River Dove. There, five members of the Linstead family now lie buried: George Linstead, his wife May, his father Frederick, his mother Catherine

⁸ Stephen Linstead remembers being taken there by his father.

⁹ Owned by Dorothy's son, Norman.

¹⁰ In the family's possession.

¹¹ A photograph in the family's possession shows the young George as a probationer with three of his older siblings in the church choir.

and his sister Catherine Harriet. The old village school that was attended by George Linstead and some of his siblings can still be seen in the High Street, opposite the house in which the Linstead family lived. It is now a private house.

Doveridge is a beautiful village in which to grow up and George Linstead remembered his childhood there with affection all his life. His first musical steps were taken on the family harmonium. In later life, he recalled in a light-hearted article for *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph* entitled 'Chased by the Harmonium' how he had been haunted by harmoniums throughout his life: 'The first musical sounds I produced with my fingers were drawn from a harmonium' he wrote.¹² However, he soon graduated to the piano: 'Having shown some prowess on the harmonium, I was rewarded by the gift of a piano, and it was not long before the drawing room was filled with the strains of "The Robin's Return" and "The Dying Poet". The harmonium became an aspidistra stand.'

If the small parlour of the Linstead's house in Doveridge High Street was scarcely a drawing room, the remarkable musical talents of Frederick and Catherine's seventh child may have made it feel like one. Age plays tricks on the memory and, however gifted he was, it must have been quite a few years before the young George was sufficiently advanced on the piano to play the two popular Edwardian parlour tunes he listed in his article: indeed, one would imagine it was long after he left Doveridge for Sheffield, because both pieces are technically quite advanced. However, a glance at these two ballads reveals where Linstead found the models for his opus 3 (later renumbered opus 1) the *Traditional Rhapsody interpolating the airs of tradition: 'The Miller of Dee' and 'The Vicar of Bray' modernised in the form of a Rhapsody* he composed at the age of fifteen, so he must have been playing them well before that time. Perhaps he was very precocious and could manage them whilst he was still living in Doveridge as he suggested in his article. However, he left the village when he was nine, which makes it unlikely.

¹² *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*

Chapter 2 Early Days in Sheffield

Tragedy struck the Linstead family in 1915 when Frederick Linstead died of pneumonia. George Linstead was only seven years old at the time. Frederick Linstead was the sole breadwinner and from being reasonably secure financially, his widow and younger children were suddenly plunged into financial uncertainty. Catherine Linstead continued living in Doveridge for two years after her husband's death, doubtless eking out whatever savings they had, but in 1917, when George Linstead was nine years old and his elder brother Charles Caleb eleven, the family moved from the peaceful village of Doveridge in rural Derbyshire to the war-torn city of Sheffield.

Nearly twenty years later, Linstead recalled the trauma of that experience and wrote on the title-page of a symphonic study he had composed called *Doveridge* the following lines from D.H. Lawrence's poem *Piano*: 'The glamour of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast down in a flood of remembrance. I weep like a child for the past'. He could never forget the trauma of the move from Doveridge to Sheffield in 1917. Just before he died in December 1974, he once again recalled the experience:

[In my youth] I exchanged the pleasant pastures of Roxburghshire and South Derbyshire for the fuming towers of this North Midlands city. The horror of the experience is still with me half a century later, in spite of the wonderful transformation which has taken place within recent years in a city which is now smokeless, clean, well planned in its new buildings, and even beautiful in those places where once it was ugly'.¹³

The reason Catherine Linstead moved to Sheffield with her younger children was because her second daughter, Constance, had been lucky enough to secure a job as a post office clerk in Sheffield. The salary was doubtless small, but it was a secure post and she was thus able to rent a small house, 6 Clarkson Street (now demolished), that could accommodate herself, her mother and younger siblings.

Shortly after the family moved to Sheffield, Charles Caleb Linstead, the elder son, passed the scholarship examination and gained a place at Sheffield Central School. His younger brother, George, followed in his footsteps two years later. It was not easy getting into a secondary school in Sheffield in 1919. Only children that were recommended by the Head Teacher of their elementary school were considered for a place and of the 1,696 recommended in 1919, only 523 were admitted. In other words, only 32% of those pupils whose teachers thought they should receive secondary education actually received it.¹⁴ George Linstead and his brother were two of the lucky ones.

In spite of the traumatic effect of the move from Doveridge to Sheffield that stayed with George Linstead all his life, it was, in fact, the first piece of good fortune that was to attend him as a musician. However much he later looked back on his days in Doveridge with

¹³ George Linstead, 'The Hallé in Sheffield - some personal recollections' an article published posthumously in 1975.

¹⁴ H. Keeble Hawson, *Sheffield - The Growth of a City 1893-1926* (Sheffield, 1968) p.86.

warmth and affection, he would never have developed into the musician he became had he remained in South Derbyshire.

At that time, in spite of the ravages of the First World War, Sheffield was a city full of music, a place where musical ability was fostered and where there were professional and amateur musicians who could appreciate Linstead's situation, recognize his talent and help him achieve his goal of earning his living from music. No less a person than Sir Henry Coward, the doyen of music in Sheffield, had himself come from humble beginnings. He had trained as a cutler, became qualified as a schoolmaster through successfully taking Sunday School classes in his spare time, developed his musical skills - initially by learning and perfecting his skills in Tonic Sol-fa - and eventually gained the degrees of BMus and DMus at the University of Oxford whilst still an elementary school headmaster.¹⁵ Although he composed, Coward's real talent was for choral conducting, especially large, mixed choirs.

In 1876, Coward had founded the Sheffield Musical Union. He conducted it for an astonishing period of fifty-seven years, retiring in 1933. At its height, the Sheffield Choir was the leading amateur chorus in England. It gave the first performance of Elgar's *Coronation Ode* in 1902 and the first successful performance of *The Dream of Gerontius* in the same concert. The Choir, numbering about two hundred members, toured Germany in 1906, Canada and the USA in 1908, Germany again in 1910, and in 1911 with the addition of members from other choirs, embarked on a six-month World Tour that included Canada, the USA, Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania and South Africa. In all, the choristers travelled 34,000 miles and sang in 134 concerts. Apart from the musical aspects, the experiences of that trip on the ordinary citizens of Sheffield who were lucky enough to undertake it can scarcely be imagined. This was the musical city to which Linstead moved in 1917, even if he did not appreciate it at the time.

Linstead's second piece of good fortune was to become a pupil at Sheffield Central School. In Linstead's time, Sheffield Central School was a traditional Grammar School housed in buildings now called Leopold Square in the centre of Sheffield. Two of its famous former pupils were Sir Thomas Padmore GCB who gained a scholarship to Queen's College, Cambridge, took firsts in French and German and then had a distinguished career in the Civil Service, and Baron Dainton of Hallam Moor, who as Sir Frederick Dainton, was Vice Chancellor of Nottingham University from 1965-1970 and Chancellor of Sheffield University from 1979 until his death in 1997. As far as George Linstead was concerned Sheffield Central School could not have been a better choice. Although it was generally considered as second in the pecking order to King Edward VII, the music at Sheffield Central School was at that time on a much higher level. When Linstead went there in 1919 it had its own orchestra as well as the usual choirs. The reason for the high standard of the music-making was, of course, an exceptionally gifted music master whose name was G.E. Linfoot.

George Linfoot, MA, BMus, BSc, was a Sheffield University science graduate and violinist whose main interest was music. He was Director of Music at Sheffield Central School for

¹⁵ Oxford's music degrees at that time did not have any residential requirement.

eighteen years from 1902 to 1920 and turned it into the best school for music in Sheffield at the time, noted for the high standards of its choral and instrumental music making. On Empire Day, 1914, an orchestra of about 25 players accompanied the singing.¹⁶ Linfoot was also noted for developing what was known at the time as ‘musical appreciation’ which involved listening to music, the analysis of scores and the study of music history. Unfortunately, he left the school when Linstead entered his second year but was still able to keep an eye on the music department he had created because he remained in Sheffield. In the Autumn of 1920, Linfoot became the City’s first Music Advisor, a post that was combined with being Sir Henry Coward’s successor as part-time Lecturer in Music at Sheffield University. This joint post was the brainchild of Sir Henry Hadow who had been looking for a way to attract a really distinguished musician to succeed Coward who had resigned his university post after nearly thirty years.¹⁷ So, from 1919 when Linstead started at Sheffield Central School, until 1928 when he became a pupil of Frank Shera, Linfoot was in the right place to help one of Sheffield’s most gifted young musicians develop his talents. Linfoot also conducted the Sheffield Teachers’ Operatic Society, a post later held by his former pupil, George Linstead.

No sooner had Linstead entered Sheffield Central School than he was asked to play for school assemblies. In the light-hearted article he wrote for *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph* on his encounters with the harmonium, Linstead recalled how in his school days he became one of the school’s organists, playing the harmonium for school assemblies: ‘At the age of 11 I thought I had finished with the harmonium. I was wrong. At Grammar School it was not long before I became one of the school “organists” playing hymns for morning assembly on the harmonium’.¹⁸ This shows Linstead must have been a competent and confident pianist by the age of eleven. At Sheffield Central School he also began to compose music.

Linstead’s first composition was a Piano Sonata written when he was twelve. The work was later destroyed. This was followed by an oratorio entitled *The Revelation of St John the Divine* based on the last book of the New Testament, composed when he was thirteen. This work was also destroyed, but Linstead referred to it throughout his career as an important piece of juvenilia. It is hardly surprising in a City with such a famous choral tradition that the young Linstead should try his hand at an oratorio. Whilst still at school, Linstead also composed an opera *King John* but it is no longer extant. Although he destroyed most of his early works, Linstead kept his opus 3, the *Traditional Rhapsody* for piano, renumbering it opus 1 when he drew up a catalogue of his early works in September 1932. The manuscript score of the *Traditional Rhapsody* is dated 11th October, 1923 and it is easy to see why Linstead kept it. We have no written account of the composer’s character as a young man, but one glance at this piece tells us everything we need to know.

¹⁶ E.D. Mackerness, *Somewhere Further North - A History of Music in Sheffield* (Sheffield, 1971) p.130.

¹⁷ Arthur W. Chapman, *The Story of a Modern University - A History of the University of Sheffield* (London, 1955) p.316

¹⁸ *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph*

We can easily imagine the surprisingly confident fifteen-year-old Linstead as a young virtuoso pianist flying up and down the keyboard to the amazement of his contemporaries. The full title of the piece is: *A Traditional Rhapsody Interpolating the airs of tradition: 'The Miller of Dee' and 'The Vicar of Bray' modernised in the form of a Rhapsody*. It is full of scales, arpeggios, big chords, off-beat rhythms, chromatic scales and trills. There are octave passages everywhere. One glance at 'The Dying Poet' and 'The Robin's Return', the two sets of parlour variations he remembered playing in his youth, shows that they were clearly the models for his own *Traditional Rhapsody*. Although Linstead was a classical composer in every sense, he retained throughout his life a love of the lighter side of music, and although generally a quiet man, on the platform as performer or conductor, he clearly exuded confidence.

Linstead left school at about the age of fifteen and took a job in the hat department of the Sheffield branch of Dunn's, the gentlemen's outfitters. At the time the family were poor and there was no possibility of him staying on at school and going to college. He remained at Dunn's until eventually he was given six months to find a job better suited to an employee who composed music in the firm's time. He continued composing after he left school as well as furthering his musical education by having piano lessons and taking classes in theory at the university with G.E. Linfoot. The only other work known to date from this period is an opera based on the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus that Linstead composed in 1923 and 1924. It is no longer extant. Although information about him at this time is scant, we know he continued to play the piano and to compose because in 1927 he gave his first broadcast both as a pianist and as a composer on Sheffield's new radio station.¹⁹ It is most likely he performed on that occasion *A Traditional Rhapsody Interpolating the airs of tradition: 'The Miller of Dee' and 'The Vicar of Bray'*, of his early works the one of which he was the most fond.

¹⁹ See Linstead's programme note for *Scherzo* dated 21st February, 1953. 2FL, Sheffield's new radio station, had started broadcasting in November, 1923.

Chapter 3 - Serious Musical Studies 1928-1940

In 1919, the same year that Linstead went to Sheffield Central School, by chance there arrived at the university as Vice Chancellor one of England's most distinguished musicians, Henry Hadow. Sir (William) Henry Hadow (1859-1937) was a scholar, composer, educationalist and historian of music. He came to Sheffield as Vice Chancellor of the University from Armstrong College, Newcastle. Although the appointments committee noted his distinguished career as a Classics don at Worcester College, Oxford, and as an administrator in higher education at Newcastle, amazingly they were completely unaware of his equally distinguished career as a musicologist and appointed as Vice Chancellor, by chance, the foremost musical historian in England at the time. Single-handed, Hadow had edited the 8-volume *Oxford History of Music* published at the beginning of the century, writing Volume 5: 'The Viennese Period' himself. In 1896, he had published *Studies in Modern Music: Hector Berlioz, Robert Schumann, Richard Wagner* and, in 1926, whilst he was at Sheffield, he published a further volume entitled *Studies in Modern Music 2nd Series: Frederick Chopin, Antonin Dvorak, Johannes Brahms*. Thus in thirty years, whilst he was professionally engaged on other work, mostly as an administrator, Hadow wrote comprehensive studies of every major composer from Haydn to Brahms. How fortunate for musical life in Sheffield to have, albeit in an administrative post, such a distinguished and influential musician. It is said that in the 1920's no major decision was made in the sphere of music in England without first consulting him.

As was noted earlier, the year after he arrived in Sheffield, Hadow appointed Linfoot as part-time lecturer in music in succession to Sir Henry Coward. At the time he wanted to found a Chair in Music, but, sadly, there was no money available. However, in 1926, Mrs. James Rossiter Hoyle - one of Hadow's near neighbours and the widow of a wealthy industrialist who had been Master Cutler in 1912 - died leaving £16,000 to endow a Chair of Music at the university.²⁰ Hadow - who first approached Vaughan Williams - appointed Percy Buck, King Edward VII Professor of Music at London University, as visiting Professor in the session 1927-8, while plans were finalised regarding the new department. Hadow knew Buck well and had commissioned him to write the introductory volume of his *Oxford History of Music*, which was eventually published in 1928. Buck was only a temporary appointment and, in 1928, Hadow appointed Frank Henry Shera as the first full-time James Rossiter Hoyle Professor of Music.

Shera was at the time Director of Music at Malvern College, Henry Hadow's old school. It was a post he had held since 1916 having held a similar appointment at Bradfield College before going to Malvern. Whilst he was Director of Music at Malvern College, Shera had published two short books: *Musical Groundwork - A Short Course of Aural Training* for OUP in 1922 and, in 1925, the still interesting and useful *Debussy and Ravel* in the Musical Pilgrim Series.

When Frank Shera arrived in Sheffield in 1928 to take up the new post of full-time Professor of Music, he was already well known to the city's citizens because he was a native

²⁰ Arthur W. Chapman, *The Story of a Modern University - a History of the University of Sheffield* (London, 1955) pp.316-318

of Sheffield. Shera had been born in the City on 4th May, 1882. His father, Dr. Shera, had for thirty years been Principal of Wesley College, one of the Sheffield schools that were later merged to form King Edward VII. Wesley College was also an extension college of the University of London, so Shera was brought up understanding the system of external degrees and diplomas that, in due course, he encouraged Linstead to take as an alternative to a full-time university course.

Shera himself had not been educated in Sheffield: he attended Oakham School in Rutland followed by Jesus College, Cambridge, where he passed the tripos in Classics as well as taking the MusB and MMus degrees.²¹ Upon leaving Cambridge he studied at the Royal College of Music under Stanford, Parratt, Walford Davies and Cecil Sharpe. He passed his FRCO in January 1908.

Sir Henry Hadow's appointment of Shera to the newly-created James Rossiter Hoyle Chair of Music was, with the benefit of hindsight, an inspired choice. Shera set up the department, created the degree courses, devised their structure and, for at least the first fifteen years, taught unaided all the courses himself as well as conducting the University Orchestra and Choir. The success of Shera's twenty-year tenure as Professor of Music at Sheffield can easily be judged by naming four of the many talented students in his department around the time he retired in 1948 who themselves became distinguished academics and scholars: the late Denis Arnold, the Monteverdi and Gabrieli scholar, who was later to hold the Chairs of Music at both Nottingham and Oxford Universities; David Brown, the international Tchaikovsky specialist who was subsequently a Professor of Music at Southampton University; the late Jack Pilgrim who for most of his career was on the music and education staff of Leeds University; and Gilbert Reaney, a medievalist who lectured at Reading and Birmingham Universities before moving to the USA as Professor of Music at Berkeley, California. Reaney was the first recipient of the Dent Gold Medal, the 'Nobel Prize' of musicology. Incidentally, both Reaney and Arnold were natives of Sheffield. By the time Shera retired, Linstead himself was the only other member of staff in the department of music having, in 1947, replaced a part-time lecturer, Dr. Willis Grant.²²

Linstead's life as a professional musician really began in 1928 with the return of Shera to Sheffield, when he became one of Shera's first students in the Department of Music at Sheffield University. At the same time, he took up his first post as an organist and choirmaster in one of the Sheffield churches.²³ Indeed, it was probably Shera who suggested he turn his keyboard skills towards the organ so that he could obtain a regular income from music whilst he was studying part-time at the University. Times have changed, but until the end of the 1950's the salary paid to the Organist and Choirmaster of a Parish Church, together with fees and private pupils, formed the basis of a reasonable living wage.

²¹ Hadow had followed a similar route although at Oxford.

²² Later, Willis Grant was Professor of Music at Bristol University, but at that time, he was Organist of Birmingham's Anglican Cathedral.

²³ Family tradition has his first two church appointments, between 1928 and 1934, as being at St. Stephen's and St. George's churches, Sheffield.

Because the music degree courses at the University had not yet been established, Shera doubtless encouraged Linstead to sit for equivalent external diplomas and degrees instead. Linstead took the AMusTCL diploma in the theory of music and an ARCM also in theory in 1929 just one year after he started classes with Shera. It must have been a wonderful day in the Linstead family when the letter arrived on 30th September informing George Frederick that he had gained his first serious, professional, musical qualification: Associate of the Royal College of Music. Unfortunately, Linstead's mother Catherine did not live to see her youngest child's next success because she died seven months later, on 23rd April, 1931, at the age of 66. However, she must have known by then that her son, George, was about to become the first member of the family to hold a university degree. Linstead had submitted his exercise two months before she died and in November 1931, following three years of Shera's tuition, he received his BMus degree from the University of Durham.²⁴ It is interesting to note that just one month before Linstead was awarded his Durham BMus, the first full-time music students started their BA and BMus courses in Shera's new Department of Music at Sheffield.

Linstead had taken his degree at Durham University as an external student. At that time, the music degrees at Durham, both BMus and DMus, had no residential qualification. This had also been the case at Oxford and Cambridge before the turn of the century. Indeed, Cambridge did not teach music as a Tripos subject until after the Second World War. Sir Henry Coward gained both his BMus and DMus degrees at Oxford whilst an elementary school teacher in Sheffield and although both Hadow and Shera were Oxbridge graduates they had taken their honours degrees in classics, not in music. Ironically, it was Hadow who tried in 1898 to end Oxford's lack of a residential requirement for its music degrees in order, he felt, to raise their status in the university. Because the system was so different in those days and Linstead himself took so many external degrees and diplomas, it is perhaps wise at this point to pause in the narrative of his life to explain briefly the system of music higher education before the Second World War.

In 1889, Durham University began awarding degrees in music that required only a general education as a qualification for registration and no residence at the University. They were designed to fulfil the need of the many organists and choirmasters in Britain who, as articulated pupils, could not pursue a traditional university course. Oxford, Cambridge and London also granted degrees in music without a residence requirement, but they did oblige candidates to show competence in other subjects such as classics and mathematics. Most apprentice organists signed their articles at the age of fifteen or sixteen, usually when their voices broke as choristers, and so had no formal education after that point. Durham had clearly identified a need because 80 candidates registered in the first year alone and by 1900, 157 music degrees had been awarded.

This was at a time when university degrees were rare and generally the preserve of the

²⁴ It is worth recalling that while Linstead was celebrating his success, Sheffield had one of the highest rates of unemployment in the country and one in five working-class homes in the city were below or bordering on the poverty line. see Clyde Binfield *et.al. The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993* vol. 2 p.318.

upper classes who had been educated in the public schools and at Oxbridge. Durham opened the doors to talented musicians from more modest homes who could never have dreamed of gaining a degree by any other means. Indeed, until after the Second World War - by which time a number of British Universities including Sheffield had developed honours degrees in music - there were more music graduates with degrees from Durham than from all the rest of the British universities put together. The degrees from Durham were pass degrees and unclassified and exercises in original composition were required both for the degree of BMus and DMus.

In the early days, only one musical form was allowed: a Cantata for chorus, string orchestra and soloists in four movements (a chorus, a vocal quartet, a vocal solo and a choral fugue). This is not surprising given that most of the candidates were organists and the first three Professors of Music were cathedral organists themselves. The Professorship of Music at Durham was initially a non-residentiary, part-time appointment. The first holder of the post was the Organist of Durham Cathedral, Dr. Philip Armes, an Oxford DMus, and the pattern of appointing a cathedral organist as Professor continued until the first full-time Professor of Music, a non-cathedral organist, Arthur Hutchings, was appointed in 1946. He was also the first Professor of Music who was required to live in Durham.

The examinations were concerned with the technical rudiments of composition and as Sir Edward Bairstow - Durham's third Professor of Music - remarked: 'In those days, it was a matter of conforming strictly to the textbooks'.²⁵ His predecessor had been Joseph Cox Bridge, the organist of Chester Cathedral and younger brother of Sir Frederick Bridge, organist of Westminster Abbey, who had so strongly opposed Oxford University's move to introduce a residence requirement for its music degrees in 1898. Indeed, it was the existence of alternative non-residentiary courses at Durham that eventually persuaded Oxford to close its doors to non-resident students of music. Sir Edward Bairstow, Organist of York Minster, who became Professor in 1929, was himself a graduate of Durham (BMus 1894, DMus 1900). As he was fond of reminding his students, he had failed both degrees the first time round. He combined both posts with ease because his university chair only require him to give one course of lectures a year and to examine the exercises submitted for the degrees in music. A glance at the list of compositions submitted for the BMus and DMus examinations in the early years shows that an anthem or cantata was the usual exercise submitted. Indeed, as was noted above, in the early years it was mandatory. It was not until the 1930's that one finds occasionally compositions of a secular nature such as those Linstead submitted.

Linstead submitted a Piano Quintet as his BMus exercise in 1931. In the catalogue he created in 1932, it is listed as his opus 61. It was composed in November, 1930. Following the title page of the score he sent to Durham in 1931 is the following quotation from Shakespeare's *Othello*: 'I will a round, unvarnished tale deliver'.²⁶ Linstead left unquoted *Othello*'s next line, 'Of my whole course of love' expecting the reader to know it and to realize that his Piano Quintet had a hidden programme: it was the story of his falling in

²⁵ Quoted in Francis Jackson, *Blessed City - The Life and Works of Sir Edward Bairstow* (York, 2/1997) p.19.

²⁶ Shakespeare, *Othello* Act 1, scene 3 line 90.

love. Linstead met his future wife, May Dorothy Griffiths (a young Sheffield English graduate and schoolteacher) at around this time, and the Piano Quintet tells in music the tale of their early courtship. In 1932, Linstead dedicated his first published work, a Piano Prelude, to her. It was subtitled *Virgo dulcissima* [Sweetest Maiden] and was published by John Blackburn of Leeds. However, it was not until 1940 that he persuaded her to become his wife.

Linstead continued having lessons in composition throughout the 1930's most especially from Sir Edward Bairstow who was then Organist of York Minster and the part-time Professor of Music at Durham University. Shera had not progressed beyond the MMus, so he probably advised Linstead to take lessons from someone who had already taken a doctorate. It was Linstead's aim to take the Durham DMus degree, so lessons from the Professor, Dr. Bairstow, doubtless seemed a good idea.

Reference has already been made to the difference between music degrees taken before the Second World War and those afterwards. The DMus degree was no exception. It was not awarded for the submission of a portfolio of original, unaided, often published compositions displaying the unique style of their composer, as it is nowadays; rather, the exercise was intended to display the student's advanced technical compositional skills. It would not be unfair to describe the exercise as a demonstration of advanced musical theory. Students took their on-going exercises to Bairstow who would read them through at the piano and discuss how the piece might continue and what skills needed to be developed or demonstrated. When it was felt the student had displayed enough skills at the appropriate level, the exercise was submitted and sent to an external examiner. Linstead worked on his doctorate throughout the 1930's submitting his exercise, *The Conflict* - an oratorio for baritone solo, chorus and orchestra which set words from Tennyson's *Lotus-Eaters* and George Barker's *The Leaping Laughters* - in February 1940, eight years after he had passed his BMus. Interestingly, eight years is the gap between Bairstow's own BMus and DMus degrees.

Half way through the work on his doctorate, in 1935, Linstead took an FTCL diploma in 'The Art of Teaching'. It was an odd choice because his BMus degree already qualified him to teach in a school and, with the exception of one short spell at King Edward VII helping out with the Advanced level teaching while Norman Barnes the Director of Music was ill, the one job in music Linstead never pursued was school teaching.

As well as journeying north to Bairstow's studio in Leeds, during the 1930's George Linstead also travelled west across the Pennines to Manchester to have lessons with the concert pianist James Ching (1900-1961). Although based in London, he had a studio in Manchester. Ching, an Oxford graduate, had studied at the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music, in Leipzig and Berlin. He began giving recitals and broadcasting in 1926, rapidly establishing himself as a leading interpreter of Bach. He played many

times at Sir Henry Wood's Promenade Concerts and appeared twice as soloist at the Edinburgh Festival. Like his teacher Tobias Matthay, Ching developed his own 'school' of piano playing: his pedagogical methods being based on his study of physiology. His

scientific method of piano playing was enshrined in a number of books. Ching also produced a whole series of graded exercise books for pianists. In 1938, he established James Ching Professional Services, a company that still exists, providing a postal resource for music teachers including notes and analyses of set works for the syllabuses of the various examination boards. Linstead became very friendly with Ching and regarded him as one of his most important influences.

During the 1930's Linstead was the professional pianist of choice for many of the most important chamber concerts in Sheffield. The composer and ethnomusicologist Peter Crossley-Holland (1916-2001) noted that one of his earliest successes whilst he was a student at Oxford was the professional performance in Sheffield in 1934 of his *Fantasy Quintet* for piano and strings. He credited the success of this performance with his emergence as a serious composer. The pianist was George Linstead. In the same year Linstead also played the piano part in Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande*.

Chapter 4 The Professional Musician 1932-1939

In September 1932, nine months after he passed his BMus, Linstead drew up a catalogue of his musical compositions. He discarded a large number of early works including the Piano Sonata he had composed at the age of twelve, the oratorio *The Revelation of St John* he had composed at the same age, an opera *King John* also composed while a schoolboy and another opera based on the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus he had written in 1924-5 between the ages of sixteen and seventeen. However, he kept the *Traditional Rhapsody* for piano solo he had composed at the age of fifteen, changing its opus number from 3 to 1. The catalogue of 1932 only lists three works composed before he started lessons with Shera in 1928, although he had written many more.

The catalogue is quite comprehensive from the time he started studying under Shera. It shows that in the year 1928 Linstead composed eleven works including five for organ, two for piano, an impromptu for cello and piano, an Irish tune for orchestra and two songs. The following year he wrote forty pieces, mostly songs and solo piano works. In December 1929 he composed a Violin Sonata. Although the following year he composed fewer works - fourteen in total - they were more extensive pieces including the Piano Quintet that was his BMus exercise and a Sextet for Wind. A similar number of pieces came from his pen in 1931 including, in May, an *Adagietto* for Organ that may well have been composed for his mother's funeral at the beginning of that month.

The 1930's were Linstead's most fertile time as a musician. It was in the years after gaining his degree in 1931 and before war broke out in 1939 that he wrote many of his most important works. He was also doing a lot of professional work as a pianist, organist and conductor. 1932 was one of the best of those years: he had his first publication (the Piano Prelude 'Virgo dulcissima' mentioned above) and he composed two of the most important pieces he ever wrote: his *Rhapsody for Viola and Piano* and his *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*.

Recently, a study of the latter work formed part of the subject of a doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Sheffield by Spencer Pitfield, a clarinetist. Dr. Pitfield has described Linstead's *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* as one of the milestones in the history of the clarinet repertoire. It is certainly one of the most interesting pieces Linstead composed and shows that by his mid-twenties he was writing pieces of historical importance and lasting value.²⁷ Dr. Pitfield has described Linstead's contribution to the repertoire of the clarinet in the following terms:

'The Linstead Sonata is immensely significant to the development of a more exploratory and expressive 20th-century clarinet tradition in Britain. Whilst not equaling the heights of "lyrical artistry" and invention achieved by later native compositions, such as Bax and Ireland, this Sonata did lead the way in two important areas. Firstly, it dramatically increased the technical expectations placed on performers - when compared to pre-1930 Sonatas. A "new" virtuosity is in evidence in the clarinet score's wide register shifts, which are often transitioned quickly during

²⁷ The Clarinet Sonata has recently been published by Rosewood publications .

long, technically demanding semi-quaver passages. The piano score is equally complex with challenging rhythmical interplay between left and right hands, and sections, which leap across the keyboard. Secondly, the Linstead Sonata was the first British composition of its type to be through-composed. It exchanged the tradition of 'breaking' movements for a shorter, "non-stop" format. Within this one movement structure it incorporates considerable contrast, which is emphasized through tempo change, rubato, ritardando and the use of fermate. Importantly, this "new" "formal" structure, which includes a prelude and postlude, is well balanced despite the lack of traditional movement separation.²⁸

Composed in February 1932, the work received its first performance the following month on 26th March at the Victoria Hall, Sheffield. The composer was at the piano and the clarinet soloist was William Roystone. The concert was one of a series promoted by John Parr.

Although a shorter work, Linstead's *Rhapsody for Viola and Piano*, composed in December 1932, is every bit as interesting and adventurous as his *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*. It is challenging both in technique and style and a worthy addition to the viola repertory. It was probably also performed at one of John Parr's Chamber Music Concerts.

Parr's Chamber Concerts, for which Linstead composed most of his chamber works in the 1930's, were an important part of Sheffield musical life for well over fifty years. Although the concerts started in 1898, the majority were held between 1930 and 1945 when over a 1,000 pieces were played. John Parr was an employee of the railway who was obsessed by music for wind instruments (his collection of instruments is now housed in Sheffield City Museum). But John Parr did not just collect wind instruments and promote wind chamber concerts, he actively sought out wind music from all periods and countries, spending as much time as he could in libraries looking for new pieces, making sets of parts and performing the works in his concert series at the Victoria Hall, Sheffield. In the 1930's the regular members of 'The Combination', as Parr called his group, were, Louis Colton (flute), Percy Charlesworth (Oboe and Cor Anglais) William Roystone (clarinet) and John Parr (bassoon). George Linstead was the pianist. By being so closely involved with Parr's series of Chamber Concerts, Linstead gained a detailed knowledge of wind music and wind scoring, heard a vast range of music that had lain unheard for centuries and, most of all, was able to composed music for members of 'The Combination' and to have those works performed in public.

Parr himself was a bassoonist who later also developed an interest in the double bassoon. In 1932, Linstead wrote a set of *Six Variations on an English Folktune* for Parr to play on the double bassoon in the concert on 8th October. In the same concert, Linstead was joined on the platform by his old music teacher from Sheffield Central School, George Linfoot, who played the violin.

Linstead wrote a fascinating article in the *The Musical Times* celebrating fifty years of

²⁸ Spencer S. Pitfield, 'British Sonatas by Hadow, Bell, Linstead and Fiske: Rediscovering a Forgotten Repertory' ICA ClarinetFest2000, Oklahoma, USA.

Parr's Concerts in Sheffield.²⁹ Typically reticent, he omitted to mention all but one of his own pieces that had been composed for, and played in Parr's concerts.

Unlike many young composers, Linstead never wrote music that was not going to be performed. In consequence, most of his early pieces were works for solo instrument, songs or chamber music, and most of the works he composed in the 1930's received their first performance in John Parr's Concert series. When John Parr introduced strings in order to expand the repertoire, it gave Linstead the chance to compose works such as his Viola Rhapsody, and his Violin Sonata, interesting and important works that can be compared to the Clarinet Sonata as of equal interest, originality and quality. Parr was not only keen on reviving music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he was also keen to promote contemporary music. Probably some of the most adventurous music Linstead ever composed dates from this time and owes its existence to the amazing enthusiasm of John Parr. Parr has been likened to Thomas Britton the small coal merchant in London at the time of Purcell, who organized some of the first public concerts. It is not an unfair comparison. Parr's Chamber Concerts brought to audiences in Sheffield for over fifty years a range of music that was not heard anywhere else in Europe at that time.

Another work composed by Linstead especially for 'The Combination' was his *Octet for Five Players*: the saxophone and clarinet are played by one performer, as are the violin and viola, and the cello and the bass, the other two parts being for piano and trumpet. The title reveals the puckish sense of humour that lay behind Linstead's sometimes austere exterior. The Octet was first performed in June 1932. In the August of that year he composed his first two pieces for Brass Band: a March and a Meditation.

All the while Linstead was composing chamber music and performing in John Parr's Concert Series, he was earning an important part of his income for being an Anglican Organist and Choirmaster. In 1933, he moved to his third Organist and Choirmaster post, at St. Mary's, Walkley. It was his best post so far and he remained there until 1954 when he moved to Christ Church, Fulwood, his fourth and final post.

In 1933, Linstead produced yet another excellent and important piece for John Parr, this time for strings and timpani. It is an unusual combination but well suited to Linstead's rhythmic and sometimes aggressive style of the 1930's. The work is full of life and was given the French title *Pièce d'Occasion*. Also in 1933 he composed a rather more gentle scene for a ballet score *Hylas and the Water Nymphs* which was performed at the Sheffield Empire and again in March 1934 by an augmented University Orchestra in the Firth Hall. In the same concert George Linstead played the piano for a performance of Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande*, a composer with whom he was in correspondence.

Also in 1933, Linstead arranged *Two Irish Dances* for orchestra. These received two performances in the 1930's, one amateur and one professional. In 1933, the Southampton Symphony Orchestra played his arrangements and then, in 1936, the BBC Northern Ireland Orchestra gave the works their first broadcast.

²⁹ George F. Linstead, 'John Parr and his Concerts' *The Musical Times* June 1945 pp.169-172

A work that should certainly be linked with his Clarinet Sonata and his Viola Rhapsody is Linstead's *Sonata for Violin and Piano* composed in 1934. It opens with a solo for the violin and ends with an exalted climax. Linstead revised this work in 1944 and it was performed again at a University Concert on 11th February 1949 by George Hallam and Gilbert Reaney. These three works are all innovative and important additions to the solo repertoires of their respective instruments and, as a group, are among Linstead's most important works.

Also in 1934 he composed, for John Parr's Chamber Concert Series, a *Quartet for Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Double Bass*. It is an unusual combination, but doubtless what was available for that particular concert showing that Linstead could adapt his music to whatever group of instruments happened to be available to play it. It is interesting to note that as a University teacher, it was his classes in instrumentation that were the most often remarked upon by his former students.³⁰

In December 1934 Linstead completed his hundredth work: *The Holy Bottle* a Rabelaisian opera. The special correspondent of the *Daily Mirror* provided his readers with a concise description of the piece:

'Here are some facts about an ultra-modern opera:-
Its theme: whether to marry - yea or nea?²
Dramatic rhythm chorus declaiming a psalm.
No singing chorus.
Female corps de ballet with male solo dancer.
Twelve principals: one a male alto.
Music advanced - difficult.
Text from Rabelais's "Heroic Exploits of Gargantua and Pantagruel.'

The most interesting phrase is that which describes the musical style: 'Music advanced - difficult'. This was a recurring problem with Linstead's music, especially with the pieces composed in the 1930's.

In 1935, Linstead composed his first and one of his best original works for symphony orchestra, a symphonic study entitled *Doveridge*. He wrote on the score: 'Doveridge is a delightful village on the River Dove two miles from Uttoxeter, where the composer lived for several years'. It was the village in which Linstead had spent his youth. He also added the following quotation from D.H. Lawrence's poem *Piano* to the score: 'The glamour of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast down the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past'. The music does not describe the pastoral idyll of South Derbyshire as one might expect from the title. Rather, it expresses the trauma of the move from Doveridge to war-torn Sheffield that happened to the composer in 1917. Although the work begins pastorally with a slow rising melody on the French horn, the mood rapidly changes becoming animated and in places, dramatic and disturbed. Even if the act of composing the piece was therapeutic, the experience of uprooting his life from Doveridge to war-torn Sheffield at the age of nine stayed with the composer all his life. Sadly,

³⁰ Letter from Eric Mackerness to Stephen Linstead dated 14th February, 1975.

although a fine work, *Doveridge* is one of the very few pieces by George Linstead that has remained on the shelf awaiting its first performance.

Wearing another of his many professional hats, in February 1935 Linstead directed a most successful performance of 'The Desert Song' by the Croft House Players at the Sheffield Empire. The music critic of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* wrote:

'As music director, Mr. George F. Linstead avoids the conventional by emphasizing the finer points of the score. With both principals and chorus he gains the utmost from the spacious score, and his accompaniment is excellent. Last night he enjoyed a fresh triumph.'

In March 1936, at another of John Parr's concerts, Linstead directed the first performance of his new wind quintet entitled *Mood* for flute, oboe, clarinet, violoncello and contra-bassoon. As with his Quartet of 1934, Linstead added a stringed instrument to the wind group probably because those were the players available for the concert. The music critic of *The Sheffield Daily Telegraph* was enthusiastic:

'Mr. George Linstead again displayed his easy and assured handling of the modern idiom, and under the composer's able direction, the world's first performance went especially well.'

The music critic of the *Yorkshire Post* (T.H.) was equally impressed with Linstead's emotional tone poem and wrote: 'Considering its difficulty, it was very cleverly played'.

The point is well made and is often repeated in the context of Linstead's music. One piece of advice neither Shera nor Bairstow seems to have given Linstead was about the difficulty of his pieces. He was himself a very able pianist of professional standard and all his works, even quite short ones, require a high level of technical skill. Unfortunately, professional musicians are busy people, fully occupied in learning and playing the standard repertoire and they have little or no time to learn the works of unknown composers. Unless new composers write music that is playable by competent amateurs and good sight-readers they stand little chance of hearing their works performed publicly and therefore of getting known. The exclusion of the amateur from the performance of modern music is a recurring theme in twentieth-century musical style and part of the reason for its lack of acceptance and popularity. In contrast, the French composer Satie's piano piece, *Gymnopédie No.1*, dating from 1888, is not just a beautiful piece, it is also of only moderate technical difficulty. Consequently, it is much played and the composer has become well known. Not one of Linstead's piano pieces is easy, or even of moderate technical difficulty. Also the accompaniments to some of his anthems and songs, not to mention the piano parts of his chamber music, are well beyond the capabilities of those people most likely to perform them.

In May 1936, Linstead had another success with his ballet *Phantasmagoria* performed at the Sheffield Empire. The ballet was choreographed by Miss Hettie Calladine. Linstead's modernism and hardness of texture proved ideal for a ballet representing the metal age. The dancers suggested the movements employed in the manufacture of stainless steel,

other metals and enamels. The music critic of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* commented: 'Mr. Linstead conducted the work in a forthright manner, and both the music, with its powerful and descriptive quality, and the performance of it, were satisfying'. It was Sheffield industries depicted in a Sheffield ballet, to music by a Sheffield composer - a '*pièce de résistance*' according to the same critic.

However, 1936 was mostly taken up with the composition of a chamber opera entitled *Eastward in Eden*. The libretto was by Norah Radcliff and based on her play of the same name, published by Nelsons. Like his Rabelaisian opera *The Holy Bottle* of 1934, this opera is in one act and is through-composed. Like it too, it includes spoken dialogue rather than recitative and is therefore in the tradition of the German *singspiel* rather than Italian opera. Although the style in which the work is composed has modern elements - augmented 4th, large leaps and chromatic melodic lines - it is fundamentally a traditional score. It was performed in 1937 by Croft House Operatic Society and received a second performance in 1940 by Sheffield City Training College.

Also in 1936 Linstead composed his second major work for orchestra. This was his *March of the City Councillors*. For most of the 1930's, Linstead composed chamber music and songs, which were the pieces he could get performed. Unlike many young composers, especially nowadays, Linstead generally had the sense to write for performance and not for the drawer. It was not until the middle of the decade he had the opportunity for performances of larger-scale works and so it was at that time he started composing pieces for orchestra. His working method was always the same: he would complete a piano score and then orchestrate it. In 1937, his *March of the City Councillors* was broadcast by the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra. It is an excellent piece that opens with Linstead's favourite augmented 4th used for fanfares on the trumpets. The performance was very successful, so it is not surprising Linstead had three more new works broadcast by the same orchestra in their 1938-39 season. These were an *Overture in C* composed between 16th and 21st April, 1936 and later taken up by Sir Thomas Beecham, a *Symphonic Movement* composed in 1937 and dedicated to his teacher Professor F.H. Shera, and his first *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra*, a two-movement work in G major composed in 1938 in Linstead's more traditional, tonal, chromatic style.³¹ All three works were conducted by the composer himself. Although he had conducted amateur and semi-professional bands before, for example, in 1937 he had directed the performances of his opera *Eastward in Eden*, this was probably the first time Linstead had conducted a professional orchestra. It is evident he was a success on the podium or he would not have got past the first piece.

In 1937, Linstead also drafted a symphonic poem entitled *The Nightingale and the Rose*, based on a short story by Oscar Wilde, but it was neither orchestrated nor performed.

In 1938, Linstead's *Four Moods* was published by Augener. This set of four piano pieces was Linstead's first publication by a major publishing house and he took the opportunity to say 'thank you' to the four most important people in his life by dedicating one piece to each of them. The first piece, 'Aubade' was dedicated to James Wing, his closest male friend. Although not a musician, Wing, an Oxford graduate, eccentric and poet, who was ten years

³¹ The work was revised in 1940.

older than Linstead, had supported him, including possibly financially, in his quest to become a professional musician.³² The second piece, 'Night Piece' was dedicated to James Ching his piano teacher. The third piece, 'Pas de Chien' was dedicated to 'Mamie' (his nickname for May Dorothy Griffiths) the lady who was soon to become his wife, and the fourth piece, 'Blue Willow' was dedicated to his most influential teacher, mentor and friend, Professor Frank Shera.

In 1939 Linstead began teaching by correspondence. He took an advertisement in the Professional Notices column of *The Musical Times*: 'George F. Linstead, B.Mus. (Dunelm), F.T.C.L., A.R.C.M., coaches for Degrees and Diplomas. Compositions revised'. He continued providing music tuition by correspondence for twenty-seven years. By 1945, his advertisement had been revised to read: 'Dr. George Linstead, Mus.Doc. (Dunelm), F.T.C.L., A.R.C.M., gives correspondence tuition in all subjects for Musical degrees and diplomas. He also added 'Recent successes include Mus.Doc.(Dunelm) March 1945' and the phrase: 'Original course and models'. His first DMus success was Cyril Ernest Ramsey, a schoolmaster, who had submitted a work for chorus, orchestra and soloists entitled *The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire*. In 1948, Linstead noted other recent successes in order to attract students: 'Recent successes at Durham, London and R.S.M. Exams'. His advertisement remained in the pages of the Musical Times until December 1966 by which time it read: 'Dr. George F. Linstead, BA, DMus, FRCO, FTCL, ARCM. Correspondence tuition for degrees and diplomas in music'. Ironically, few people had greater experience of taking external degrees and diplomas than Linstead himself.

Dark clouds were looming on the horizon and in September 1939, war was declared. The War was a watershed in Linstead's life, not least his life as a composer. With the benefit of hindsight it is clear the 1930's were Linstead's most creative period as a composer and probably his most successful as a musician. For most of the decade he was on the crest of a wave. Those happy and successful times were, sadly, never to return.

³² James L. Wing was born in Sheffield in the parish of Nether Hallam in 1898. Whilst an undergraduate at Oxford, he published a poem 'Louis Onze' in *Oxford Poets* (Oxford, 1918). He is listed in the *History of Sheffield Collegiate Cricket Club* Chapter 14 - Oddities, as a character and as the club's least successful batsman. Interestingly, it was Wing's grandfather, J. Cooper Wing who, as managing Director of George Woolstenholm and Son's Washington Works, had provided the Tonic Sol-Fa classes for his workers that had opened the musical doors for Sir Henry Coward who mentions his enlightened attitude to his workers a number of times in his *Reminiscences*.

Chapter 5 - The War and its Aftermath 1940-1949

In May 1940, George Linstead married a girl he had been courting for well over a decade. He had met her not long after he started studying with Shera in 1928. May Dorothy Griffiths was the daughter of an Inland Revenue clerk, Hugh Griffiths. She was born in Oxtan, Cheshire on the Wirral, on 4th May, 1906, but moved to Sheffield as a girl when her father was transferred from Liverpool. She attended Notre Dame High School (although not a Catholic) followed by Sheffield University where she graduated in English in 1928 and then took the one-year Diploma in Education course. She and George Linstead probably met when they were both students at the University, he part-time and she full-time. They were certainly quite close by the beginning of 1931 because, as was stated earlier, it is likely the secret programme of the *Piano Quintet* Linstead submitted as his BMus exercise and composed in November 1930 tells the story of their falling in love. Also, in 1932, Linstead dedicated his first published work, a Piano Prelude, subtitled *Virgo Dulcissima* [Sweetest Maiden] to her. She was always known in the Linstead household as 'Mamie'.

Long courtships were common before the War when couples 'saved up' to get married, but theirs was longer than most. Perhaps the subject of Linstead's Rabelaisian opera *The Holy Bottle* of 1934, which discusses the pro's and con's of getting married, was inspired by their personal dilemma. Indeed, it was not until War had broken out that they decided to get married. The ceremony took place at Christ Church, Fulwood on 14th May, 1940. It was a quiet affair, as was said at the time: 'after all, there's a war on'. There was no honeymoon. The day after their wedding, the newly-weds went back to work, she to teaching, he to the Ministry of Supply. Linstead gave up his bachelor flat at 161 Oakbrook Road and they moved in together just around the corner at 6 Westwood Road. It was a house they rented for the rest of their lives and in which George Linstead himself died. Originally designed as a shop with living accommodation, the intended commercial area provided Linstead with a perfect place in which to have his grand piano, his music, his books, to teach and to compose. The house overlooks Whitely Woods. Six weeks after his marriage, on 25th June, George Linstead received the happy news that he could now style himself 'Dr.' George Linstead: he had been awarded a Doctor of Music degree by Durham University.

It was also in 1940 that Linstead added yet another string to his bow by becoming music critic of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*. It was a post he held until 1972, two years before his death. For thirty-two years he attended and wrote reviews of all the important concerts in Sheffield.³³ Critics are never popular, but Linstead was scrupulously fair and never referred his own pieces even if they had been performed in major concerts in Sheffield by orchestras such as the Hallé. He also began submitting reports on music in Sheffield to *The Musical Times* in the 'Music in the Provinces' section of that journal. Occasionally, he submitted articles to the same publication.

Linstead's article on John Parr's Concerts, published in *The Musical Times* in June 1945, shows what a good English stylist he was and how clear, interesting and knowledgeable a

³³ He was succeeded by Dr. Gilbert Kennedy.

writer he was on music. Not surprisingly, after the War he replaced Shera as the writer of the programme notes for the City Hall concerts. From the evidence of these notes and his articles one is tempted to suggest that had he not chosen to follow the path of a composer, Linstead might have been an even better musicologist. Whilst many music historians write about music they have heard, Linstead most often wrote about music he had played or conducted. He knew it from the inside out, with the eyes and ears of a performer and a composer, and this total involvement and understanding reveals itself in everything he wrote.

However, as soon as war was declared Linstead was sent to work for the Ministry of Supply as a Regional Labour Officer. He remained in that post for seven years. It was a hiatus in his career from which he never recovered. Sheffield was a key city in Britain's military supply chain during the Second World War and in December 1940 the centre of the city was devastated by the Blitz. On the nights of 12th and 15th December, German Aircraft dropped about 450 bombs, land mines and incendiaries on Sheffield. 668 civilians and 25 servicemen were killed, nearly 1,600 people were injured and over 40,000 people were made homeless. Mrs. Linstead was three months pregnant.

The following summer, in the relative safety of Chesterfield, Mrs. Linstead gave birth to the Linstead's only child, Stephen Guy, who arrived on 23rd June.³⁴ It was wartime, so she continued working as a supply teacher relying on her mother to babysit.³⁵ After the War, she became Head of English at her old school, Notre Dame High School, a post she held for the rest of her teaching career. Although George Linstead's income was erratic, his wife had a regular salary that kept things financially stable at home and, of course, allowed Linstead to enjoy the freedom of a freelance career.

During the War, Linstead composed and arranged a number of works for Military Band that were broadcast by the BBC.³⁶ In 1942 he arranged *David of the White Rock* and *The Hunting of the Hare* for the Welsh Guards Band. In 1943 he arranged two Yorkshire tunes, *I'm a Poor Stranger* and *Kilkenny Races* for the Band of the Scots Guards. Also in 1943 he composed an original piece *Hornpipe* for the RAF Central Band, arranging *The Greenwood Lad* for them in 1944. Also in 1944 he composed an overture *The Peak* for the Band of the Irish Guards.

In the early years of the War, it was very difficult to get orchestral works performed, so Linstead returned to composing chamber music. In 1941 and in 1943 he composed his first two string quartets. The first was presumably performed because it was revised in 1944, likewise, the second was revised and performed in 1949. They are very different in style: the second being a far more traditional, straightforward work with a somewhat academic fugal finale. However, Linstead's much more modern and adventurous *String Quartet No.1* was selected in 1946 by the British Selection Committee of the International

³⁴ Stephen Linstead went to King Edward VII School, Sheffield, followed by an Open Exhibition to Corpus Christi College Oxford. He was a civil servant by profession and is now retired.

³⁵ The wartime shortage of male teachers had forced the government to change the regulations and permit married women to teach.

³⁶ BBC Sound Archives Catalogue.

Society for Contemporary Music, but, sadly, it was not one of the works finally chosen for performance in the London Festival.

Once orchestral concerts were resumed, Linstead began receiving commissions for works for orchestra. He had, of course, had four orchestral works successfully broadcast by the BBC Northern Orchestra just before the War. His *In Nomine* for Orchestra, a slow and meditative work, was performed and broadcast by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in 1944. Linstead had composed the work in 1940 but had had to wait for a performance. However, the year following its broadcast by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, *In Nomine* received two further professional performances: one by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the other by the Hallé Orchestra. On 27th December 1945, the CBSO performed the work in Birmingham Town Hall under the baton of George Weldon, a champion of Linstead's works. The composer provided the following programme note:

"The title "In Nomine" was frequently used by English composers in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the compositions were often based on the same piece of plainsong, viz, the antiphon for Trinity Sunday.

Since the antiphon does not begin with the words "In Nomine" the composer has not hesitated to use another famous medieval melody, "Aeterna Christi Munera".

This melody also inspired one of Palestrina's most sublime masses.

The composition begins with a bare statement of the theme announced by a solo cello. It is then heard respectively on the bassoon and the cor anglais and treated canonically among the strings. A development ensues during which fragments of the theme are treated fugally, and after some moments of polytonality a powerful climax is reached - marked by the trombones' reiteration of the first four notes of the theme. From this point the music diminishes in volume and intensity to the end of the composition.'

In his programme note for the performance by the Hallé Orchestra on 5th October, 1945, Professor Frank Shera described *In Nomine* as follows:

'The theme is entrusted in turn to a solo 'cello, bassoon, and cor anglais. It is then developed, with some canonic treatment and much use of a restless two-note figure. A short fugato (with moments of polytonality) leads to a powerful climax, the trombone sounding the initial note of the theme. Thereafter the music diminishes in volume and emotional intensity to the end of the piece.'

In 1944, Linstead also produced a version of his *In Nomine* for strings alone. This received its first performance in the same year, being played and broadcast by the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra.

In 1945, Linstead's two short piano solos *Le Babil* [Chatter] and *Une Brioche* were published by Graham Gill.³⁷ As their titles suggest, they are the two works by Linstead that

³⁷ *Le Babil* was republished by Chester in 1960.

owe most to Poulenc. Much has been made of Linstead's purported friendship with his French contemporary,³⁸ but there is little evidence for it. It is true Linstead was a Francophile and took several holidays in France during the 1930's. It is also true that he dedicated *Une Brioche* to the composer, sending him a copy and receiving in reply a postcard of encouragement in which Poulenc said of Linstead's piece that it was 'croustillant et fait avec un bon beurre' [crusty and made with good butter]. There is no doubt Linstead admired Poulenc's music, not least his sense of fun and the hints of light music that often emerge therein. However, apart from these two short piano pieces, Linstead's *Overture 'In the French Style'* and his *Suite for Brass Band*, it is hard to see any further connection between the two composers.

In 1946, Linstead composed a powerful work for orchestra entitled *Notturmo*. For the work's second public performance in 1993 by the Sheffield University Orchestra in the Firth Hall, David Harold Cox provided the following description of the work:

'The music of *Notturmo* is dark and foreboding; it begins peacefully but gradually builds up to a substantial climax as the tempo of the work gains momentum. Linstead's gloomy vision of night may well have been coloured by his experience of life during the second world war since the work was completed in 1946.'

The structure of this work recalls that of Linstead's Symphonic Study *Doveridge* of 1935, where a quiet beginning leads into some modern, aggressive, hard-textured music.

In spite of continuing with his musical career in his spare time, the War affected Linstead as it affected so many. He was a different person after the War from the man he was in 1939. It is difficult for those who did not experience the War to comprehend how seriously it affected those who did. For Linstead's professional life, the War came at just the wrong time and was a hiatus in his career. Had the War not come when it did, Linstead would certainly have gained his university post much earlier and would have had tenure before Shera retired. Indeed, he would have been in a position to succeed Shera himself. At the very least, it would have prevented the insecurity that occurred after Stewart Deas was appointed Professor of Music, who kept Linstead as a part-time lecturer on an annually-renewed contract for twenty years. Moreover, had Linstead not wished to stay in Sheffield he would have been in a position to apply for a Chair at another University when Shera retired and have stood a reasonable chance of getting it.

The War affected Linstead's career and it affected his musical style too. It is in this area that the change is most apparent. Before the War, Linstead was writing music that was innovative and contemporary; afterwards, he wrote mainly pastiche. The change was conscious. In a letter to a former pupil, Brian Manners, he wrote:

'I am sending you a copy of the great work. It was a compromise, of course. Had I written the type of music I wanted to do, they would have kicked me out! As it was,

³⁸ For example, see the article on Linstead in *Larousse de la Musique* (Paris, 1957)

I gave them something which they all liked, and it was repeated, by request, on the Sunday after the dedication.³⁹

It is a sad letter although it was not intended as such. Linstead had decided to give up writing the type of music he wanted to write - best illustrated in pieces such as the Clarinet Sonata, the Viola Rhapsody and his *Four Moods* for piano solo - and decided to provide what his listeners wanted to hear. He was, of course, very good at that too.

In 1947, as soon as war ended and Linstead was free to leave his post as Regional Labour Officer at the Ministry of Supply, Shera appointed him part-time lecturer in music in the University. He took over from Dr. Willis Grant who later became Professor of Music at Bristol University but was, at that time, Organist of Birmingham's Anglican Cathedral. Doubtless, as soon as funds were available, Shera intended to give Linstead a full-time post but that was not to be. After twenty years as Rossiter Hoyle Professor of Music, Shera retired in 1948. Linstead was still on a part-time contract. In the year Shera retired, the University gave Linstead a one-year full-time contract⁴⁰ as a precaution against their failing to appoint immediately a successor to Shera. However, as soon as Stewart Deas became Professor of Music, Linstead returned to the annually-renewable, temporary, part-time contract he held for the remainder of his life.

One of the first major works Linstead composed in his new 'compromise' style was *Moto Perpetuo* in 1947. It was his most successful orchestral work and the piece that received the greatest number of professional performances and broadcasts. It was perhaps for this reason he continued writing in his 'compromise' idiom for the next twenty years. The first professional performance of *Moto Perpetuo* was given by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under the baton of George Weldon on 18th December, 1947, but three weeks earlier, on 28th November, it had been played by an amateur Sheffield band, the Jessop Symphony Orchestra, in a mixed concert that included a performance of *I Pagliacci*. The CBSO gave three further performances: two in 1948 on 16th April and 15th September, and one on 24th February, 1951 also under the baton of George Weldon. Even though Linstead reviewed the concert for the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, with typical modesty he made no mention of his own work. However, in a review for another paper, it was described by its music critic, Edward Taylor, as 'five minutes of real fun'. On 16th April, 1948, the Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli performed the work in Sheffield City Hall. Having outlined the composer's career, the author of the programme note, Professor Shera, added a paragraph written by Linstead himself that reveals his puckish sense of humour:

"This little work was written in April, 1947, and was first performed by the City of Birmingham Orchestra, conducted by George Weldon, in December of the same year. It is a gay and, I hope, inoffensive little quirk based on a continuous quaver rhythm, and containing two main subjects: the first is played initially by the violins

³⁹ Letter dated 27th October, 1954 from GFL to Brian Manners concerning Linstead's anthem 'Thus saith the Lord God'.

⁴⁰ '...in view of the uncertainty surrounding the appointment of a successor to Professor Shera, that Dr. G Linstead be appointed temporary full-time assistant lecturer in music for the session 1948-1949' [ref: Senate Minutes volume XL, 7 May 1948].

and flute, the second by the trumpet. Neither is developed, as far as I know - but I am open to instruction on this point - and the orchestration tries to be as impertinent as the themes.'

In 1944, the year in which both versions of *In Nomine* were performed, Linstead had arranged *Two Scottish Tunes* for orchestra as companion pieces to his arrangements of Irish, Welsh and Yorkshire tunes. However, he had to wait a further five years for this work's first performance which formed part of a Sheffield 'Prom' Concert given by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra on 14th September, 1949 in the City Hall. The conductor was again George Weldon. Linstead provided the following programme note on his work (by now he had taken over from Shera as the author of programme notes for the City Hall concerts):

'These two arrangements were made in 1944, and were intended as companion pieces to the set of Irish, Welsh, and Yorkshire tunes previously arranged by Dr. Linstead, and which have been broadcast on many occasions. The two Scottish melodies are to be found in Moffat's *Minstrelsy of Scotland*, but both appear in much earlier collections and under different titles.

'O why left I my hame?' is a slow, nostalgic tune which first appeared in a collection of Scottish airs published in 1838. It is there given the title "The Lowlands of Holland", and is attributed to a certain Peter McLoed (1797-1859). "Corn Riggs", a gay reel, is probably much older, and is to be found in Playford's "Choice Ayres" of 1681. Burns's poem "It was upon a Lammas Night" was written to this tune. In the present arrangements the tunes are always present, but they are treated boldly and with considerable variety of harmony and orchestration.'

Surprisingly, Linstead was often careless about his scores and lost an important work from this period, an organ solo entitled *Incarnatius*. It is, perhaps, his best organ piece and we owe its existence to Linstead's former pupil, Brian Manners, who wanted to learn it and surreptitiously made a copy for himself. Thank goodness he did, or the work would have been lost. *Incarnatius* was composed in 1947 and first performed by the composer at a recital at St. Mary's Church, Walkley on 15th February, 1951, when he was President of the Sheffield & District Organists' & Choirmasters' Association. It is partly a compromise work, but there is still a lot of Linstead's contemporary style in it and it is not as technically difficult as are some of his works from the 1930's. In consequence, it has received more public performances than his other organ works. The composition is based on a phrase from Merbecke's Communion Service that is sung to the words, 'Born of the Virgin Mary' which is played fortissimo at the work's climax.

In 1948, Linstead began work on a symphony. It was a project that occupied his mind for most of his life and he had several attempts at completing it. A piano score exists of a *Symphony in C*, but this is clearly a very early work. There is also, in piano score only, a *Symphony in D minor* dated 1959, but again it is very traditional and it hard to see why Linstead had written it. It seems he could never find his own voice within the form of a symphony. Linstead was, in essence, a composer of small-scale forms and relatively short works. None of his works (the operas apart which are, in any case, sectional and without

recitatives) exceeds ten minutes in length. A work the size of a symphony, or even a long first movement, eluded him. Linstead was never able to develop the lengthy tonal arguments necessary for a large-scale composition. The projected symphony was never completed. Another work that Linstead had several attempts at completing was an opera on the subject of the baroque composer and wife-murderer, Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa. Again, it was never completed.

After the war, Linstead continued taking further degrees and diplomas. In July 1945 he passed his ARCO and in January 1951 he took his FRCO. This may have been prompted by Norman Barnes being appointed Organist and Choirmaster at St. John's Ranmoor in 1949. Barnes, a former Organ Scholar of St. Peter's College, Oxford, was Music Master at King Edward VII School and had already passed his Fellowship when he applied for the job. In 1953, Linstead applied for and got a similar post at Fulwood Parish Church. By then he too had passed his FRCO.

Out of the blue, in September 1950 Linstead registered for an external BA degree in English at London University. Why he decided to study for a degree in English is a mystery. His wife was a Sheffield English graduate, but according to his son Stephen he never consulted her throughout his studies. He graduated with a lower second-class BA honours degree in the Summer of 1953. Perhaps he was disappointed with his result because this was his last external qualification. Between 1929 and 1953 he had taken a total of three degrees and five diplomas, all of them externally. In order, they were: AMusTCL, ARCM, BMus(Durham), FTCL, DMus(Durham), ARCO, FRCO, BA(Hons) (London).

Chapter 6 - The 1950's

During the 1950's, Linstead continued receiving commissions and performances of orchestra works. In June 1950, he made an arrangement of the *Castleton Garland Dance* that was performed later in the same year by the CBSO and by the Hallé Orchestra. He provided the following programme note on his new work:

"The Castleton Garland Dance is really a processional Morris Dance, and is similar in form and melody to those found in many other parts of England. The Morris Dance derives its name from the Moorish Moresca (obs. English, Morys = Moorish) which was introduced into England in the 15th century. Both the Moresca and the Morris Dance involve a certain amount of dressing up, and the use of bells, or jingles, attached to the legs of the dancers.

The Castleton dance, however, differs from most other Morris Dances in that it commemorates the Restoration of Charles II, and is performed only on Royal Oak Day, 29th May. In this dance-pageant a man dressed as a female leads the procession bearing a huge garland, which in the evening is hung on a pinnacle of the church tower. (An interesting entry in the church accounts for 1749 reads: "Pd. for an iron rod to hang ye singers garland in . . . 8d.") The inns of the village have always been given the privilege of entertaining the dancers during the procession; from which it will be gathered that the closing stages of the jour de fête are often quite Bacchanalian.

The tune of the dance is to be found in Cyril Sharp's great collection of folk-tunes. In the present arrangement - which was made in June, 1950 - the melody is always discernible, and is played eleven times, each repetition being marked by some change of harmony or orchestration.'

As is immediately apparent, this is one of Linstead's 'compromise' works, providing what the audience would like to hear rather than what he himself wanted to write. It is thus clearly of its period. Linstead did not return to writing consistently in the more demanding style he had adopted in the 1930's - 'what I wanted to write' - until he was in his last decade and professional performances had more-or-less ceased. In the same year as the *Castleton Garland Dance* was performed, Linstead was elected President of the Sheffield Singers' Operatic Society.

In 1951, Linstead's *String Quartet No.2* was performed in the Great Drawing Room at 4 St. James's Square, London, at the 131st Studio Recital sponsored by the Committee for the Promotion of New Music. This four-movement quartet had been composed in 1944 and revised in 1949.

In 1952, Linstead received a commission for a wind sextet from Edward Walker and the London Symphony Orchestra Wind Ensemble who gave the work its first performance in February 1953. As a work, it clearly benefitted from the enormous experience Linstead had gained in writing for John Parr's 'Combination' in the 1930's. It is scored for two flutes, oboe, clarinet and two bassoons and was entitled *Recitative and In Nomine for Wind*.

In the same year, on 1st November, Linstead returned to the podium to conduct a performance in Sheffield City Hall of Sir George Dyson's 1930 cantata *The Canterbury Pilgrims* that was given by the Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra with Jennifer Vyvyan as the soprano soloist. Conducting was, of course, yet another of his wide range of musical skills.

On 21st February, 1953, a *Scherzo* for orchestra by Linstead received its first performance in Sheffield City Hall. It was played by the CBSO conducted by Rudolf Schwartz. It was the only movement of the projected symphony Linstead had begun in 1948 that was finished, orchestrated and performed. It is interesting, the *Scherzo* was the only movement Linstead finished: the lightest, shortest and most humorous movement. It tells us much about Linstead's character as well as his limitations as a composer. Linstead provided the following programme note. (Although in the note he states that the whole symphony was finished, this was not the case, for as late as 1959 he was still wrestling with it.)

'The *Scherzo* is the middle movement of a symphony which was written in 1948. It has two main themes: the first of a chromatic nature in parallel seconds; the second more martial, chiefly for the trumpets. The Trio makes use of frequently changing "measured rhythms". The appearance of the claves at one point will help the listener to identify one of these rhythms, which is associated with a particular dance. There are also other rhythms suggestive of the waltz, the *vidalita*, *zamba*, *cueca*, *bailecito* and *hueya*: rhythms which are woven together and into the texture of the music.'

In the same year, Linstead resigned as Organist and Choirmaster of St. Mary's Walkley and took a similar post at Christ Church Fulwood, where he succeeded J.C. Shutt FRCO(CHM). The liturgy was not as much to his taste - the church was evangelical and there were women in the choir - but the pay was better and, for a musician who never learnt to drive, it was within walking distance of Linstead's home.

In 1954, Linstead composed his best work for chorus and orchestra. It was a setting of Psalm 103 *Benedic Anima Mea* and was finished on 23rd April, 1954. Sadly, it did not receive its first performance until 27th January, 1979 - four years after Linstead had died - when it was sung by the Sheffield Bach Choir under its conductor Roger Bullivant in St. Mark's Church Broomhill as part of a Cantata Concert.

The psalm is set for full orchestra and chorus, but without soloists. The work has eleven main sections. The style is Linstead's frequent blend of tonal and modal chromatic writing. Influences of Holst and Vaughan Williams are evident in two of the middle sections, as is a tribute to Brahms's *German Requiem* in Linstead's setting of the words: 'The days of man are but as grass'. Linstead's favourite augmented 4^{ths} are also much in evidence. In his note on the work, Bullivant makes the following observation:

'In an age of declining tonality, many a composer, having written such a fine peroration [the final section "O praise the Lord"] would have been content to end with it in A Major, but Linstead has something much more impressive, yet traditional, in mind: the orchestra work their way back to B-flat [the key of the opening section] and an even bigger climax is achieved, not without a few E-naturals to remind us of the Lydian opening. In retrospect, the A major section is seen as

merely a preliminary to something bigger and grander. The problem with such procedures is of course to be able to save one's most exciting music for the right time - not to make the "preliminary" merely tame or the "climax" a let-down. This Linstead has done: it is something which only the genuine composer, steeped in the classical (in the best sense) tradition, can achieve.'

Bullivant, who had been Linstead's colleague at the University for twenty-five years, wrote in the *Sheffield Telegraph*: 'It is extremely good, we have come to like it very much in the choir'.

In the Autumn, Linstead composed an anthem *Thus saith the Lord God* for the opening of the extension to Christ Church Fulwood. It was a great success and a second performance was demanded the following Sunday. Therein, it is easy to see the influence of his teacher Bairstow, for example, the opening runs in the organ accompaniment of the latter's most famous anthem *Blessed City Heavenly Salem* are mirrored in the middle of Linstead's piece. Unfortunately, Linstead went for longer, more pianistic runs that are much more difficult to play and less effective than Bairstow's. At the time, Linstead thought these two performances would be the last that would have been heard of anthem: 'Needless to say, it will not be performed again' he wrote to his former student, Brian Manners.⁴¹ Had it been left to Linstead himself, this would have certainly been the case because the copies were lost. Luckily, Linstead's pupil Brian Manners made a copy for himself and preserved it, so that it has recently been possible to make a new edition and the work is once again being performed.

The anthem, *Thus saith the Lord God* is a work of pastiche and highly traditional, but Linstead's other commission in 1954 was in a completely new area. The English Steel Corporation decided to produce a promotional film *Engineers in Steel* and Linstead was asked to write the music. It is scored for forty players and, for a film score, it is perhaps over-scored. Linstead probably did not realise at the time that in film music 'less often means more' nor how much can be done with thin textures and solo lines. His score was recorded by the Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maurice Miles. It was Linstead's first and his last attempt at a film score.

Another 'compromise' work that was popular with audiences was Linstead's *Overture 'In the French Style'* which was composed in the Spring of 1955 and received two professional performances. In 1958, it was given its first performance and broadcast on 11th November by the CBSO conducted by George Hurst. Then, three months later, on Saturday 7th February, 1959, in Sheffield City Hall, it received its second professional performance by the Hallé Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. The composer provided the following note:

"The title of this overture needs an explanation: it does not imply a "French Overture" in the baroque sense, but one conceived in a later, 20th-century style. It is a comment upon, but not an imitation of, the music written by the set known in the 1920's as "Les Six", which included George Auric, the composer of the music to the film "Moulin Rouge".

⁴¹ Letter dated 27th October, 1954 from GFL to Brian Manners.

The Overture is in a three-part form, the main theme being given to the clarinet near to the beginning, and reappearing on the same instrument in the recapitulation. There are several other tunes, all of them gay, and perhaps slightly sardonic.

The Overture was written in the spring of 1955, and the first performance took place on 11th November, 1958, when it was broadcast by the B.B.C. Northern Orchestra from the Milton Hall, Manchester.'

In a later note on the same piece written for a performance by the University Orchestra in 1970, Linstead slightly expanded on his general comment on *Les Six* by mentioning the influence of two members in particular: Germaine Tailleferre and Francis Poulenc 'both of whom are remembered in this piece'.⁴² Linstead's brief connection with Poulenc has been referred to above, but how he came to know the works of Germaine Tailleferre is a mystery. She wrote very little music, received few performances and not much was published. However, the comment reveals the depth of Linstead's knowledge of contemporary French music.

Early in 1955, Professor Shera had a stroke that rendered him speechless, and on 21st February, 1956 he died aged 73. Not only had he created the Department of Music at Sheffield single-handed and for at least the first fifteen years taught all the courses, he had in many senses created Linstead as a musician too. It was Shera who had encouraged him and taught him for most of his degrees and diplomas, it was Shera who had made sure he was able to support himself through music and it was Shera who had given him his first post as a lecturer. However, Shera must have been very proud of his pupil. When he died, he could look back on a number of former students who were distinguishing themselves in the world of music, but not one on whose life as a whole he had been a greater influence.

In 1958, Linstead composed a *Partita for Organ* on the plainsong *Veni Creator Spiritus*. Again, it was essentially a work of pastiche: his models were the French organist/composers Widor and, more obviously, Vierne. This set of variations leads to a toccata-like finale.

There is no doubt Linstead's 'compromise' style was successful. The public enjoyed his more approachable music and he received many commissions and performances throughout the 1950's. There was, of course, a price to be paid later on. Such works do not have lasting value because they lack originality and depth - other composers come along with similar transitory music. It is, therefore, Linstead's music from the 1930's and late 1960's that is attracting most interest nowadays.

Throughout the 1950's Linstead kept up his playing both on the organ and piano. In 1955 he was the solo pianist in a performance of Schumann's *Piano Concerto in A minor* at Sheffield City Hall and at the same venue on 27th July, 1960 he gave an organ recital which included works by Bach, Liszt, Messiaen and Widor on the 4-manual Willis organ that had been designed and opened in 1933 by his teacher Bairstow. He gave another recital there

⁴² Sheffield University Orchestra Programme 6th May, 1970.

the following year which included works by Dupré, Vierne, Mendelssohn and Bach. With typical modesty, he did not play any of his own works for organ on either occasion.

Chapter 7 - 1960's

In one sense, the 1960's began well for George Linstead with yet another commission for an orchestral work. Having been an Anglican Church Organist and Choirmaster for most of his life,⁴³ it is not surprising that he should at some point compose a work based on hymn tunes. *Anglican Overture* was composed for, and performed by the Hallé Orchestra on 20th October, 1961 in Sheffield City Hall. The conductor was again George Weldon who had championed Linstead's music over two decades. Linstead provided the following programme note:

'The idea of a work based on hymn tunes is by no means new. The organ-hymns and chorale-preludes of composers from Schlick to Bach, operatic overtures and even symphonies based on hymn tune material are common, and provide ample justification for a concert overture built on groups of well-known hymn melodies. These melodies are not the property of any one religious denomination, of course; the title is explained in the fact that all of them have been played frequently by the composer in the 33 years he has been an Anglican organist.

The overture, including the connective tissue, is derived from some twenty hymns, and falls into three main sections:

- I. Moderato, gradually increasing in speed to Allegro. The tunes include Song 34 (Gibbons), University (Collignon), Praise my Soul (Goss), St. Ethwald (Monk).
- II. Allegro moderato. St. Matthew (Croft), Wiltshire (G.Smart), Aurelia (S.S. Wesley), Dominus regit me (Dykes), Stephanos (Baker).
- III. L'istesso Tempo (Maestoso). Song 34 (Gibbons) combined with Tallis's Ordinal and fragments of Goss's Praise my Soul.'

In most other senses, the early sixties were a poor time for Linstead. The performance of the *Anglican Overture* turned out to be his last commission, his last performance by a major symphony orchestra and his last orchestral work. Between 1937 and 1961, eleven of his orchestral works had received a total of eighteen performances by some of the major orchestras in Britain including the Hallé Orchestra, the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. But tastes were changing, especially at the BBC. William Gloch, Controller of Music from 1959 to 1972, promoted the music of the Second Viennese School and sadly British composers were left out in the cold. Indeed, it was not until long after Linstead's death that the music of his English contemporaries was once again heard regularly from the concert platform.

It was also in the early 1960's that Linstead was diagnosed with ischemic heart disease caused by atherosclerosis. He gradually became more and more debilitated. Mrs. Linstead learnt to drive and was thus able to transport him around in their blue mini, but increasingly he was forced to give up most of his professional work.

⁴³ Linstead took his first post in 1928 and was in his fourth when he died in December 1974.

In 1964, Linstead composed his *String Quartet No.3* returning both to a style and a medium he had not used for some twenty years. Only the first movement was performed by the Hallam Quartet on 14th April, 1965. The reason was probably the technical difficulty of the music. The one compromise Linstead was never able to make was between his contemporary, rhythmic style and its associated technical difficulties.

Nothing at all has been said so far in this monograph about Linstead's life outside music and his family. Few musicians have the time for hobbies, but from the late 1940's onward, George Linstead found more and more of his time being taken up by his only real interest apart from music - freemasonry.

Shortly after he was appointed part-time Lecturer in Music in the University, George Linstead became a freemason. He was initiated on 31st March, 1948, passed to the second degree of Fellow Craft on 30th June and was raised to the degree of Master Mason on 24th November in the same year. His mother lodge was Hadassah No. 4871, a predominantly Jewish lodge in Sheffield, consecrated in 1927. His proposer was Hyman Stone, a prominent Sheffield solicitor who had been President of Sheffield University Union of Students in 1923-4. This was an important moment in George Linstead's life because, as he grew older, he became more and more interested and involved in freemasonry, joining other lodges and progressing to higher degrees and additional orders.

It will come as no surprise to learn that his interest in freemasonry was almost certainly sparked off by his long-time mentor and friend Professor Frank Shera who was himself a freemason. Shera had joined University Lodge No. 3911 in 1932, becoming Master in 1949. It was a Lodge Linstead himself joined in 1953 immediately becoming Lodge Organist.

As a talented and experienced organist, Linstead was a godsend to West Riding freemasonry. Masonic ceremonies are much enhanced by a good organist - especially one who can readily improvise - and very few lodges are lucky enough to have even a competent pianist amongst their members. From 1948 until his death in 1974, Linstead played the organ for the two craft lodges to which he belonged, Hadassah and University, as well as for many other Sheffield lodges, spending two or three nights each week musically enhancing the rituals of his fellow brethren.

On 15th March, 1954, Linstead was exalted into the oldest of Sheffield's twelve Chapters of Royal Arch Masons, the Chapter of Paradise No. 139. One year later, on 10th February, 1955, his older brother, Charles Caleb, also joined the freemasons and was initiated into Sheffield's oldest Masonic Lodge, Britannia Lodge No. 139, doubtless as a result of his younger brother's enthusiasm for the Craft.

As time progressed Linstead became more and more involved with Freemasonry. On 23rd May, 1958, he was installed into the Sheffield Preceptory of Masonic Knights Templar, De Furnival Preceptory No. 66.⁴¹ His proposer was William Gregory Ibberson, Chairman of

⁴¹ The Masonic Knights Templar is not a higher degree like the Rose Croix, but an additional Masonic order that is specifically Christian.

George Ibberson and Co. In 1962, the Masonic Knights Templar installed Linstead as their Provincial Grand Organist. Lines from their ritual are to be found - doubtless as a personal *aide memoire* - on the back of a copy of a musical setting Linstead had made of Robert Burns's masonic poem *Adieu, a heart warm fond adieu* that was performed at the end of a Templar meeting in May 1966. It was one of only two specifically masonic works Linstead composed, the other was a *Prelude for Organ* written in 1969 that has since disappeared.

On 20th November, 1959, Linstead was perfected into Sheffield's Talbot Rose Croix Chapter No. 18, the eighteenth degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. Like the Masonic Knights Templar, this is a specifically Christian order with arguably the most beautiful ritual in all freemasonry.

Unlike most masons, George Linstead never went through the Chair of either of the Lodges to which he belonged. He reached the rank of Senior Warden in University Lodge in 1967, but could not be persuaded to become Master of the Lodge. In 1968, he reverted back to being University Lodge Organist.

Although he never went through the Chair of either of the Lodges to which he belonged, Linstead's skills as an organist led to his achieving Grand rank. He was invested with the rank of Provincial Grand Organist on 18th May, 1966 at a meeting of the Province of Yorkshire, West Riding, held in High Bentham. His year as Provincial Grand Organist coincided with the dedication of Tapton Hall in Shore Lane as Sheffield's new masonic building, replacing the old Masonic Hall in Surrey Street. Linstead played the organ for the dedication ceremony on 24th June, 1967. He may also have been responsible for the design of the new two-manual Conacher pipe organs that were installed in two of Tapton Hall's three Temples. Certainly both organs have a device - divisional general cancel bars at the top of the divisional stop knobs - that the author has only ever seen on one other organ: Linstead's rebuild of the organ at Christ Church Fulwood. The organs Linstead probably designed at Tapton Hall are still in daily use by the freemasons of Sheffield in their rituals and ceremonies.

Linstead relinquished the post of Provincial Grand Organist after just one year and was given the honorary rank of Past Provincial Grand Organist. Although he did not compose any new music for the Tapton Hall dedication ceremony, he wrote a special *Prelude for Organ* for the Jubilee of University Lodge in 1969 which was noted on the summons to the ceremony, held on 9th April, 1969: 'Bro. G.F. Linstead, P.P.G.Org. will play an original "Prelude" especially composed to mark this jubilee'⁴⁵ It is a shame that although for over twenty-five years Linstead spent most of his leisure time in Masonic Lodges playing the organ, he never thought - and none of his fellow brethren thought to ask him - to compose and publish music for the rituals of the Craft. Had he done so, his name as a composer would now be known throughout the world.

⁴⁵ Held in the Hallamshire College Library at Tapton Hall.

In 1967, in a rare moment of personal reflection, Linstead admitted to the Sheffield public who had read his articles in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for over a quarter of a century, to his frequent sense of inferiority and of often feeling an outsider: 'Singlemindedness' he wrote, 'can give one a sense of inferiority, or at least one of remoteness from the world'.⁴⁶ His excuse was that he had little time left for hobbies or exploring new trends 'because art is so demanding'. Like many creative artists, he railed against television as 'an insidious timewaster, if ever there was one'.

As Linstead's health began to fail, the University appointed a full-time lecturer in composition. The post was advertised in 1959 and Phillip Lord, a graduate of Victoria University, Manchester, the Royal Manchester College of Music and of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, was appointed. He had previously been assistant lecturer at Aberdeen University. He rapidly became a friend of George Linstead, indeed Linstead's only friend in the department since the death of Shera in 1956. They had much in common: both had begun life in difficult circumstances, both were composers, both were excellent pianists and both were keen freemasons. It is also interesting to note the similarity between the compositional styles of Linstead and Lord at that time: both were writing in a solidly tonal idiom, both had a gift for chromatic harmony and memorable modulations and for climaxes based on sequences. Both were also excellent orchestrators.

While he was a lecturer in music at Sheffield University, Phillip Lord decided to take the Sheffield DMus degree and enlisted Linstead's aid. Linstead was, after all, the only person in the music department who could help him being the only member of staff with that degree. Furthermore, Linstead had huge experience of coaching others for the Durham DMus by correspondence. By the 1960's, things had changed at Durham, but the Sheffield syllabus had remained virtually the same since it was first devised by Shera in the 1930's, largely because only one other candidate had taken the degree. It was therefore still on the pattern Linstead had taken himself at Durham in 1940. The exercise was exactly what its name suggested: an exercise in advanced compositional technique. The candidate was not required to submit an original, unaided, creative artwork except in the broadest sense. Indeed, neither Linstead, nor Lord thought or imagined their DMus exercises would ever be performed. As with the Durham DMus in the first half of the twentieth century, the Sheffield DMus was expected to be a demonstration of the candidate's advanced technical compositional skills: writing for orchestra, for choir and for soloists, with a dose of eight-part counterpoint thrown in for good measure.

Interestingly, Linstead's first pupil to gain a DMus in 1945, Cyril Ramsey, set the same poem Phillip Lord chose for his DMus exercise in 1967. Thus Linstead's first and last DMus successes both set Jean Ingelow's Victorian Ballad *High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire*. The universities were different, Durham and Sheffield, but the text was the same, the setting for orchestra, choir and soloists the same, and the display of advanced

compositional techniques very similar including the demonstration of eight-part counterpoint. The co-incidence is remarkable and argues that it was Linstead who

⁴⁶ 'A second stream of culture', *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* 13th March, 1967.

suggested the text to Lord as being very suitable for a doctoral exercise in composition. Lord passed his Sheffield DMus degree in 1967.

Sadly, Linstead and Lord also shared one other thing in common: both had weak hearts and were to die before their time. Two years after he gained his DMus, Phillip Lord died of a heart attack one Saturday morning at his home in Sheffield. He was only thirty-nine years old. Like Linstead he was ill for a while before his death. It was an especially sad end because Lord had just been appointed to the Chair of Music at his old University in Manchester but died before he could take up the post. Linstead soldiered on for another five years but became more and more debilitated.

Chapter 8 - Finale

Linstead's last years in the Department of Music were as happy as they had been in Shera's time. In 1968, Stewart Deas retired and an Irishman, Dr. Basil Deane, became James Rossiter Hoyle Professor. The Department took on a new lease of life. For the first time, Linstead was given his own room (during the previous twenty years he had hung his famous homburg hat and dark overcoat on a peg in the hallway of the department). Basil Deane treated him professionally and encouraged him to carry on composing. Although Deane came to Sheffield rather too late for Linstead, who was by then severely incapacitated through illness, nevertheless he rose to the challenge and in 1969 produced one of his best works from the 1960's, his *Invocation* for Strings. He also wrote a short piece for the University Madrigal Choir and, during the Christmas vacation of 1971, a more extended piece for the University Chamber Orchestra called *Bagatelles* that was performed on 12th December, 1973 with Professor Basil Deane conducting. Linstead had returned to his rhythmic, chromatic but tonal style of the 1930's. His puckish sense of humour is evident throughout this piece, as his programme note makes clear:

'This lighthearted piece was written during the 1971 Christmas vacation with the University Chamber Orchestra in mind. It consists of several tunes strung together to form a single movement in something like sonata-form. Some of these tunes may suggest certain composers, and various wild guesses have been made by the students during rehearsals. The composer can assure them and the audience that no melody by Dvorak or Grieg ever entered his head. The waltz and march fragments, however, could be said to represent the Englishman in Paris during the 1920's, but no further clues can be given, nor are they necessary in a work of such studied triviality.'

In 1973, Linstead composed an interesting solo piece for organ entitled *Capriccio*, which was one of his most experimental works harmonically. Sadly, this work did not receive its first performance until 1979, five years after his death, when Roger Bullivant played it at a University concert in Firth Hall. *Capriccio* was one of Linstead's last works and reveals his deep understanding of the power and range of the sonorities of the organ. The opening figure, which recalls the most famous opening in all organ music - that of the Toccata and Fugue in D minor, attributed to J.S. Bach - recurs throughout the piece, each time in a different guise. Of the various episodes, the most notable is the slow, quiet fugue in the middle. Linstead also wrote a second piece for organ in 1973, entitled *Processional* that he finished on 7th August.

For those who have never seen, let alone heard a note of Linstead's music it is, perhaps, important to comment briefly on those of his works are most worthy of performance. Orchestrally, most of Linstead's music, especially in the 1950's was essentially pastiche, but the Symphonic Study he wrote in 1935 entitled *Doveridge*, named after the village in which he was brought up, is in quite a different category. Although it starts and ends quietly, it is composed in Linstead's rhythmic, texturally hard style and paints a picture of the traumatic move from rural Derbyshire to war-torn Sheffield undertaken by the nine-year-old Linstead in 1917. An orchestral work with a similar structure is *Notturmo* composed in 1946. There are a few short works for solo piano that were published at the end of the 1930's that

should find their way into concert programmes: *Le Babil* and *Une Brioche* would appeal to those who like Poulenc, and the more demanding *Four Moods* to pianists who are at home with the works of Scriabin. Organists may find *Incarnatus*, composed in 1947, a worthy alternative to Messiaen's compositions of the same period. Linstead's *Pièce d'Occasion* for Strings and Timpani dating from 1933 is rhythmic and full of life and another work to consider. However, of the hundreds of pieces Linstead composed during his lifetime, there is no doubt the *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* of 1932, the *Rhapsody for Viola and Piano* of the same year and the *Sonata for Violin and Piano* of 1934 (revised 1944) are among his best works and clearly enhance the repertoire of instruments that are short of works by British composers from the 1930's.

From a city that at the turn of the twentieth century was world-renowned for the quality of its choral singing, Linstead's setting of Psalm 103 *Benedic Anima Mea* is also worthy of future performances. After its first performance in 1979 by the Sheffield Bach Society, its conductor, Roger Bullivant, noted the work's similarity in style to Sir William Walton's compositions of the same period and how much the choir enjoyed singing the piece once they had mastered its technical difficulties.

It is difficult to characterize Linstead as a composer. Ignoring the many pastiche works, especially those composed after the Second World War and before the late 1960's, perhaps it is best to describe him as an eclectic British composer of the mid-twentieth-century whose works display an unusual degree of originality, a knowledge and sympathy with continental styles of the early part of the century, and stylistic scope. Noteworthy is how much more 'modern' his style is than that of either of his teachers, Shera and Bairstow.

Linstead did not belong to any 'School' as such and, in that sense, he is like a provincial Frank Bridge but of a later era. He certainly admired Poulenc and *Les Six*, but it is difficult to find much influence of French music in his works outside a couple of the shorter piano pieces and his *Overture 'In the French Style'*. Havergail Brian, who also had a provincial northern background, is a point of comparison in terms of style and individuality and perhaps even in his approach to harmony.

Linstead was clearly an eclectic, but unlike Bax, Britten or Ireland, one who never developed a consistent style, but who nevertheless was able to maintain in successive pieces a personal touch - particularly in the harmony.

To the historian, it is not perhaps Linstead's compositions that prove the most interesting aspect of his life. Rather, it is the part he played in the history of the music of his adopted city for half a century and the way his life illustrates the career of a freelance professional musician of his times, not least in the wide range of tasks he had to perform in order to make a living from music. It is difficult to decide whether Linstead was at his best as a composer, a performer or a writer on music. He himself would have wished to be remembered as a composer, but the truth is more complex. He was a gifted musician who reached fully professional standards in all three areas of composition, performance and musicology. His contribution does not lie in just one of them, it rests on all three. He was certainly one of the most resourceful musicians of his generation. Not least, his life

illustrates how it was possible for a talented but poor boy in the first half of the twentieth century, with the help of other distinguished and able musicians, to reach the highest professional standards without ever having attended full-time either a college or a university. In that sense alone, there is no more worthy successor to Sir Henry Coward in the history of music in Sheffield, than Dr. George Frederick Linstead.

Linstead's last days were spent between his home 6 Westwood Road and Christ Church, Fulwood. He was very ill but endeavoured to play for the Christmas services in 1974. However, knowing himself how ill he was, he asked his assistant, David Pettinger, to be in the organ loft with him, ready to take over if need be. During the church's Carol Service, just after he had struggled to play the accompaniment to the choir's rendering of 'And the Glory of the Lord' from Handel's *Messiah*, Linstead asked Pettinger to take over and was taken home. He died at Westwood Road on 29th December, he was sixty-six years old. His funeral service was held at Christ Church, Fulwood on Friday, 3rd January and his ashes were taken to Doveridge - the Derbyshire village in which he grew up and where his father, mother and sister had already been laid to rest - and buried in the churchyard of St. Cuthbert's Church near the bank of the River Dove where he had played as a child.

On Saturday, 11th January, 1975, a memorial service was held in Sheffield Cathedral at midday. It was Sheffield's final tribute to a man who had enhanced the music of his adopted home in so many areas for the best part of half a century. A chapter in the history of the City's music had come to a close.

George Frederick Linstead (1908 - 1974)

CHRONOLOGY

- 1859 Frederick Albert Linstead, GFL's father, born at Hockham, Norfolk.
- 1863 Catherine Elizabeth Harvey, GFL's mother, born at Vinehall, Sussex
- 1890 Frederick Linstead and Catherine Harvey married at Ore, Sussex.
- 1895 Mary Francis Linstead born at Melrose, Scotland [d.1992].
- 1896 Constance Ruth Linstead born at Melrose.
- 1898 Dorothy Linstead born at Great Bowden, Leicestershire.
- 1900 Catherine Harriet Linstead born at Melrose [d.1974].
- 1901 Census records show the family living at Great Bowden.
- 1902 Marjorie Linstead born.
- 1904 Charles Caleb Linstead born at Melrose on 9th January [d.1959].
- 1906 May Dorothy Griffiths (Linstead's future wife) born on 4th May at Oxton, Cheshire.
- 1908 George Frederick Linstead born on 24th January at Melrose in Roxburghshire, Scotland, the last of seven children.**
- 1911 Linstead family move from Melrose to Doveridge in South Derbyshire.
- 1913 GFL enters Doveridge National School where his elder brother, Charles, is already a pupil.
- 1915 Frederick Linstead, GFL's father dies of pneumonia and is buried in Doveridge Churchyard.
- 1917 GFL moves with his mother and siblings to Sheffield.
- 1919 GFL attends Sheffield Central School and begins composing.
Henry Hadow appointed Vice Chancellor of Sheffield University.
- 1920 GFL composes a Piano Sonata and begins his first major composition: an oratorio *The Revelation of St John* - later destroyed.
- 1922 An opera *King John* - also destroyed.
- 1923 *Traditional Rhapsody* for piano composed - originally opus 3, later listed as opus 1.
GFL leaves Sheffield Central School and begins work in the hat department of Dunn's Gentlemen's Outfitters - later given six months to find more suitable employment.
- 1924 An opera based on the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus composed - later destroyed.
- 1925 GFL has his first broadcast both as a pianist and as a composer.
- 1928 Frank Henry Shera becomes James Rossiter Hoyle Professor of Music at Sheffield University.
GFL begins studying with Shera as a part-time student.
GFL's first post as Organist and Choirmaster, possibly at St. Stephen's, Sheffield.
- 1929 GFL passes ARCM diploma in Theory of Music on 30th September. AMusTCL in theory also probably gained at this time.
- 1930 *Idyll* for Wind Quartet composed and performed.
Sir Henry Hadow retires as Vice Chancellor of Sheffield University [d.193].
- 1931 Catherine Linstead, GFL's mother, dies in Sheffield on 23rd April and is buried in Doveridge Churchyard next to her husband.
GFL graduates BMus at Durham University on 3rd November.

- 1932 *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* composed and first performed at the Victoria Hall, Sheffield on 26th March by William H. Roystone with GFL at the piano.
Six Variations on an English folk tune for double bassoon composed and performed.
Octet for five Players composed and performed.
March and Meditation for Brass Band composed.
Rhapsody for Viola and Piano composed.
 During the 1930's, GFL has piano lessons with concert pianist James Ching and lessons in composition with Sir Edward Bairstow.
- 1933 GFL appointed Organist and Choirmaster at St. Mary's, Walkley - his third Church post.
Two Irish Dances arranged for orchestra.
Pièce d'Occasion for Strings and Timpani composed and performed.
 Scene for a ballet *Hylas and the Water Nymphs* composed and performed.
- 1934 *Sonata for Violin and Piano* composed (revised in 1944).
 GFL is pianist in Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande* and in Peter Crossley-Holland's *Fantasy Quintet*.
Quartet for Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Double Bass composed and performed.
 GFL's compositions reach opus 100 with *The Holy Bottle* a Rabelaisian chamber opera.
- 1935 GFL passes FTCL diploma in 'The Art of Teaching' in July.
Doveridge a Symphonic Study composed.
 GFL conducts 'The Desert Song' to packed audiences at the Sheffield Empire.
- 1936 *March of the City Councillors* performed by the BBC Northern Orchestra.
 Wind Quintet *Mood* composed and performed in Sheffield.
 Incidental music to *The Cricket on the Hearth* performed in Southampton.
Overture in C for orchestra composed (performed in 1938).
Phantasmagoria - a ballet, composed and performed.
- 1937 Opera *Eastward of Eden* composed and performed by Croft House Operatic Society.
Symphonic Movement composed.
- 1938 *Four Moods*, a set of four piano pieces each dedicated to an important person in his life, published by Augener.
Le Babil and *Une Brioche* for piano composed (published by Gill in 1945). *Une Brioche* dedicated to Poulenc.
 Linstead's *Symphonic Movement*, *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra No.1* and *Overture in C* performed and broadcast by the BBC Northern Orchestra conducted by the composer.
- 1939 Opera *Eastward in Eden* receives second performance by Sheffield City Training College.
 GFL is pianist in Holst's *Hymn of Jesus* with the Hallé Orchestra under Malcolm Sargent.
- 1939-45 During the War, GFL works as Regional Labour Officer for the Ministry of Supply.
 [N.B. The George Linstead who obtained a BSc pass degree in Chemistry as an external student of London University in 1932 and taught at Nether Edge Grammar School during the War was not the composer as is stated erroneously on the school's web site.]

- 1940 GFL marries May Dorothy Griffiths ('Mamie') at Christ Church, Fulwood on 14th May.
GFL awarded DMus degree by the University of Durham on 25th June.
In Nomine for Orchestra composed.
GFL appointed Music Critic of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*.
- 1941 Stephen Guy Linstead, the Linsteads' only child, born in Chesterfield on 23rd June.
String Quartet No.1 composed (revised in 1944).
Concertino for Piano and Orchestra No.2 composed.
- 1943 *String Quartet No.2* composed (revised and performed 1949).
In 1943 and 1944, GFL arranged and composed a number of works for Military Bands including *Two Yorkshire Tunes* that were broadcast by the BBC.
- 1944 *In Nomine* arranged for strings.
In Nomine for orchestra performed by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the version for Strings by the BBC Northern Orchestra.
Two Scottish Tunes for orchestra composed.
- 1945 *In Nomine* for orchestra performed by the CBSO and by the Hallé Orchestra.
GFL passes ARCO on 20th July.
- 1946 *Nottuno* for orchestra composed.
- 1947 Organ solo *Incarnatus* composed [performed 1951].
Moto Perpetuo composed and performed by the CBSO.
Sonatina for violin composed.
GFL appointed Part-time Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Music, Sheffield University.
- 1948 *Moto Perpetuo* performed by the CBSO (twice) and the Hallé Orchestra.
GFL begins work on a Symphony (the middle Scherzo movement performed in 1953).
GFL initiated into Hadassah Lodge of Freemasons on 31st March, passed 30/06/48 raised 24/10/48.
Shera retires as Professor of Music.
GFL is appointed temporary, full-time, assistant lecturer for one year after which he returns to the annual, part-time, assistant lecturer contract he retains until his death.
Stewart Deas appointed Professor of Music.
- 1949 *Two Scottish Tunes* for orchestra performed by the CBSO.
Sonata for Violin and Piano (1934, rev.1944) performed.
- 1950 *Castleton Garland Dance* composed in June and performed later in the year by the Hallé Orchestra and the CBSO.
GFL elected President of Sheffield Singers' Operatic Society.
- 1951 GFL passes FRCO on 19th January.
Organ solo *Incarnatus* performed by the composer at St. Mary's, Walkley.
CBSO perform *Moto Perpetuo* in Sheffield City Hall.
Linstead's *String Quartet No.2* performed at the annual meeting of the Committee for the Promotion of New Music.
Moto Perpetuo performed again by the CBSO.
- 1952 *Recitative and In Nomine* for wind sextet composed.
- 1953 *Recitative and In Nomine* performed by the LSO Wind Ensemble in London in January.

- Scherzo* for orchestra (composed in 1948) performed in February by the CBSO conducted by Rudolf Schwarz.
- GFL passes BA in English at London University on 1st August.
- GFL appointed Organist and Choirmaster at Christ Church, Fulwood.
- 1954 Psalm 103 *Benedic Anima Mea* for chorus and orchestra composed (performed 1979).
- Film score *Engineers in Steel* composed and recorded by the Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maurice Miles.
- GFL exalted into the Royal Arch Chapter of Paradise No.139 on 15th March.
- Anthem *Thus Saith the Lord God* composed and performed.
- Overture on a theme by Monteverdi* for strings composed.
- 1955 *Overture 'In the French Style'* composed, performed and broadcast by the BBC Northern Orchestra from the Milton Hall, Manchester.
- GFL is soloist in a performance of Schumann's *Piano Concerto in A minor* at Sheffield City Hall.
- 1956 Professor Frank Shera dies in Sheffield on 21st February.
- 1958 GFL installed into the De Furnival Preceptory of Masonic Knights Templar No. 66 on 23rd May.
- Partita for Organ* on 'Veni Creator Spiritus' composed.
- 1959 *Overture 'In the French Style'* performed by the Hallé.
- GFL perfected into Talbot Rose Croix Chapter on 20th November.
- 1960 *Le Babil* republished by Chester.
- 1961 *Anglican Overture* composed and performed by the Hallé Orchestra.
- GFL arranges the Jamaican folksong *Linstead Market* for piano.
- 1962 GFL becomes Provincial Grand Organist of KT.
- 1964 *String Quartet No.3* composed - first movement only performed by the Hallam Quartet on 14th April, 1965.
- 1966 GFL invested as Grand Organist, Province of Yorkshire, West Riding on 18th May.
- 1967 GFL plays the organ for the dedication of Tapton Masonic Hall on 24th June.
- 1968 Stewart Deas retires as Professor of Music and Dr. Basil Deane appointed.
- 1971 *Bagatelles* composed for the Sheffield University Chamber Orchestra and performed in December, 1973 in the Firth Hall.
- 1973 GFL composes *Capriccio* for organ (performed posthumously, in 1979) and *Processional* for organ.
- 1974 **GFL dies at 6 Westwood Road, Sheffield on 29th December.**
- 1975 GFL's funeral service held at Christ Church, Fulwood on 3rd January. His ashes later buried at Doveridge.
- Memorial service for GFL held at Sheffield Cathedral on 11th January.
- 1979 Works by GFL performed in a University Music Department Concert including the first performance of *Capriccio* for organ.
- 2001 GFL's wife, May Dorothy, dies in Birmingham on 11th February aged 94. Her ashes are interred with those of her husband in Doveridge Churchyard.

Selected Works by George F. Linstead mentioned in the Monograph:

Piano Sonata (1920)
Oratorio: *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* (1920-21)
Opera: *King John* (1922)
Traditional Rhapsody for Piano (1923)
Opera: *Agamemnon* (1924-5)
Violin Sonata (1929)
Idyll for Wind Quartet (1930)
Wind Sextet (1930)
Piano Quintet (1930) BMus Exercise
Adagietto for Organ (1931)
Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1932)
Rhapsody for Viola and Piano (1932)
Piano Prelude (1932)
Six Variations for Double Bassoon (1932)
Octet for Five Players (1932)
Pièce d'Occasion for Strings and Timpani (1933)
Ballet: *Hylas and the Water Nymphs* (1933)
Two Irish Dances for Orchestra (1933)
Sonata for Violin and Piano (1934)
Quartet for Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Double Bass (1934)
Opera: *The Holy Bottle* (1934)
Symphonic Study *Doveridge* (1935)
Mood a Quintet for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Violoncello and Contra-bassoon (1935)
Ballet: *Phantasmagoria* (1936)
March of the City Councillors for Orchestra (1936)
Overture in C for Orchestra (1936)
Symphonic Movement (1937)
Opera: *Eastward in Eden* (1937)
Symphonic Poem: *The Nightingale and the Rose* (1937)
Une Brioche for Piano (1938)
Le Babil for Piano (1938)
Concertino for Piano and Orchestra No.1 (1938)
Four Moods for Piano (1938)
Oratorio: *The Conflict* (1940) DMus Exercise
In Nomine for Orchestra (1940)
String Quartet No.1 (1941, rev.1944)
Concertino for Piano and Orchestra No.2 (1941)
String Quartet No.2 (1943, rev.1949)
Various arrangements for Military Band (1942-44)
The Peak for Military Band (1944)
Two Scottish Tunes for Orchestra (1944)
In Nomine for Strings (1944)
Notturmo for Orchestra (1946)
Moto Perpetuo for Orchestra (1947)
Incamatus for Organ (1947)

Sonatina for Violin (1947)
Scherzo for Orchestra (1948)
Castleton Garland Dance for Orchestra (1950)
Recitative and In Nomine for Wind Sextet (1952)
Anthem: *Thus saith the Lord God* (1954)
Benedic Anima Mea for Chorus and Orchestra (1954)
Film Score: *Engineers in Steel* (1954)
Overture on a theme by Monteverdi for Strings (1954)
Overture 'In the French Style' for Orchestra (1955)
Partita for Organ on *Veni Creator Spiritus* (1958)
Anglican Overture for Orchestra (1961)
String Quartet No.3 (1964)
Song: *Adieu, a heart warm fond adieu* (1966)
Invocation for Strings (1969)
Bagatelles for Chamber Orchestra (1971)
Capriccio for Organ (1973)
Processional for Organ (1973)

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

The majority of Linstead's music manuscripts are owned by Stephen Linstead, the composer's son, and preserved at his home in Solihull, Birmingham. A few are held in the Archive of Sheffield University Library and the two works he submitted as exercises for his BMus and DMus degrees are held in the Archive of Durham University Library at Palace Green. Linstead's many reviews and articles for the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* are held in the library of the Sheffield Telegraph and Star. Regular reports and articles on music in Sheffield by George Linstead are also to be found among the pages of *The Musical Times*, especially in the feature 'Music from the Provinces'.

Secondary Sources:

- Clyde Binfield et.al., *The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993* (Sheffield, 1993).
Eric Blom (ed.) *Everyman's Dictionary of Music* (London, 1946).
Eric Blom (ed.) *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 5th edition (London, 1954).
Friedrich Blume (ed.) *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Kassel, 1949-68).
Gordon Brooks, 'Cavaillé-Coll's British Organs' *Organists' Review*, May 2006.
Arthur W. Chapman, *The Story of a Modern University - A History of the University of Sheffield* (London, 1955).
Henry Coward, *Reminiscences of Henry Coward* (London, 1919).
Norbert Dufourcq (ed.) *Larousse de la Musique* (Paris, 1957).
Lois Edwards, 'John Henry Stokes an Edwardian horse dealer' *Leicestershire Historian* No.40 (2004).
H. Keeble Hawson, *Sheffield - the Growth of a City 1893-1926* (Sheffield, 1928).
Eric D. Mackerness, *Somewhere further North - a History of Music in Sheffield* (Sheffield, 1974).
Jane Middleton, *St. Cuthbert's Church, Doveridge - A Guide and Brief History* (Doveridge, 1996).
Spencer S. Pitfield, *British Sonatas by Hadow, Bell, Linstead and Fiske: Rediscovering a Forgotten Repertory* ICA ClarinetFest2000, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA.
Spencer S. Pitfield, *British music for clarinet and piano 1880 to 1945: repertory and performance practice*.

Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Sheffield, 2001.