

CHAPTER SIX - THE NINETEEN SEVENTIES

His 2000th recital occurred at 1.15 p.m. on Thursday 27 October 1977, but the music was the same as he played, the week after his sixty-ninth birthday, on 20 October 1977. Following that recital, according to his diary, he had Mr Robert Mason for a lesson at 4.30p.m. On his actual birthday he played a good programme consisting of J. S. Bach.

Toccata, Adagio, Grave and Fugue in C major
a) Chorale Solo "Von Gott will ich nicht lassen"
b) Chorale Fugue "Christe, aller Welt Trost"
c) Chorale Coloratura "Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns Wend"
Prelude and Fugue (Allabreve) in C minor

At the second recital at 1.15pm: -

Andante in D major	Alfred Hollins 1865-1942
Sonata in G major	Edward Elgar
Lullaby	Gordon Phillips
Carillon de Westminster (requested item)	Louis Vierne 1870-1937

His 2000th recital on 27 October 1977 must have been lovely. It was:-

Trumpet Minuet	Alfred Hollins 1865-1942
Naiades	Louis Vierne 1870-1937
Toccata and Fugue in D minor	J S Bach 1685-1750
Hornpipe, Air and Gavotte (Tower Hill Suite)	Gordon Phillips
Prayer and Cradle Song	Alexandre Guilmant 1837-1911
Toccata (Symphony No.5)	Charles Marie Widor 1845-1937

Altogether a programme that would be popular today, could we hear it again.



Gordon in 1975

By that year Gordon was happy enough to have begun composing again, but music just for his own, or his students, use. It was not published during his life-time, but following his death, Robert Cruden tirelessly worked on the manuscripts turning them into computer printed pieces which enjoyed a wider circulation through the Gordon Phillips Society. Then music publisher, Adrian Self became interested, and beginning with the Basic Organ Tutor in 2003 has now got them all published by his firm of ANIMUS.

The "Tower Hill Suite" was the first in this happier period to be written during the hot summer of 1976 when he would look out from his organ loft to see the visitors queueing up to go round the Tower of London. Then followed "Variations on a Nursery Song" and "American

Fanfare" in 1981; "African Meditation" and "Fanfare for Organ 1984 for the Queen of England" and in 1985 "Fanfare for Organ 1985" for the Queen of England and also

"Trumpet Tune" for John Turner (a private student who became a good friend). During the early 1980s Gordon also wrote his "March for the Knights Templar", "A Quiet Processional" for a lady organist in Filey, Yorkshire who had lessons infrequently from him and "Tongues of Fire", a very lively piece in semiquavers which he played at Pentecost to illustrate in music the coming of the Holy Spirit in tongues of flame.

Various dignitaries were invited to All Hallows and for several of these Gordon would write a suitable Processional march which he played. For the Queen it was the "Fanfare for Organ", and for an African Bishop he wrote the "African Meditation" as the Bishop was going to preach the sermon. Gordon needed appropriate music to play as he ascended the pulpit.

In his earlier days, Gordon would never play arrangements of music, as he knew there was sufficient varied organ music to last a life-time. Later he changed his mind, and even wrote some arrangements himself. Our legacy from him of these Concert Transcriptions for organ is as follows:

The Bees Wedding	Mendelssohn
Spring Song	Mendelssohn
Gipsy Rondo	Haydn
Pavane	Fauré
The Trumpet shall Sound	Handel
Pavane from 'Capriol Suite'	Peter Warlock
Minuet from Symphony in E flat K543	Mozart
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring	J. S. Bach
Handel in the Strand (written 1983)	Percy Grainger

This music cannot be obtained from ANIMUS but they have all been prepared as computer prints by Robert Cruden, so may be obtained from the Gordon Phillips Society. The beginning of "The Bees Wedding" is shown below.

The image displays the beginning of the musical score for "The Bees Wedding" by Mendelssohn. It is a three-staff score (treble, middle, and bass clefs). The first system includes a "Ch." marking above the treble staff. The music begins with a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, creating a rhythmic pattern. The second system continues this pattern, with a melodic line in the treble and a supporting bass line. The third system shows a continuation of the piece, with a melodic line in the treble and a supporting bass line. The score is presented in a clear, computer-printed format.

Among Gordon's papers, there is an undated draft of a letter he wrote to 'Musical Opinion' which is as follows:

Dear Sir,

Mr John W Cooke in his reply to my February letter, mentions an awareness of the need for properly designed choruses which he says has developed during the last fifty years. As far as I have been able to observe neither the Choir nor the Pedal department have shown much sign of this much-to-be desired movement. Neither have English Great organs been models of enterprise. One still sees many specifications containing Diapason 1,2 and even 3. The idea that only Diapason tone is suitable for accompanying hymn-singing is quite wrong. A flute chorus will perform the task just as efficiently.

If I listed the English composers who cannot be played on the modern English organ, I should have to start at least as far back as Blow and Purcell and carry the list on to S S Wesley. During the whole of the 18th century and well into the 19th century composers asked for tones no longer generally available, while Wesley in the Choral Song and the so-called Largetto in F# minor writes for a keyboard going down to GGG.

But the point I should like to stress is that the Church, having to a large extent taken over the organ, now has a responsibility similar to that of a civil authority which take charge of a great painting or a precious manuscript. It must preserve the masterpiece and not debase it. It may use the organ for accompanimental purposes, but it should also allow its congregation to hear the five centuries of music written for the instrument, much of it composed by devout Christian musicians. If we are to be denied this privilege, on the score of music in church being but a means to an end therefore, by implication not requiring a comprehensive instrument, then the Church may be said to have betrayed its trust, and the better type of organ (and organist) may well find their way out into the pagan world, or even the Royal Festival Hall!



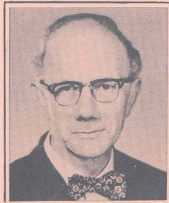
Finally may I congratulate another writer, Mr John S. Smith on a noteworthy contribution in support of historical accuracy in performance. In this connection the organ in the R.F.H goes further than any other instrument in the country and whatever defects it may have, that fact alone commends it to all who value an authentic interpretation.

I remain

Yours faithfully

Gordon's great friend, Sidney Campbell one year his junior, sadly died in 1974 aged 65. Sidney had benefited from starting young and gained both ARCO and FRCO at the age of twenty-two. He and Gordon both studied with Dr Ernest Bullock and Sidney later took MusB and MusD at Durham. He became Sub Warden at the College of St Nicolas, Canterbury and wrote "Canterbury Interlude" which Gordon played, and then became organist of Southwark Cathedral, then returned to Canterbury Cathedral as organist and master of the Choristers until 1961. That year he was appointed successor to Sir William Harris at the Queens Free Chapel in Windsor Castle, where he played a four manual organ.

"Canterbury Interlude" is published in Book Six of Gordon's series "Preludes, Interludes, Postludes" which has photographs on the front cover of Sidney, Gordon and also Arthur Milner. Gordon allowed 4½ minutes for playing that piece, but Sidney's longer work, entitled "Canterbury Improvisations" a three movement piece comprising "Impromptu", "Lento" and "Fugal Epilogue", took 10 minutes. A third composition by Sidney, "Pageantry", was timed by Gordon to take 5 minutes.

No. 600f

Arthur Milner Sidney Campbell

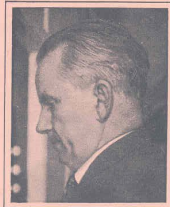
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Short original organ compositions of moderate difficulty by Modern Composers for Service and Recital
playable on a 2-manual Organ with indications for the use of a Choir Organ or Solo Organ where available

General Editor: Gordon Phillips

Volume Six

<p>Arthur Milner Prelude in E minor on a Theme by Palestrina</p>	<p>Sidney Campbell Canterbury Interlude in E flat major</p>	<p>Gordon Phillips Postlude for a Festival in G major</p>
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 Gordon Phillips