The author in his heydey,
with the London Chamber Orchestra

John Honeyman was, for 40 years, a professional double-bass player, playing with many of the great orchestras and conductors, and closely involved with the formation and running of the London Chamber Orchestra

SING LOW
MY SWEET CHARIOT

Memories of a Musical Foot-Soldier

1947 to 1987

by John Honeyman

The Author in his early days

Under Sir Adrian Boult, Tchaikovsky Hall, Moscow, 1954

CHAPTER SEVENTY THREE

I was extremely fortunate in being around during the period when all these good musicians were performing. "I doubt we shall see their like again".

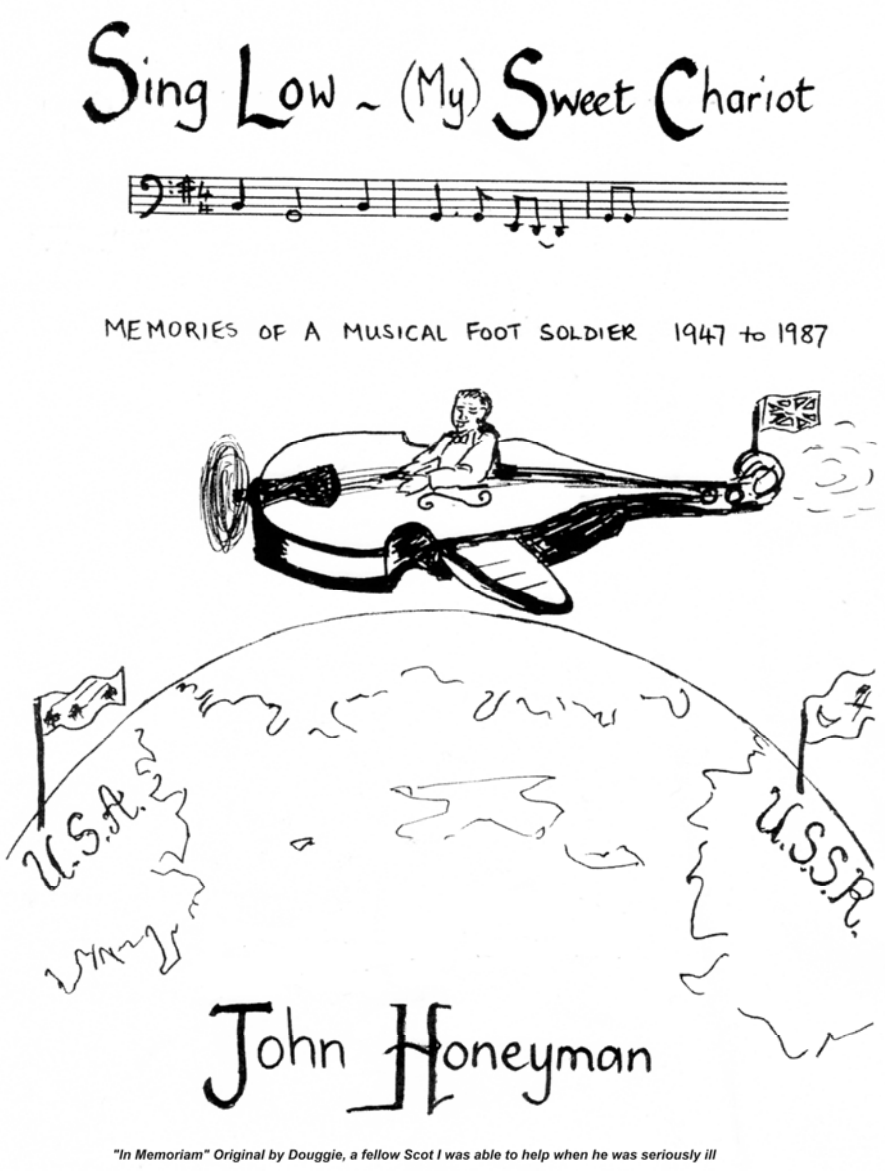
I also seemed to move from one fine orchestra to another at the right time, probably more due to luck than good judgement, which enabled me to see wonderful places and play in the finest venues in the World.

As in all true adventure stories I have ridden off into the sunset -- well nearly --. The tranquillity of rural Devon is very similar to that of my origins in Fife, ...only warmer, where I am now able to do and enjoy all the simple things I never had time to do - AND

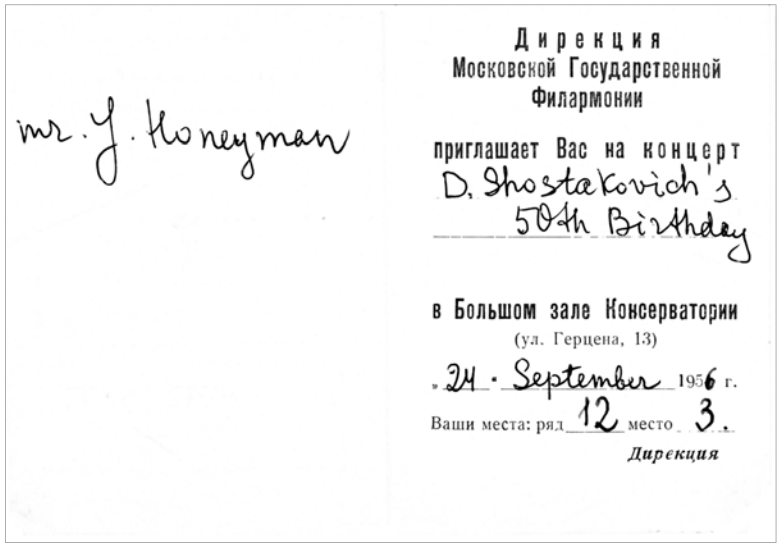
I still have my memories.

P.S. By beautiful co-incidence, my age on finishing this tale is 73.
Honest, I did not count the chapters!

John Honeyman - April 1998



"In Memoriam" Original by Douggie, a fellow Scot I was able to help when he was seriously ill



mr. J. Honeyman

Дирекция
Московской Государственной
Филармонии

приглашает Вас на концерт
D. Shostakovich's
50th Birthday

в Большом зале Консерватории
(ул. Герцена, 13)

24 · September 1956 г.

Ваши места: ряд 12 место 3.

Дирекция

Invitation to Birthday 50th Party for Dmitri Shostakovich, 1956

London Chamber Orchestra

Dartington College, but it was not the same, used as I was to the "West End" scene (Snob! Snob!) so in 1986 I "hung up my saddle" for good, moved to a lovely quiet village within minutes of Exeter. We are now lucky enough to have a Swimming Pool so I now have so much to do with Fly Fishing, Dog walking on the lovely Haldon Hills, Garden and House maintenance, I cannot understand how I managed to previously fit work in.

CHAPTER SEVENTY TWO

As mentioned before, Geoffrey Heggs was promoted to become an Adjudicator of Industrial Tribunals - and - I believe, subsequently a Circuit Judge, so he had to relinquish all business association.

Rents etc. had increased some threefold in the popular area of Red Lion Square and we felt we "had had the best of it". So, in 1980 John F. and I decided to wind up Concert Artists' Representation. John carried on for a year or two with M.A.M. finally from his home in Surrey. Also, I felt it best to get out whilst "at the top" as I had seen too many of my older colleagues who had gone on that bit too long, often to the stage where younger chaps who had never heard them at their best couldn't appreciate how good they had once been. In fact, when I made it known that I intended to retire "gracefully" my younger colleagues were astonished, one actually saying, "But you are in the position we are all aiming at!"

I still think I took the right decision, particularly when I see the situation "the business" is now in, especially the free lance session scene. Anyhow, in 1981 my wife and I moved out of London, first to a little cottage in Dorset which we bought a year before in preparation and from where I still "commuted" to London for a few sessions still mainly National Philharmonic. After a further year we moved to a thatched cottage some way beyond Exeter which I set about restoring and creating a. garden (including an ambitious water feature) out of the three-quarters of an acre wilderness around it.

I still continued for a further couple of years or so to come to London for occasional special "reunion" sessions for old pals such as Laurie Johnson and Jack Parnell. These were booked by Frank Reidy (fine clarinettist in his day) and were thoroughly enjoyable, meeting all the "boys" such as 70+ year old Kenny Baker (playing as well as ever) and others of that ilk in Laurie's large orchestras. I joked to Frank once that he got the hand together with a spade. I did the occasional "gig" around Devon, in Exeter and the famous

The Author with his parents

A bit of fun during the Egypt trip.

Preface

This climbing of my personal mountain is dedicated to my wife Anita, who pestered me until I did it, and I would like to thank my good friend Ronald Alan Smith of Dunsford in Devon - Associated Board Examiner, Pianist and Organist extraordinaire - for his support and encouragement, and particularly Ashley Allerton first-class musician, and enthusiastic computer buff who, despite the doubts of many professed experts, managed to rescue the original material from an old computer print-out (by guess-who?) to a current system.

I consider myself to have been extremely fortunate in having had a musical career during a particularly important and exciting time, which by luck and “fortune’s smiles” enabled me to meet and play with famous musicians, conductors and soloists, many of whom were probably the last in the truly great tradition of European music and whose names continue to evoke an almost mystical aura. It is unlikely that all the circumstances will exist ever again for so many “Greats” to appear over such a relatively short period, and when I “go down Memory Lane” with this anecdote or that, many of my friends in and out of music keep asking me to set down my memories. The continuing interest and exhortations have finally, after ten years of procrastination, persuaded me to record this “Histoire” “as it seemed to me”.

The events may not always he chronologically exact as it is difficult to remember every detail of forty years of varied activity. Leaving aside my personal opinions, which may be occasionally cynical, these details are factually correct.

All of this was enjoyable and I was busier than ever “wearing my several hats”, but I was getting more and more fed up with the treadmill that was London, so different from when I came down in ‘47, and beginning to think seriously of retirement to the country.

situation existed with Klemperer in his last days where “Manny” Hurwitz led the Philharmonia.... Shades of Russian First Secretaries and other World Leaders. Incidentally, Manny Hurwitz was a fine conductor, as was Pau1 Tortelier, but because they were known and wanted as Instrumentalists, they never got the chance of the recognition they deserved.

This farcial series apart, the “Nat.Phil” made many excellent recordings with all kinds of artists, the best known being of Operas such as “Otello” with Placido Domingo – “Pleasant Sunday”, lovely name, lovely man,- Sherril Milne and Mirella Freni, very well conducted by James Levine.

Joan (“Joanie“) Sutherland was another real star we enjoyed working with in the countless operas conducted by her husband Richard (Ricci) Bonynge. Ricci was a fine pianist and a sensitive musician and Joan’s success was in no small way due to his coaching - and selection of repertoire to emphasise her Coloratura. possibilities. He was a somewhat ineffectual conductor but very pleasant and scholarly in his approach and with a good - and sympathetic - orchestra he got marvellous results. Joanie was mostly very placid and easy going, (she would sit on stage, even when not required, and listen whilst doing her needlework) unless she disagreed strongly with Ricci when fireworks could fly between them. Other singers were of equal international standard such as Scotto and the great Pavarotti, who was initially a protege of Joan Sutherland.

According to my wife, Anita, the members of the National Philharmonic Orchestra were the greatest stars of all -- a most unlikely looking set of men who, when the red light went on, played like Angels. The magnificent sound of the combined forces of brilliant string players and star woodwind and brass players, not to mention the percussion, was too good to be true. The sound reverberating sound around Kingsway Hall in London for instance had to be heard to be believed, and the music in all its moods was the best she had ever witnessed.

CHAPTER ONE

I was born in Cowdenbeath in Fifeshire, Scotland, on January 24th 1925 and my Dad, Peter, was a journeyman tailor who also played the fiddle. The family “baund” was popular at weddings and dances, and they had two fiddlers. Dad was the main one and Uncle John, although much older than Dad, wasn't nearly so good. Being senior, he was “the manager” so he would tell Pete to “keep it going” whilst he had a drink with and chatted up the clients. There was also a flute, a cornet, a drummer and my Uncle George, the youngest of the three brothers, who played the accordion or, when possible, “vamped” on a piano.

My earliest musical recollections, around the age of three or four, were of them practising in our front room when the drummer would play on our fender, (the fire surround, not the modern Bass Guitar) as this saved him from bringing his drum kit. As with all small boys, the drummer was my favourite; also he had a “pin'” (wooden) leg which fascinated me and I remember, it seemed to me then quite hilarious when he told me his toes were cold. To a four-year-old this was a grand joke which he often repeated because it made me laugh. It was many years before I learnt that men with wooden legs could actually feel their toes cold.

I assumed that I would also become a fiddle player and I was fairly good at music at Junior School. I could read music a little and was able to help others in the class with their Tonic SolFa. My father, however, was adamant that I should not be a musician as “it was too precarious a profession” and despite years of pleading would not let me play his fiddle. He remembered the days well (and I was just old enough to vaguely do so without appreciating the fact) when every Cinema had a Pianist, Trio or Orchestra and that virtually overnight some ten thousand musicians became redundant with the advent of the “Talkies”.

This history is going to become an unashamed series of “name

dropping" so, thinking of Cinema bands, the Trio of violin, 'cello and piano in Cowdenheath Picture House was led by David McCallum -No, not the star of "The Man From Uncle" who was his son. David senior was in his early teens and still in short trousers then, but gifted enough to attract the attention of a wealthy patron who arranged for him to go to Germany for further musical training. As many will know, David became a famous leader of London Orchestras, principally for Tommy Beecham with the Roya1 Philharmonic etc. and afterwards as a much sought-after freelance leader. Although seeing him as a small boy, I didn't actually meet David until the 1960's when we were both free-lancing in London. He was the archetypical "canny" Scot and continually complained about "what that young lad (young David) was going to make of himself with all this RADA and acting nonsense!" What he made of himself of course, very soon afterwards, was a famous film actor and Dollar Millionaire.

But back to David senior; on one occasion, a colleague of mine, Jim Merrett junior, picked up David who didn't have a car. Funnily enough, Jim's Dad, another Scot who became my teacher in London and was as "canny" as David, didn't have one either and I often took him to engagements … These old boys were from an era when few people had cars so they never learned to drive. Taking David to an out of town date, Jim went out of his way to collect him and took him door to door. After the concert (Mantovani I remember) he drove him back and on the way they stopped for a cup of tea. Jim let David out and said, "You order the tea, David, whilst I park the car." He collected him afterwards, made the necessary detour to take David home and on setting him down said by way of goodnight, "Well I think that went very well today David." David replied – slowly – "Aye, but by the way Jim – you owe me tuppence for the tea."

CHAPTER SEVENTY ONE

National Philharmonic.

John F. and I continued booking our "Jingles" etc. but my free lance playing career was becoming even busier and I could only spare one or two days (at most) in the office. One reason was that the "National Philharmonic", run by well known violinist and "fixer" (referred to by himself as the "eight bar concerto king" - actually a very fine violinist with an excellent tone) Sidney Sax, was becoming almost a. full time job. Sid had created a latter day "Philharmonia" which, through its fine playing and efficient (if, like Walter Legge's, also ruthless) management, was "cleaning up" in the recording scene and as a principal player I was more and more involved.

We worked on many films with people like John Williams (the American Film composer - not the Guitarist) and Henry Mancini and in recordings with well-known conductors and artists. The best known was probably Stokowski, who, in his late 90's was being engaged by Decca for recordings although he could hardly make his way to the rostrum. I had worked with "Stokie" several times in the past and had observed him to be a cantankerous old B .... but now of course age had mellowed him. He went on until he was 99, (in fact the Royal Phil had cheekily and optimistically offered to engage him for his 100th Birthday Concert) by which time he was almost incapable of movement. The twice daily procession of him, with many helpers, being so slowly led to the rostrum caused me to cynically remark that it looked 1ike a waxwork figure being wheeled out on a trolley. The recordings went on alright as once he had brought his arm down, Sid would nod the tempo of the piece as he played and the orchestra, like a giant quartet, would carry on with "Stokie" further and further behind until the movement ended. No one ever complained (the record company only wanted the name on the record) and he presumably was quite satisfied by the sound on playback. I suspect thehearing part of his brain was possibly still O.K. but signals to the limbs were no longer getting there. A similar

principle of which had unanimous agreement) performing in South Africa. Much though we would have loved to do another trip of this nature with the great entertainer, we had to reluctantly turn it down. We heard afterwards that the trip went ahead -- with Count Basie and his Band!

CHAPTER TWO

Jim Merrett senior (Old Jim) was my main reason for going down to London on the advice of my teacher in Glasgow, H.T. (Harry) Baxter. Harry was a sound player of the old school but Jim was recognised as the best teacher of advanced playing in the country and I have already mentioned that he was another "canny"Scot. When I started free-lancing after my Philharmonia and L.P.O. days, I worked with old Jim on many sessions particularly in the Sinfonia of London which was almost exclusively a film recording orchestra. Actually, Jim's playing career ended when he had a stroke during a Sinfonia film session. This was at Shepperton Studios and luckily not far from Ashford Hospital where they had an excellent emergency department. We managed to get him there quickly and I am pleased to say he partially recovered, although he lost the power of his right arm. He was still able to do a little teaching and lived on for another ten years. It was a terrible shock as he simply slowly fell forward and I and a colleague had to try to hold him and his instrument, and he was a big heavy man.

They say things come in threes and I was more than concerned as not long before my desk partner in the Philharmonia, Adrian Cruft, had fainted during a Festival Hall rehearsal, and another chap, Nick Chesterman had had a stroke during a recording session at Walthamstow Town Hall. Sadly he did not recover.

On a more cheerful note, I must tell another short anecdote re "canny" scots. Large instruments, -Double Bass, Tuba, Harp, Percussion etc. ~ have always qualified for a porterage payment and in those days it was 10/-(ten shillings) per day. We were working on a film at Shepperton and we were booked for five days. I had an estate car and I picked Jim up at the nearest tube station each morning, took him to the studios, some 7 or 8 miles, and back in the evening. I didn't expect any payment as I was only too glad to help but Jim was obviously embarrassed at collecting his 10/-whilst I was doing the main part of his portering. Knowing that I had a baby son at that time who is now over forty, he suggested I "had something

for the boy's bank" and gave me a florin (two shilling piece). He continued to do this each evening until the fifth one when, as we had collected some overtime as well, flushed with generosity, he insisted I had to have "a wee bit more for the boy's bank" and gave me a ha1fcrown (2/6d). They grew up at a time and in an environment when they had to watch every penny and these old boys never really got used to the idea of "big" money and not having to be so canny.

If there was a large orchestra with, say, 6 or 8 Basses on a series of sessions, chaps used to often buy sweets and pass them around. On one occasion Jim felt obliged to buy the sweets and he turned to me and said, "You know John, these cost a penny each!" The old bugger had been sitting calculating this from the number he had handed out. He was then earning an average of around £18 per day when the normal working wage was £5 or £6 per week, and Theatre musicianswould be averaging £10 to £12 per week. They were great characters otherwise and very fine experienced players. We younger chaps loved them, considered their canniness to be a joke and regaled each other with the latest tale of their "personal battle against inflation".

Before going on with my personal history, as I have mentioned the Sinfonia of London and its being almost exclusively a film recording orchestra, I would like – lest I forget – to explain how it came it came to be established. The main characters in this "happening" were Muir Mathieson (another Scot with the same birthdate as myself), Gordon Wa1ker (retired first Flute and Chairman of the London Symphony Orchestra), and a lady from the Film Management world, "Dusty" Miller. Muir grew up in the film music world -in a similar way to Andre Previn much later in America -where he worked as assistant to the famous Music Director Ernest Irving, (I only met the latter once at the end of his career when he was pushed into the studio dressed in a white suit, in a Bath chair) and graduated to become the best known film music director of his day.

their house.
This made a very interesting evening. The family lived in a large flat in a modern building within close sight of the Pyramids. On our arrival we were introduced to Ali's brother who was called Mohammed and we joked about Mohammed Ali the world champion boxer and they knew all about him. We then met their mother and other female members of the family and were led into the main room where the meal (traditional Kush Kush etc.) was served to us (Mohammed, head of the household, presumably father was dead, Ali and we guests) by the ladies - who did not eat with the men. During our meal all the females sat on the open verandah watching a French film on T.V. This strange mixture of old and new was reinforced by the fact that, as in Medieval times, the animals, pigs, fowls etc. all pecked and snuffled happily in the open rear courtyard under and beside the block.

Thanks to Ali we had a wonderful time, saw some unusual sights (as well as the traditional Pyramids etc.) e.g. the Tomb of the Sacred Bulls, unbelievable for sheer size and scale. We also enjoyed his company, a real character in his quiet way, and were really sorry to part from him at the airport. His fee for his time over three days, car, kindness and advice, including the flat, was only £21 each. We gave him £25 each which when translated into Egyptian pounds was probably as much as he would earn in a normal month. Cairo is a classic example of the contrast between the rich and the mass of very poor. Within walking distance along the river banks one can see countless habitations which are actual mud huts with a small square hole for an unglazed window... literally the same as England in Medieval times with the animals sharing the accommodation.

Before leaving the Sinatra chapter I must mention a funny (but not funny ha! ha!) little episode - what you might call a "Black Farce". Sinatra asked us to book his "London Orchestra" to go with him to "Sin City" - the gambling resort in an unpronounceable "Free" native area of South Africa. The Musicians Union had (because of the apartheid regime and despite the efforts of "Saint" Margaret Thatcher and her ghastly acolytes) placed a ban on members (the

CHAPTER SEVENTY

We had decided to start off by seeing the Museum of Antiquities in Cairo itself. Our Hotel, a real luxury pad with pool and chalet style accommodation, was in Geza a few miles out of Cairo so I went out and hailed a taxi for our trip into Town. This went off well and I had asked our driver to come back later for us. He duly turned up and at our request, took us to a traditional restaurant which, "funnily enough", was run by a cousin of his.

Our driver's name was Ali and we asked him to become our personal driver for the three days we were staying. He was delighted to agree and when we asked to go to a. good curio shop he "happened" to have a cousin who ran one. This went on throughout our stay, even to the point that away out on a quiet desert road on our way to the Tombs of the sacred Bulls, "just by chance" we came upon a solitary bedouin on a camel who happened to be Ali's uncle. In return for the normal exchange of pleasantries and a small amount of Backsheese we all had rides on his camel and Noswos and Howard duly photographed us in turn. The "scam" was obvious but we didn't mind as the charges were no worse (in fact much less) than the tourist traps around the Pyramids themselves with the hundreds of annoying camel drivers and hawkers. Anyhow, it was all great fun and thanks to Ali we saw much more of local life, including the vast area where all the camel drivers "parked" their beasts. It appears to be the ambition of most poor Egyptians to own a camel, and to "run this business" successfully they must also have a small bit of ground wherein they grow fodder which when ready, the camel then carries around on its back ... a bit like producing your own petrol and carrying it in your vehicle until required.

The hotel was happy to let us keep our rooms for two nights but couldn't for the third so we asked Ali to recommend somewhere and "it so happened" he had a friend who had a four bedroomed flat which we could have for the night. To our surprise it was very nice indeed, with Lounge, Kitchen, Bathroom and the four Bedrooms. Also, Ali said he and his family would like to invite us to supper at

Gordon Wa1ker ran a successful chamber music group known as the "London Sinfonia" which largely comprised principal players from the London Symphony Orchestra with well known free-lance "star" players such as Leon Goossens (he had the same birthdate as my wife Anita who is also an oboist and number one fan of Leon) and "Old" Jim Merrett. This group became victim of its own success by getting more and more engagements which then began to clash with L.S.O. dates. The L.S.O. had a system of "starred" engagements - important dates- which all principals were supposed to undertake. The "Sinfonia" was now threatening this arrangement so the L.S.O. Board issued an ultimatum to the principals to decide where their loyalties lay.

As Gordon and Muir were now able to offer plenty of lucrative work and they would he able to continue with their chamber music in the "Sinfonia", seven of the L.S.O. principals resigned and formed, with Leon and Jim, the nucleus of the "Sinfonia of London"film orchestra. I became slightly involved as Jim asked me to come in as his No.2 but as I had just joined the L.P.O. as sub-principal under a year's contract I was unable to take this up at that time. However, "watch this space" as I was able at a future time to join this elite orchestra., still run by Gordon WaIker but eventually by his son Eddie, also a flautist, who had been in the early Philharmonia.

CHAPTER THREE

After a short digression into the future, I must now return to the more prosaic continuation of my progress from Cowdenbeath. Around the age of eleven or twelve I was keen enough to secretly join the local Brass Band where I was given a Baritone Horn. Obviously the secret was not kept for long because a Baritone was not an instrument which could be easily hidden, so Dad had to graciously accept this "fait accompli". The Band was the Cowdenbeath Silver Prize Band…… Do I hear something to the effect of, "Ah! Cowdenbeath! Didn't they have a football team, good for draws on Littlewoods' coupons?" -You may laugh, but it had been a prize band, probably around the same era (circa 1910 -1935) as the football team was good enough -in the First Division no less - not to be laughed at. They had a grand old man named Johnny Haldane as bandmaster who had been there for ever, was a tremendous coach and even then consistently won the Hymn Tune section (eleven consecutive years) over at the annual contest in Princess Street Gardens in Edinburgh.

I was very proud to be in the band a couple or so years later when we won this again and I subsequently did my FIRST EVER "Professional" date playing for the Annual Co-op Society school-children's treat and march through our Town to our public park. As we were short of basses I was "volunteered" to play the E flat Tuba for the first and only time. I found this to be great fun and quite hilarious, although perhaps not so for my colleagues, as the unaccustomly large mouthpiece seemed to be either sliding up my nose or down my chin as we marched! Unlike other engagements which were all amateur, the Co-op in true socialist tradition insisted on paying us. We received nine shillings (9/-) each for our services.

The Bass Trombone player left soon afterwards, probably due to my Tuba playing, although I was back on my Baritone again, - so my next leap to stardom was to be appointed Bass Trombone player. This was probably less due to exceptional talent than to the fact that being tall and lanky, -around fifteen by this time, -I had the longest

guests must have thought these English, nearly all in swimming trunks, running around at midnight and later, must indeed be mad.

As I had been party to the booking arrangements, I knew that the air tickets were normal schedule, thus, unlike charter, were changeable and decided to stay on for 2 or 3 days to see the sights. I mentioned this to a few of my pals and four of them, George Turnlund and Norris Bosworth ("Noswos") Violas, and Eric ("Brodie") Bowie and Howard Ball, Violins, begged me to "work it" for them as well. On the morning after the show we were able to wave goodbye to our hung-over and bleary-eyed mates as they boarded their coach.

CHAPTER SIXTY NINE

Harold Davison asked John F. to provide the "London Orchestra" for a trip with Sinatra to Cairo. This turned out to be a "one night stand" but what a one nighter. We played in the open air by the Sphynx alongside the Pyramids of Geza to an invited audience of thousands at a cover charge of several hundred pounds: they had a sumptuous dinner before the concert, as did the orchestra and the skies were filled all day with the private jets of the rich and "famous" flying in at Sinatra's invitation. The concert, apart from some dinner music played by a small group of us led and directed by Raymond Cohen (during which we spent most of our time trying to keep the music on our stands because of a strong wind which had blown up ... being on my own I had to enlist the help of percussion player Alan Hakin to keep mine more or less in place) was simply Frank Sinatra and his orchestra and was for a charity for Egyptian homeless of which the President was Mmme.Sadat, widow of the assassinated Premier.

We flew in the day before the concert on Egyptair regular flight, - not a charter as usual - obviously influential strings had been pulled, which was fine, except, due to a local (Cairo) "balls-up" there was a problem with ground transport and accommodation and this wasn't all sorted out until 1.30 a.m. ... the joys of touring! The rehearsal was scheduled for 9.0 a.m. (early as in all hot countries) next day (that day as it turned out) and when Sinatra learned about out rough experience the night before, he rehearsed the full orchestra for less than an hour then said, "Take your Strads out of the sun, Gentlemen, and if I can have just 20 minutes with the "Hot" (doubly appropriate) players, I would like you all to have lunch on me back at the Hotel" He also, without telling us, "picked up the tab" for our dinner at the Hotel before the Concert, neither he nor us knowing that an absolutely sumptuous supper was laid on for us at the venue - which of course, apart from a few special delicacies we couldn't eat. The wine and spirits also flowed but the orchestra were real troupers and didn't overdo it before the show, which was a fantastic success, but really "hit it" back at the Hotel by the pool. Other

arm in the band and could reach the 7th position without the handle. I loved the old G Trombone and there is no more satisfactory sound in music than blasting out a good old raspberry in the 7th position…….a real licence to fart in public! Seriously, it was a lovely instrument, unfortunately seldom seen or heard nowadays as it has been superceeded, at least in orchestras by the more modern F and B flat Trombone. It proved to be a good career move as it was the only instrument in a brass band which played in concert pitch and had its music written in Bass Clef. Even the Tubas were written in Treble Clef. I bet not even Michael Caine "knows that"!!

About this time I had started general music studies at the Carnegie Institute in Dunfermline – including piano which I found frustrating as my reading was so much faster and better than my technique. Incidentally, the Carnegie Institute has, or had, one of the finest music libraries in the country -even the B.B.C. used to consult it - and concerts were given in its Carnegie Hall. As I shall explain later, I played in concerts in the Institute Orchestra so I achieved the distinction of appearing in Carnegie Hall some 15 years earlier than I did playing with Karajan in the – "slightly" better known one in New York. Andrew Carnegie left Dunfermline as the archetypal " barefoot boy eventually becoming one of America's best known millionaires. He made his money in steel by "sweating" his workers, metaphorically and literally then, like so many others became a great public benefactor, endowing his libraries etc. in Britain and America. He also gave the magnificent Pittencrief Park to Dunfermline and the story goes that as a boy he used to look longingly through the railings at this beautiful place and eventually bought it and bequeathed it to the Town.

CHAPTER FOUR

My life has had many happy co-incidences and one occurred at that time. I met a brilliant pianist called Bert Livingstone, who had been the pianist in the Picture House Trio referred to earlier. Bert had been the most outstanding pupil at the Carnegie Institute, (winning all the important prizes) f or over 20 years, in f act since Ian White's time at the school. Ian White was the long time conductor of the B.B.C. Scottish Symphony Orchestra, a near-genius musician who "suffered" from perfect pitch, an extremely sardonic disposition and a terrible chip on his shoulder about "these people in London" who didn't appreciate his talent. He wrote a number of pieces, mostly with a Scottish flavour, such as "Donald o' the Burthens" which incorporated bagpipes in an extensive orchestral suite. Like many near geniuses his music was shall we say --*interesting.* He was a difficult man to get to know, although old Harry Baxter got on well with him, but respected for his pianistic ability and musical correctness. In later life I was invited back to Glasgow several times as a temporary replacement on a weekly basis. They didn't replace Harry as principal Double Bass for nearly three years so they were always under strength, and as I was based in London I had the full benefit of Ian's acid comments, such as, while looking in my direction, "I suppose they may not agree with this in London" -mildly annoying but also somehow quite flattering.

The co-incidence referred to before I digressed was that Bert Livingstone like many good keyboard players and arrangers, who often think from the bass, was fascinated by the Double Bass because of its unique sonorities -and had gone so far as to buy a set of strings which he used to experiment on a borrowed instrument. Most musicians either love it, or if their ear isn't sufficiently developed just ignore it. Funnily enough, Mr.Haldane, the brass band conductor, always said to the bass end of the band, "Try to sound like the Double Basses in an Orchestra.!" Bert wanted me to try it and he knew an old shoe-maker in Cowdenbeath who had played the Bass as an amateur in the P.S.A. Orchestra - Pleasant Sunday Afternoons – (funny how Placido Domingo has the same

was the first of a numbered edition in commemoration of the Queen's Silver Jubilee and as is the custom No.1 of special editions is reserved for the Chairman of the Company and this one had not been taken up and was still in the vaults. On the advice of the aforementioned Fan, John had it inscribed in Gold "To Sinatra From His London Orchestra" with the City of London Insignia. It was duly presented to Sinatra at one of the London Concerts on behalf of the Orchestra by trombonist Don Lusher - and Sinatra was visibly moved by our gesture.

He was undoubtedly the greatest artist and entertainer in his field and had that secret charisma known only to so few. We did many three week seasons with him at the R.F.H. and later the R.A.H. and he would pack these venues night after night and had that elusive gift of making everyone in his audience feel he was singing to them individually. He was heavily into the gambling scene, he owned and had interests in Casinos in Las Vagas etc. (incidentally when on tour in Europe he would take a whole floor at a prestigious hotel - e.g. The Savoy - and move Sinatra Enterprises into it) but that side apart, he was one of the few personalities in the World (Peter Ustinov being another) who was of truly international fame - and drawing power. I shall now amplify this claim by describing one of the most memorable trips I ever made.

CHAPTER SIXTY EIGHT

Music Activity Management's most important client was Harold Davison. I had known Harold in the late 40's when he had been the Manager of the Vic Lewis Band and also the Tito Burns Sextet – a fine small group with an outstanding trumpet player called …. believe it or not ….. Albert Hall. Harold went into artists' management in a big way, went to America where he formed a Company with co-incidentally the same initials M.A.M. He handled many of the big American stars on their European Trips. His client list included most fine Jazz soloists, a la Roland Kirk, and more memorably, Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Junior, Jack Jones and many others. He was partly responsible for the international success of the Dankworth Orchestra as he booked John and his band for a Sinatra English Tour as the Basie Band, who had previously played with Sinatra were unable to come.

Eventually John F. found himself booking for Harold what Sinatra called "his London Orchestra" each time he came to Europe. John would book all the leading British Jazz players such as Kenny Baker and Stan Roderick, Trumpets, Don Lusher, Trombone, Ronnie Chamberlain, lead Alto-Sax, - and I would then recommend leading string players such as Raymond Cohen, Leader, Bill de Mont, Cello, George Turnlund, Viola, and other stalwarts of the L.C.O.

Sinatra was a musician's singer, his unique phrasing learned from working in his early days with fine players in great bands such as Tommy Dorsey. He never forgot his background and just loved working with good musicians, ALL of whom thought he was marvellous and would put his dates in their diaries months ahead. In fact, the rapport was so good and as a sign of our respect and affection I suggested to John F. that we make a small presentation to him. John agreed with my idea (had been thinking along similar lines) and the regular "Boys" all made a small contribution towards it. John went to Mappin and Webb in Victoria Street in the City and we were extremely lucky because the Sales Manager was an ardent Fan of Sinatra and suggested a very special Crystal Goblet. This

name) which had been popular in days gone by. To cut a long story short, I went to see this old chap who indeed still had his old Double Bass -under his bed - and agreed to sell it to me. When he named the price I had a shock (this was still the days of a "five pound fiddle") because I thought he said "Fufty pounds", and I had nowhere near that sum. I said I couldn't any way afford fufty pounds and he said, "No, laddie, not Fufty --Fufteen!" The deal was done on the spot, I gave Bert another two or three pounds for his set of strings, and I was the proud possessor of a pretty fair German Double Bass. Actually the G (top) string broke in the middle of the night with an almighty bang which I thought was the end of the world!!

We recovered and I was on my way, as Mr. James Moody the Principal of the Carnegie Music School (and a marvellous Dickensian character) called me in for a chat - talk about co-incidence eh! - during which he asked me if I would like to take up the Double Bass as they needed another player in the school orchestra. When I said yes and I had got a Bass, he arranged for me to go over to Edinburgh once a fortnight - itself a big adventure in those days -for lessons from a professional player called Tom C. Millar.

CHAPTER FIVE

The war had started by now and I, with a close pal, volunteered for the Navy – Boy's Service. He was accepted but I was rejected (Grade 4) because, they said, "of a history of rheumatism in the family. I thought it strange as although my father and my aunts were prone to it, I felt O.K. When they sent me to a specialist I learned that because of a severe attack of rheumatic fever I had had a year or so previously, I had been left with a heart murmur -so although I was bitterly upset at "being left out", that was that and as my Dad pointed out I would come to realise I was probably lucky. I promptly joined the Auxiliary Fire Service and, although I watched two German planes being shot down in the first raid of the war on Rosyth Dockyard which was within a few miles, the first real job we had was being rushed to Glasgow to help deal with the after-math of the Clydebank bombing -the first serious "Blitz" of the war. I stayed on in Glasgow for some months helping with the reconstruction, as despite my "murmur" I was a strong lad and coped easily with the heavy building work.

Back in Cowdenbeath I again applied myself to my Bass, continuing with my lessons from Tom Millar and soon became proficient enough to get a few gigs with local dance bands. Like a Contra--Bassoon, it was reckoned if you had one you could earn a living, and if you could play it, you could earn a good one!! It was the period of the "phoney war" when apart from rationing and the blackout, the majority of people were relatively unaffected and I got a full time early evening job in the Kinema Ballroom in Dunfermline and "worked" in a factory supposedly "turning" parts for aeroplanes --God help all who flew in them.

This was when I played in my first concert in the Carnegie Hall with my present teacher from Edinburgh, Tom Millar as bumper up - and my (unknown then) future teacher in Glasgow, H.T. (Harry) Baxter. Harry was principal Double Bass in the B.B.C. Scottish Symphony and teacher of Double Bass at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in Glasgow. He was a Dunfermline man originally, and helped out

CHAPTER SIXTY SEVEN

As mentioned in a previous chapter about the L.C.O. I had formed with John Flanagan a company called Concert Artists' Representation to work in conjunction with Music Activity Management. Apart from the L.C.O., we represented various artists including well-known "Light" Music Conductor, Iain Sutherland, who incidentally introduced me to a lady Oboist who subsequently became my wife Anita. I had known John Flanagan and John Dankworth since my earliest days in London, until we went our separate ways. In fact I played in the original ""Demo" tape of the "Dankworth Seven" as Tony Russell, their other partner (a fine trombone player who unfortunately died young from Leukemia) had rung me to say their Bass Player couldn't make it and would I help out. The recording, on a home tape-recorder, was made in someone's (probably Tony's) back room.

John F. was known by his initial because we had a John D. (Dankworth) and a John H. (Honeyman) and it became John in stereo in the office where John F. and I much of the time sat opposite each other. John F. regularly booked players such as Jack Rothstein, violin, Ken Essex, viola, and myself who were all leading players indeed initially partners in the revived L.C.O. and I joked with him that he was "booking my orchestra", which led to him making the aforementioned approach.

The collaboration worked well with me booking orchestral players, mainly strings, and John F. all the "Hot" Players – as Sinatra called them. We did many films and "Jingles" (T.V. Commercials), one important client being Jeff Wayne, an American who did the music for around 50% of the Jingles produced in London at that time, also the score for "War of the Worlds" with Richard Burton as reader. This suited the L.C.O. players and other sought after players as we did most of his Jingles from 8.0 to 9.0 a.m. which meant they could go off to their "normal" sessions etc. which always started at 9.30 or 10.00 a.m.

CHAPTER SIXTY SIX

I now intend to digress with a couple of anecdotes which although unconnected may help to lift the gloom of the previous chapter. Jimmy Galway is now an international solo artist but I first knew him as the principal flute in the L.S.O. He was always a jokey character with a strong Irish accent and of very independent spirit as shown by his own story of his audition for the Berlin Philharmonic, the upshot of which was that Karajan appointed him principal flute of the Orchestra. I met Jim again a year or so afterwards when he was on an extended holiday from the Berlin and we were playing together on some date or other (I believe at the Albert Hall) and I asked him how it was going. His reply was vintage Galway. "It's lovely, and the first time I have played in an orchestra where I can't understand THAME!" I worked with Jimmy on later occasions when he had become an established soloist, in particular on the many recordings he made for R.C.A. with "Chuck" Gerhard and he always had that fine sense of humour and marvellous confidence in his playing.

The other story concerns the time when my then wife and I had "fixed" the orchestra for a season with the Kirov Ballet at the Festival Hall, produced by the ubiquitous Victor Hockhauser. The two conductors of the Company were also both named Victor and I often acted as unofficial interpreter with my schoolboy German. One of them was short and tubby and a rather serious and dour character, the other was tall and slim with a more relaxed manner. One day I mentioned to the thinner one that the orchestra's nickname for them was "Vic Thick" and "Vic Thin". He laughed and said, "ALSO in Moscow!" Musicians' humour is obviously as international as their music. There was a sad side to this engagement as well as this was when their prima ballerina "defected". The Company had not been allowed abroad for ten years because of Nureyev's defection in Paris. Here it was happening again and the two Vics and the Company Manager had no doubt that they would be blamed and it probably meant the end of their careers on their return.

as did other pros by "bumping up" (strengthening) various string sections in local orchestras. This has always been and still is a regular practice with amateur orchestras world-wide. Even the very large orchestra which plays for the celebrated Verona open air Opera season each summer is composed of local amateur and semi-pro players, Butchers and Bakers etc. who practise throughout the year and have Principal Players from La Scala, Milan, to lead the sections for performances.

The Tenor Sax player in the Kinema Ballroom was Joe Temperley. There was also a. brilliant musician of Italian parentage who played great trumpet: he was a "natural" who also played very good Sax and Clarinet, had started as a Violinist and was also pretty good on Accordion. His name was Horace (Oreste) Demarco, was around the same age and we were great pals. Somehow Joe had been "discovered" and offered a job in the exclusive Piccadilly Club in Glasgow and he told me they were looking for a Bass Player. Consequently, I did an audition one afternoon and got the job. Joe became quite a star, eventually went to America where he played with many famous bands, including, now on Baritone Sax, some years with Duke Ellington. He now comes back to Scotland fairly regularly and I read that he is still a big name in Glasgow.

The band at the Piccadilly was a five piece, -Piano, Bass, Drums, Tenor Sax and Trumpet. The pianist was the bandleader - a bit flowery in playing and temperament. The drummer was a great guy, name of Johnny Fellowes, who was the epitome of a "wee Glasgow baucle". Think of a cockney-type with a Glasgow accent. Johnny really showed me the real Glasgow of Barrowland, the Gorbals, "Parkheid" etc. and funnily enough he was the nephew of Horace Fellowes -a much posher branch of the family - who was the senior string tutor at the Athenaeum (Royal Scottish Academy). Horace had been a famous soloist and leader of Covent Garden Orchestra for many years between the wars. He lived to be 101, and to celebrate his 100th birthday gave a series of recitals, one each in three different places. He had only a small column in "The Scotsman" when he died. How we revere our Artists in Britain eh!

when you consider the fuss made of shady politicians and “business executives”. I got on famously with Horace and after the Orchestra class every Friday used to carry his “Gladstone” bag to the station when he walked down Buchanan Street to catch his train to his home in the borders. The bag always had a particular musical clink as he enjoyed “a wee dram”. Now there may he a clue to his longevity -sez he hopefully!

Johnny Fellowes knew all the most important Glasgow gangsters, the biggest of whom then was Finlay Hannah who, as poacher -turned gamekeeper, ran the bouncers at Green's Playhouse. Lots of Yankee servicemen came there, occasionally rowdy -- but Finlay and his boys had their own methods of keeping the lid on things so there was never any real trouble. He and his boys loved musicians, who could do no wrong, and anything you wanted - Finlay could get it. I had a couple of lengths of finest 21oz wool worsted (very scarce) from Finlay which were made into beautiful bespoke suits. My Dad, now a retired invalid, loved them -but nearly choked to death when he heard how much the tailor had charged!

The main reason for my going for the Piccadilly job was that it made it possible for me to study at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music -the Atheneum. I had Bass lessons from Harry Baxter, attended all possible classes and most important for me, played in five orchestras each week. I had by then determined to become a “serious” professional Double Bass player so this was invaluable experience, which I later learned that my contemporaries in London Colleges didn't have the opportunity of getting. Apart from the Senior Academy Orchestra on Fridays with Horace Fellowes, there was the “Bach” Orchestra which specialised in choral works including modern ones, and the “Concerto” Class - an orchestra which accompanied advanced students who were having a go at concertos. Furthermore, as we were an out college of the University, we were expected to rehearse with the University Orchestra every Tuesday and as there was only one other Double Bass student at the Atheneum, (wee Dick Campbell) we were

I was at the bottom of the wooden stairs behind the stage when Charles eventually came off and I said to him (in retrospect not the cleverest thing to say to a friend at that moment), “Charles, if ever you are asked to do the radio programme when you are asked for your most embarrassing moment -- you have just had it!” He simply went off to his own room muttering, “I’ll never do it again, I’ll never do it again!”

This episode goes to prove that music isn’t always about success and like life itself, sometimes has its unforeseen and undeserved disasters.

having their interval. They had played the first half without a Bass ... made me feel important when they admitted how much they had missed it. Less important but very conspicuous, however, when I had to walk across the stage (under these glorious but at that moment overbright chandeliers) carrying my Bass to a round of sympathetic (or as I felt then, satirical) applause from the audience.

It seemed that what had happened had been explained to the Committee of the Music Society and the Alpirsburg 2nd half (Mozart etc.) had been offered in place of the printed programme but they insisted that this famous Englische Kammer Orchester should play the Englische Kammer Musik listed on the programme. This was "Les Illuminations" by Britten and Lennox Berkley's "Symphony for Strings" - interesting pieces, especially the fabulous "Illuminations" which most of us had played in better circumstances. Although fairly difficult they were well within the grasp of a group like this. However, we hadn't even looked at the music and had not played it for years and never with Charlie Groves or the soloist. She was an American girl called Carmen ? who was very good, realised we were in difficulty and used all her considerable acting ability in an attempt to distract attention from some of the cacophony that was going on. We just about managed to struggle to the end of this masterpiece by Britten. Suffice it to say, if the Britten was disastrous, the Berkeley was catastrophic.

This piece was new to most of the orchestra and with no rehearsal there were moments when, for instance, the tune would be in the Bass line and I would launch into it only to find the cellos weren't with me, - they would then realise where they should be and join in, by which time assuming I must be wrong because, of lack of support I would have stopped. As similar things were happening over in the treble side, I leave the result to the reader's imagination. We shuddered to a finish with Charles Groves (who had virtually been playing everyone's part with his marvellous gestures) looking as if death would be a happy release. Charles did his best to milk some applause from the audience but they were a knowledgeable lot and any applause could only have been sympathy.

welcome in all of these orchestras, spoiled by the fuss made of us and in danger of an early attack of "Swollen Head". This was probably kept in control because there were some brilliant musicians around - my friend Bill McGuffie of whom more later, and a splendid blind girl pianist to mention only two. The senior key-board teacher was Frederick Lamond, -previously the internationally famous soloist known simply as "Lamond". There were also some excellent musicians, both professors and scholars in the University Orchestra ….. e.g. the English professor led the 2nd violins and one of the most outstanding oboists I have heard was Professor of Mathematics. There was also a pianist who played in a well-known dept. store who was the hero of every musician and student in Glasgow. His name was George Bowie and he was absolutely worshipped by all who knew him.

Last I must mention the Trumpet player in the Piccadilly band. Jim Morgan was a big Aberdonian who was nearly blind, but an amazing Trumpet player and all round musician. He played, by ear, excellent though technically limited piano. He had played Guitar, hence his great harmonic sense, had played Drums professionally and had a fine singing voice. On top of this he had a near perfect memory, could memorise any tune with all correct harmonies after one or two hearings, and used an individual non-pressure method of playing his "Holton" trumpet/cornet which gave him a range of notes higher and with better dynamics than anyone I have ever heard. All the touring band-leaders who came to Green's Playhouse (just round the corner) came to hear Jim and he had countless offers of lead Trumpet jobs. The idea would have been for Jim to learn and memorise the lead parts and play only when they wanted that extra brilliance,- but like George Bowie and many other good musicians at that time Jim preferred to stay in Glasgow where he felt at home, although his elder brother Jock was a violinist and lead trombone in a well known broadcasting band in London directed by Charles Shadwell.

I loved my time in Glasgow; I was just at the age when one could enjoy the excitement of a big city and I had the best of both worlds, but the real world beckoned and at the age of 21 it was time to think of London and the real opportunities. Harry Baxter reckoned he had taught me as much of the basics as he could and if I wanted to progress further I had to go to Jim Merrett in London. It is funny, looking back, unlike nowadays, we had no fear of not finding a job but could up sticks and go almost anywhere. As it happened, my pal Joe Temperley had started playing with a mad "Big Band", -ten brass and five saxes a la Stan Kenton run by a crazy "amateur" called Tommy Sampson. They were based in Edinburgh in a Ballroom down Leith Walk and were shortly to leave and go on tour, heading towards London. Their Bass player did not want to leave Edinburgh so it was agreed that I should join them (I think in Newcastle) on their way south. This suited me admirably as I had a week's work -booked through the Glasgow Branch of the Musicians' Union -playing for "The Mikado" in Perth, which was only 23 miles from home in Cowdenbeath, then I could join Tommy Sampson's band en route to London where it was my intention to remain whilst they went off on tour again. I was with them for only three weeks, but had a whale of a time, despite living from hand to mouth. The band had literally to be bailed out of their digs some mornings by Tommy who came round to pay the land-ladies when he had sorted out the previous night's takings. I could write a whole chapter about this short period and the camaraderie of the band. Who ever had some money helped the others, and we regularly slept in the coach on return from overnight one-night stands!

CHAPTER SIXTY FIVE

It was agreed there was not much point in rehearsing the first half material which we had already rehearsed and played, so, because I spoke a little "Schule Deutche" (and Charles had none) I elected to go back with him. I suggested we first go back via the Hotel where we could telephone the Alpirsbach people and warn them to get the music ready for us and some sixth sense prompted me to pick up my tails so that if the worst happened I could change in the van on our way back.

Charles was a very steady driver so he trundled along at what seemed like pedestrian speed for the full two and a half hours making me more anxious by the agonising minute. I had a Volkswagen Caravanette at home (practically the same vehicle as Charles' van) so when we got to Alpirsbach I suggested that he drop off and collect the music whilst I drove to a nearby garage to fill up with petrol. My hope was that, having taken over the wheel I could carry on driving. Unfortunately, Chas., being the steady chap he was insisted that it was all his responsibility so he must drive. There is an autobahn nearby, which, although making a great sweep around, I reckoned we could have made better time by using it, but Charles again ruled this out so we trundled on at a slow rate on the old road.

Most people at some time have had "one of these days" but ours was unbelievable. We suddenly came up to a traffic jam on what had been relatively quiet country roads and after a half hour wait we got past the cause which was that a fire engine had gone into a ditch and another fire engine was trying to pull it out. Normally, if we had been late for a session and invented such an excuse, no one would have believed it. It was a. Sunday, there was not much traffic about but we had found probably the only traffic jam in South Germany at that time. The concert was billed for 8.0'clock; we eventually drove into the great courtyard of Ludwig's Palace (built by the "mad" king of that ilk as a copy of Versailles) as the tower clock struck NINE. We made our way over to the Concert Hall to find the orchestra

CHAPTER SIXTY FOUR

Two violinists, Lionel Bentley, who was leading and Dennis East, leading the 2nds, and myself were in the midst of recordings with Menuhin at Kingsway Hall. There was a two and a half day break in these sessions and as luck would have it the German trip actually fitted in. The three of us rushed from Kingsway after a morning session to Heathrow where we caught a plane to Bonn where Chas.Gregory (who had gone ahead in his Volkswagen van) was waiting for us. The rest of the orchestra (in total 15 strings) had travelled directly to Alpirsbach. We then travelled with Chas.G. (some 6 hour journey) in his van arriving at a locked hotel in the "wee sma' oors" when everyone had gone to bed. We could get no response from the staff but luckily Boris Rickelman (Principal Cellist) was a light sleeper, and came down to let us in. Our rooms had been reserved so we were able to get our heads down.

Alpirsbach is in the mountains of the Black Forest and the concert took place in the Cloisters of a Monastery. Everything went well except one odd thing; being a closed order, the monks were all locked in. Consequently a. strange ritual went on as one of the order went about with a huge bunch of keys at his waist locking and unlocking every door as we moved in and out. Charles Gregory had kept the music for the second half of the Ludwigsburg concert in a separate folder and in the confusion caused by this "jailor" shepherding us around after the concert, which had been packed and a huge success, he left this folder lying somewhere.

The morning after the Alpirsbach concert was beautifully sunny. The orchestra set off by coach but because we were good friends and it was more convenient with the Double Bass, I elected to travel with Chas.Gregory. We had a glorious relaxing drive through the Black Forest scenery, (some two and a half hours) arriving at the Ludwigsburg Hotel in good time for a leisurely lunch then onto the Palace for the rehearsal at 3.0.p.m. It was only then, when we had all assembled in the fantastic Concert Hall that Chas.G. suddenly realised he had left the music behind. **CONSTERNATION** - to put it mildly.

CHAPTER SIX

My main objective was to stay and study in London and I had a letter of introduction to Jim Merrett from Harry Baxter which I didn't really need as I had a Bass player friend in London who had come to Glasgow with one of the many "name" bands, all of whom played at Green's Playhouse at some time. He had had some lessons from Jim so he made the introduction for me. Jim took me on and I had a lesson once a fortnight for a couple of years at Dinely Studios off Baker Street where he booked a room two days per week to accomodate his many pupils. We were given one hour each at a fee of one guinea.

I earned enough money from doing dance gigs, short theatre seasons, small orchestral concerts etc. to pay for my digs, my lessons and a wee bit of spending money. My digs were in Elgin Crescent, just off Ladbroke Grove, by Portobello Road - later to become the famous antique market but at that time simply a fruit and vegetable market. The digs were run by an Irish lady and were a veritable United Nations. My pal Sammy Stokes shared with me. He was Bass player with the Ted Heath band and was the only Englishman. There were two Indians who would take over the kitchen on many weekends and cook lovely Indian meals for us all, a chap from the Gold Coast, a Welsh jazz pianist Dylwyn Jones who later went to America, and a Chinese chap who knew all the Chinese restaurant owners and actually gave me an introductory note in Chinese when he left so that Sammy and I could always get good attention if we went to a strange Chinese restaurant. It was a good time and I learned to drive there because a Drummer pal who lived near had a Ford Eight Coupe and he used to let me drive it. Not many people could drive then and it was a good asset and fairly soon afterwards I was able to buy my first car – a 1937 "Flying" Standard 12. This was a great boon as hitherto I had to "hump" my Bass to the nearest tube station. In fact when in Glasgow one had to use a tram car AND had to acquire a pass which gave permission to carry large items such as Cello, Bass, Push-chair etc. The main problem was you had to run round the front of the tram into the

driver's compartment as you weren't allowed to clutter up the boarding platform -and quickly (or you were cursed at) tie the Bass to the upright pole then run back around the tram to get on, as it was forbidden to go through from the driver's to the passengers' compartment. Some of the drivers used to delight in starting the tram before one had quite got round and one had to really move, otherwise the Bass might end up at the University without its player ... a great joke for the driver but not so funny for struggling and out-of-breath budding Bass players!

It was a common sight in London then to see the end of a tube train carriage, which always had two fold-down seats, taken up by a Double Bass. This worked O.K. but one had to arrange one's trips to avoid the rush hours. In those days there were actually rush "hours" -morning and evening, not like today in London when all day is a rush hour. Unfortunately I was seduced by the ease of all this and joined a couple of touring "name" bands, which was enormous fun in that "glamorous" era of big bands but which I realised later was not really achieving my ambition.

CHAPTER SIXTY THREE

Keeping my hand in with chamber orchestras, I played in the Boyd Neel orchestra which had been revived by Charles Gregory - now a "fixer" but originally a fine horn player with the R.P.O. amongst others. Charles got some nice work for the band, one engagement being a season of Handel Opera at Sadlers Wells with Charles Farncombe conducting. Most enjoyable, a fine chorus, excellent conductor and soloists among whom was a soprano who more or less came to fame during this season. She was Joan Sutherland with whom I was to have the pleasure of working many times later and who blossomed into the finest coloratura in the world thanks to the admirable coaching of her husband Richard Bonynge. Ricci was a. fine pianist and though somewhat diffident as a conductor, very musical indeed and his later partnership with the superb National Philharmonic produced many glorious Opera recordings with Joan in starring roles alongside Pavarotti and other fine singers.

On the lighter side, and going back to Boyd Neel, we did several concerts and B.B.C. broadcasts with Boyd when he came back to England for a Sabbatical from his post at Toronto University and one of the engagements was a nice tour of major venues in Switzerland and Germany ending in Berlin with a broadcast concert for Berlin Radio (Freisender Berlin?). There should have been two more concerts, one in Alpirsbach and the other in Ludwigsburg but Boyd could not fit them into his schedule so they were later undertaken as a separate "tourlet", which I now confess became the worst musical event I have ever been involved in.

Charles Groves, a fine conductor and marvellous accompanist (a great skill on its own) and immensely popular with all musicians for his manner, musicality and ability to rehearse in a most constructive fashion, normally getting the most out of the time available, undertook this engagement. We had an extra rehearsal in London before leaving and as the first half of each concert was the same, Charles concentrated on the programme for the first concert (Alpirsbach) in the knowledge that he would have the whole rehearsal in Ludwigsburg for the second half of that programme.

number of years George came over from America as assistant and consultant to Charles ("Chuck") Gerhard who would spend several months in London recording all kinds of music as head of recording in Europe for R.C.A.

Chatting to George in the late 70's, again during recordings at Walthamstow Town Hall, I was remarking on the progress of recording since my first experience of 78's where we had to mark our music with a line at which we had to stop at the end of each three minute section. Then came L.P.'s, a wonderful shot in the arm for recording musicians as the whole repertoire was now to be recorded in the new medium. Then came stereo ... (N.B. the first stereo recording made by E.M.I. was on Feb. 7th 1955 in Kingsway Hall: the work was Prokofiev Symphony No.7 conducted by Malko) ... with its equally good effect for us - and I truly believe for listeners in general. Later, C.D.'s - and these particular sessions were being recorded on the new digital (as opposed to analogue) equipment which was unbelievably clear and precise. George was explaining digital to me and said they were already experimenting with a technique which would accommodate whole symphonies on a unit the size of a credit card.

CHAPTER SEVEN

I played around (literally) in this scene for a couple of years and had some great experiences - one or two I must relate before moving on. The first of these big bands was the Vic Lewis Orchestra (again modelled on Stan Kenton) with its own composer/arranger Ken, who supplied original pieces apart from the Kenton stuff, was a real Cambridge boffin type and a great chap. He was into "Ham" radio in a big way and had a 1000 Kw. outfit which had been commandeered by the Ministry of Defence during the war.

One trip we made in early 1949 was to entertain the British Army on the Rhine (BAOR to older readers) in the British section of occupied Germany. We toured army camps for five weeks mainly around Hamburg -our main base, Hanover and north-west Germany. This was my first experience of "abroad" and a real eye-opener, despite the unbelievable destruction of the war everywhere in this industrial heartland, to feel the underlying strength of Germany. Their work ethic and power of recovery was, despite their humiliation and poverty, becoming already apparent. It was a period of near complete disruption of services (other than for us) and breakdown of financial order when the black market was the order of things. Coffee, soap, cigarettes, chocolate, clothing and other commodities were the currency. After a meal we did not leave a tip in money but simply two cigarettes, which would then be used as currency by the waitress. I actually "bought" a beautiful leather briefcase for ... ten Players' cigarettes!

My next trip overseas was to the first ever Paris Jazz Festival in 1949 in la Salle Pleyel. The Vic Lewis Orchestra as "House" band opened the show each night and played again to open the second half. This was quite hilarious as half the audience were "Trad" fans and the other half was into the new "Be Bop" modern jazz. This last was a real eye and ear opener to all of us. Each half of the audience applauded their own favourites and booed the others, but all combined to boo our "progressive big band". It was all great good fun and I was delighted to meet many of the Bebop stars such as

Charlie Parker, Kenny Clark et al down in Les Caves in the student Quartier after the concerts, where they used to "Jam" well into the wee sma' hours. One of these stars was pianist Al Haig (Scion of the Whisky Family in America) who was the only white guy in the Parker sextet – a typical American College boy type, very laconic, who just loved his jazz and chose to live with all his black colleagues.

We flew to Paris in a Dakota which was another exciting first for me, although I soon became fairly blase about flying as I subsequently flew in all kinds of planes such as York and Lancaster Bombers, Douglas "Skymaster" and commercial planes from "Island Hoppers" to D.C.10's and Jumbo Jets.

My next trip of note was with Frank Weir's band. Frank was a solo clarinet player in the style of Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw, and his big moment each night was the Artie Shaw Clarinet Concerto which he normally played very well but for reasons which will later become apparent on this tour he was not always able to reach the top note of the last solo run. He had been a. member of the pre-war Ambrose Orchestra and very keen on jazz. Bert Ambrose's orchestra was very much a smooth socialite style orchestra but he had all the best West-end players, most of whom managed to curb their "pure" jazz instincts "for the money". One night Frank couldn't resist "taking off" on a jazz improvised solo, after which "Ammie" turned to the nearest player and said, "What on earth is the matter with him?" The reply being, "He has got The Message, Bert!", Bert said, "Well, give him a message from me. He finishes on Friday!" The Frank Weir band of five Saxes, one Trumpet (Bruce Bain, another Scot, brother of the famous Trombonist Jock of that ilk), Piano, Bass and Drums was really first class - and the Pianist was my very close friend Bill McGuffie.

I must again digress for a moment; Bill McGuffie was a remarkable pianist who had been a pupil of Lamond's in Glasgow. A virtuoso from an early age, he lost one finger of his left hand in an accident while playing hide and seek with his brother. He was hiding in a

CHAPTER SIXTY TWO

One of my regular jobs during the 60's and 70's, (in fact until it was disbanded) was as principal player in the Decca "New Symphony" Orchestra… again an elite group brought together for specific recordings ranging from D'Oyly Carte Operas to accompanying Artists of renown. The most outstanding of these many engagements was probably the last ever recordings (in fact the last ever appearance as a performer anywhere) by Jascha Heifitz. Heifitz lived on for some years afterwards becoming more and more reclusive. I have mentioned earlier my great respect and admiration for Heifitz and this was completely fulfilled by his marvellous performances on these sessions.

His reputation was such that "leaders" such as Hugh Bean "worked" their way in and happily sat at the back of the section and others such as "Manny" Hurwitz and Bob Masters asked me when the sessions were and came out to Walthamstow and sat somewhere at the back of the Hall so they could listen. Amongst the many fine works he recorded was the "Scottish Fantasia" by Max Bruch and it is a measure of Heifitz's greatness that he rehearsed each movement separately then after listening to play backs of them he came out, nodded to Malcolm Sargent (who, despite his social climbing and nickname of "Flash Harry", was a very good accompanist and always asked for by Heifitz) to start and played the whole work through from beginning to end. He then went back into the "Box" (recording room) and shortly afterwards came out, said, "Thank you, Gentlemen"- and the session was over. He had recorded the whole work as a performance -- no patches - no corrections. This recording was originally issued backed by the Korngold Concerto, which he also played superbly, but later, (possibly because they were both very romantic) was issued with another backing.

Exemplifying that music "is a small world" some years later when I was a. member of the "National Philharmonic". I met and became friendly with George Korngold - the son of the composer. For a

the Castle is on the top of a high hill and the only access was by a narrow lane winding up between houses. I used to walk up every day, mainly for the exercise but also to study the environment, and that took 25 - 30 minutes each time. There was a large parking area outside the Castle gate (the concerts were open air in the Courtyard) but unless well timed, cars simply got stuck on the way. They organised a mini bus but as it took around 20 minutes for the round trip (barring holdups) it couldn't provide many customers. Consequently, what had seemed a good idea proved to be a disaster and we performed most nights to very small audiences and the Americans "lost their shirts" in the enterprise. It may sound cruel after that last sentence but we had a whale of a time having so many free days in the Ballearics to enjoy the marvellous scenery and the night life and restaurants.

telephone box and his brother inadvertently shut the door on Bill's hand. Lamond went to great lengths to help Bill (who had been destined for a concert career) with different fingerings for most of the pieces, - but of course a full concert career was out of the question as obviously some of the greater pieces, Liszt for example, just cannot be properly played without ten fingers. Accordingly, Bill made his career in Light music and Dance Orchestras. He still had a fantastic technique and his style was unmistakable. He was the only pianist who would take on the task of playing Art Tatum pieces for a B.B.C. memorial programme for instance. He was also a very good arranger and became so well known that he was offered the job as Music Director for M.G.M.-half the year to he spent in Hollywood and the rest in Britain. Unfortunately, although a late starter, -not until his thirties -he had become an alcoholic and he only spent one period of his contract in America and that was that.

I did a few things with Bill such as music for jingles on the old Radio Luxembourg. There was no real agreement on Radio Jingles then and a Drummer and I were paid £3 for each fifteen minute recording, of which, with Bill, we were able to "knock off" as many as nine per day including run-through time. Bill was such a fast worker that we finished up with the studio floor covered in music sheets as we got on with this rapid recording... rather like the old days of "Music While You Work", in which, because live and non-stop, the studio finished in even more mess as a quite large orchestra flashed through the material.

Bill was my best man at my first wedding, but we drifted apart largely because I got more into "serious music", then one day in the mid 80's I was trying to tune my radio in to a particular programme when on my way along the dial I heard this distinctive piano playing, obviously Bill. After the piece the announcer said, "That record was requested by Mrs.X but I am sorry to say that Bill is very ill." I am not superstitious but I thought it odd that I should hear him "out of the blue" like that and immediately rang his wife who said that he was indeed seriously ill and hadn't played for some eighteen months. I suggested he came down to Devon for a few

days for some fresh air and to my delight he accepted. We did a fair bit of sight-seeing and we invited our fine pianist friend, Ron Smith and his wife over for dinner to meet Bill. Ron confessed he had always been a great admirer of Bill and despite his reluctance as he hadn't played for eighteen months, I persuaded Bill to try our piano and he played many of his own compositions and my requests for an hour or more …. and it was as brilliant as ever. I was so pleased that I had caught that broadcast otherwise I would never have seen or heard him again. He died very shortly afterwards.

Even in death, Bill provided us with a laugh as at his funeral service, which was attended by hundreds of musicians, the parson, who was a great friend and fan of Bill's announced that the organist hadn't turned up so could someone play the organ. Over two hundred musicians in the church and the organist was missing - I ask you!! I reckoned if Bill had known he would have got out of the box and played himself. Anyhow another old pal and fine musician, Max Harris, volunteered and I thought that was rather sweet as well as Max is a Jewish boy and there he was playing all these Christian Hymns.

The trip with Frank Weir was a tour of the American Forces Zone in Germany and we were part of a concert party which we accompanied and did a few solo band spots. The party was named "Piccadilly Playtime" and was followed on the circuit by Bob Hope and his group. We had a lovely group of dancers, a couple of comedians one of whom was Spike Milligan in his pre-goon days, the other was a very funny Canadian who went back to Canada afterwards, and other "acts" including a magician. The show went like a bomb with the American troops, particularly the Chorus girls and the band's singer, a bonnie wee Scot's lass called Helen Mack. There was almost a riot as to whether we were to be entertained after the show by the Officers' or Sergeants' Mess. They settled for alternate nights which meant that most of the tour was undertaken in an alcoholic haze ... (Poor Frank!)

e.g. a week in Santander (Franco's Summer Home) with the R.P.O., a week in Athens (exactly ten years after my visit with Stravinsky) also with the R.P.O. conducted by my old clarinet playing colleague, Colin Davis. A splendid week's visit to Israel with the Philharmonia when we were able to "float" in the Dead Sea and even had a sand storm "laid on" when we visited the Negeb Desert. Also three weeks of luxury in Ibeza with a mad, but nice, American conductor who had decided, with an equally mad producer friend, to present three weeks of music in the Castle grounds.

Their idea was to present, on alternate nights, Mozart (an orchestra. of around 25 players) and Jazz concerts with Roland Kirk and his Band. As Jazz afficionados will know, Roland was a blind saxophonist of great fame and a nice man who let me into some interesting blind man's secrets. On our first meeting in the bar of the Hotel he immediately said, "You are not English (so he could recognise accents?) and you are just over six foot tall." I couldn't work that one out until he said he could tell from the height at which the voice came.

Just after chatting to Roland I noticed a big fellow who kept looking at me rather pointedly across the room. Eventually he got up and ambled over to me at the bar and I thought, "What have I done now?" and "Wish my mate Finlay Hannah of Green's Playhouse was here now." Suddenly this "Bruiser" stuck out his hand and with a big grin said, "It's Pete King you fool!" - only he didn't exactly say fool. It was over twenty-five years since I had seen Pete (he then was a good Sax player gigging around Town), but he had "filled out" a bit since then. I knew of course that he had become Ronnie Scot's partner and in fact manager of the R.S.Club. The tie up was then obvious as he was representing Roland Kirk who (as did all the top American Jazz players) always played at Ronnie's when in Europe. (Incidentally "Ronnie's" was heavily subsidised by Harold Davison of whom more anon.)

A problem, which the two Americans had not anticipated, was that

CHAPTER SIXTY ONE

Back in London I carried on with my free lance activities as before. I was now pretty well established as a principal player with a good connection and all manner of interesting engagements. I was playing regularly for Charles Katz, Sidney Sax, (the latter a. well-known violinist and "fixer" who went on to form the "National Philharmonic", of which more later) and Frank Reidy (fixer for Jack Parnell at A.T.V . and Laurie Johnson). Laurie was well known for his many fine film scores and the "Avengers" series which went on for years with Patrick McNee and a succession of female partners such as Honor Blackman, Diana Rigg et al.

We quite often on films had large orchestras involving Bass sections of 4 to 8 players (for a special sequence in "Jesus of Nazareth" I had 10) for which Frank Reidy and others would ask me to book the section. As in all professions, I was able to engage my pals (who were all fine players) and this in turn led to my being offered nice dates by them. On one occasion, on a Laurie Johnson film over 3 days (some 6 sessions) I had, apart from my regular partner, Keith Marjoram (ex co-principal of L.P.O. and R.P.O.), Gerald Drucker (principal of the Philharmonia) , Jack McCormack (principal of the R.P.O.), Jim Merrett (Professor of the Guildhall, ex Philharmonia and now co-principal of the B.B.C.S.O.) and Robin McGee (ex co-principal of L.S.O. , Professor at the Roya1 Academy and then with Neville Mariners Academy) in the same section at Denham Studios. Frank Reidy went around boasting he had a whole section of principal players and I then had a phone call from Sid Sax complaining that he cou1dn't get a principal bass for a couple of sessions as I had them all at Denham and couldn't I let someone off. Eventually it suited Gerald Drucker to do Sid's sessions so we booked Bruce Mollison (principa1 of the L.S.O.) to dep for him with us!

This nepotism meant that I often enjoyed some very nice "holidays"

We had our own Skymaster Plane.from Northolt Airport onwards which was marvellous, apart from one trip when we were caught over the Alps in a. thunderstorm... Oh Boy! This huge plane was tossed around like a matchstick and we had stornach-churning sudden drops of several hundred feet then screaming engines trying to get us back up again. (I have only ever had one other aeroplane experience like it which came many years later in South America.)

We even flew along the infamous air corridor to Berlin... something I was to do again a. few years later with the Philharmonia. World War 3 was hanging in the balance as the American airmen were "trigger happy" and were positively hoping the Ruskies would wander into their corridor.

We had as our personal escorts throughout .... the yanks do things in style ... a Major, a Lieutenant, two male Sergeants, and one female Sergeant, and some of us were given honorary rank in the U.S.Army Air Force to enable us to enter all messes and P.X.'s etc. - so f or a brief period in my life I was a Captain in the U.S.A.A.F. Apart from our own plane and our distinguished escorts who, in their informal and class free way were marvellous to get on with and who spent most of their flying time playing poker as equals, we were met by fleets of cars at every airport, driven by American service men who were living like Lords. The cars were at our disposal at all times.

One big black buck sergeant said he never wanted to go back to America as he had 75 dollars a month (some three times as much as his British counterpart) and all found. Their food and conditions were incomparably better and everything in their P.X. was at 10% of U.S. prices. Nothing was too good for "our boys over there" - in very marked contrast to the B.A.0.R.

We were billeted in the finest hotels which the yanks had commandeered for themselves, including in Wiesbaden - their headquarters during the occupation, the Hot Springs and attendants who operated them. The Masseurs and Masseuses were paid per customer, and I shall never forget one gigantic lady masseuse

carrying Frank Weir, who weighed 12 and a half stone, like a baby from his bedroom down to the baths in the basement because he was too pissed to get up but had booked in for a massage. She was determined to get her money. Even the food was "too much man!" for us with our shrunken war time rationed stomachs. If you ordered a T-bone steak, it was about two feet long, and if chicken or lobster, you got a whole one in a basket!

These guys enjoyed their "occupation" and did crazy things like making sure a plane would pick up their whisky straight from Edinburgh or oysters from Whitstable when in season. When we played in Berlin it was in the largest concert hall which again I was to visit later with Karajan. Billy had a full concert Bluthner with the extra keys to play, which he said was the piano of his life. When we went back to the hotel afterwards, however, there was an eight foot grand which he said was even better and he played it non-stop until about 3.0.a.m. whilst we were all having a boozy party. Bill was still teetotal in those days and the piano was his drugs.

The only black moment for us on the tour was when they took us on a trip to the infamous Dachau Concentration Camp -particularly depressing as a couple of our Sax players were Jewish boys and to this day I cannot forget the impression this example of unbelievable barbarity had on all of us who went there.

Needless to say, the house had a magnificent swimming pool which we were all invited to make use of and where we were joined by his two daughters in their early teens. We had races etc. and the girls loved watching a game we often played - a water-based game of jousting taken part in pairs. Alan Civil was my horse and our great rivals were Jim Brown with another horn-player on his shoulders. After a couple of hours or so in and around the pool Mr. Blankman announced supper would soon he ready and sent his black butler off who then returned with chicken and chips etc. for all of us.

We caught our plane from New York that evening and returned to London, thus ending the longest and probably the most interesting tour I had done.

CHAPTER SIXTY

The Long Island concert took place in a giant Marquee which held over 3,000 people. The Orchestra, well-known from previous visits, was rejoined by Paul Kletzki and had a rapturous reception. As next day was free, the Festival Director, a millionaire named Blankman, offered us the choice of either spending the day sightseeing in New York or relaxing at his home on Long Island Sound. Many of us had "done" New York at length on previous visits so the Orchestra was pretty evenly divided and some 30 or more accepted his invitation to his home.

The actual house (we later discovered) had been listed in a f amous international magazine as one of the finest modern houses in America. Built in split level style into the side of a hill it was large but not, as so many in America, enormous and with many interesting features including clever use of trees by outside stairways, hanging mobiles in main rooms, many levels, balconies and staircases ... also a large car port underneath with pillars and extensive grounds running down to a private beach. The grounds contained a fruit orchard, ripe peaches etc. which he asked us not to give to the horses, several of which were grazing in a fine paddock between the orchard and the beach. Obviously in America, even some horses "are more equal than others". Mr.Blankman was charming and obviously a good business man and organiser. He was a. splendid host and I had the good fortune to have a long chat with him on our walk to the beach. He told me that the Festival on its inception had been run by so-called "experts'94 invited from Europe, including a well-known Englishman, but that they had proved to he very "airy-fairy" and quite incompetent in most respects such as fire precautions - escape doors in the Marquee for instance, so he had taken over running the details himself. He was very relaxed, with no "side" and he reminded me of my brief meeting with Rothschild at his house in the Solent, which, I suppose, is our equivalent of Long Island Sound.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Back in London, I did some Theatre work for the Hylton office in shows like "Paint Your Wagon" newly over from America at His Majesty's Theatre. This was very appropriate as I was able to watch part of the Coronation procession of Queen Elizabeth from a balcony of the theatre which then had to change its name to "Her" Majesty's. I did "Most Happy Fella" and other shows as I had now got "my nose in" with the Hylton office and was able to fix my own terms such as being allowed to take a couple of shows off each week if/as necessary - e.g. if I had the offer of a broadcast or recording session, and could provide a suitable deputy who had "watched the show through". This reminds me of the "3 card trick" that was played by a Bass player who was fairly ordinary but very artful. I had a call from this chap to say he had heard I would he needing a deputy from time to time, that he knew and had spoken to the "fixer" and the conductor and they had both said he could be my dep. providing that was O.K. with me. I assumed that if he knew Vic (the fixer) and Cyril (the conductor) and they had approved, he must be O.K. so I got him to watch the show through and gave him the dates. Yes! you have guessed what is coming! Some time later Cyril said, "Who *is* that chap?" and I said, "I thought you recommended him" Cyril said, "No, he told me YOU had". We then checked with Vic and realised we had all been taken in. He was adequate enough (old enough to be my father and with a son who was a good jazz player) so he carried on doing my depping and in fact took over the job when I moved on to pastures new.

It was whilst I played in the pit at Her Majesty's that I was "discovered" by Jack Hylton himself. Most people will know that Jack Hylton had the most famous band of them all between the wars. Like Ambrose, ("a band of prime ministers"), he engaged only the very best musicians, many of whom were household names and several went on to form their own famous bands. Later, Jack, through his theatre management company became a millionaire but he still turned up at rehearsals for new shows and could give conductors and producers a hard time if they seemed to him to he

wasting time with airy-fairy ideas or general bull-shit .... of which there is an enormous and steady supply in the theatre world. When a show was up and running he also used to slip into each of his various theatres at least once a week and quietly stand at the back of the stalls listening to the show. He may not have been a. very good musician but he knew what he liked and what was good of its type. I would go as far as to say, his secret was that his taste was exactly that of "Joe Public". He was a straightforward Yorkshireman and he never lost this ability to put his finger on what the public would like despite all his fame and success.

After one of his visits to Her Majesty's I had a cryptic note handed to me by Vic Sullivan (the fixer for all the Hylton theatres) asking me, under great secrecy to turn up with my instrument at the Crush Bar of the Palladium on a certain afternoon a few days ahead. When I turned up at the appointed time l found a very large band gathering together with many famous musicians in it. Billy Ternent and Freddie Bretherton (well-known arrangers and bandleaders) and star instrumentalists such as Kenny Baker (trumpet) and Jock Cummings (drums) both of whom had been stars with the Hylton band before the war when still in their teens. The reason I was there was because the Double Bass player in the band had been Bruce Trent who was also the singer and eventually went on to make quite a name for himself as a musical comedy star. (The band also had a tuba player who played alongside the String Bass. He was Clem Lawton, a Yorkshireman who had gone back to Leeds when the Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra was formed and whom I had recently met there and was to meet again when he came down from Leeds to join the Philharmonia a few years later.)

Bruce hadn't played Double Bass for twenty years and the original plan had been for me to stand in for him at this rehearsal and he would then do the show, which was the following evening, and ... the Year's big secret – The Command Performance. Bruce said he couldn't play - "After twenty years my fingers wouldn't stand it!" and would I like to do the show as well, and if so he would fix it with Jack, who then came over (first time I had met him in person),

This apart, most of us had a wonderful time going out to "Pirate" beach clubs, (Cap'n Kidd et al). We loved the smaller Islands (Tobago) and even in Jamaica some of us hired a taxi who took us right over to the other (quieter) side of the Island, through all the beautiful lush vegetation to a Real "Paradise" Beach. We left the Caribbean for New York (having completed the circle) but instead of being an anti-climax this proved to be most enjoyable as our concert was the Finale of the Long Island Festival.

region I was in) man myself I had no idea there were so many Rums from all the different Islands, from the clear to the very dark -again, like the variety of Malts from over the Highlands and Islands. In the interests of Science I felt obliged to carry out research into this subject so threw myself wholeheartedly into it and gained knowledge which proved to be of great value on my later trip (already briefly described) to the Caribbean, which, with a smaller orchestra made more islands accessible.

In this first concert in Trinidad, Sir John, whose enthusiasm for liquid refreshment was matched only by his conducting, became so carried away, during one moment of Elgar's "Introduction and Allegro" that he virtually disappeared below his music stand. The Orchestra, as always, carried on regardless and he recovered enough to catch up and finish the piece.

At a fine reception supper afterwards a charming dusky lady asked me point blank, "Does Sir John drink?" and I had to hastily improvise by saying the heat and humidity affected some of us more than others. When the same lady was asked by my colleague on her other side (during a. general discussion about the Islands) if she "often went over to Jamaica" she replied, "Do you often go over to Moscow? - the distance is about the same". Another lesson learned. We do tend to lump the Caribbean Islands together. In fact I found the Barbadians and Trinidadians less aggressive and more easy going than Jamaicans and as different as Aberdeen to the Channel Islands.

The other concerts went as well as ever and the only unpleasant experience was one of the violinists had his wrist-watch slipped off by a boy in Kingston Jamaica. When reported to the Police and that the boy had run round the corner with it, the Police simply said he was lucky not to have given chase as the boy's larger accomplices would most likely have been waiting to thump him and rob him completely. This was before the common expression "mugging" had come in but these guys were obviously well advanced in their practise for their future career.

said that would be fine and "Call me Jack!" The numbers (one of which was a song for Bruce) had been arranged by Billy Ternent and Freddie Bretherton (who also played keyboards) so, as had been normal practice in the past were rehearsed by them then Jack simply "fronted" the band for performances.

The secret was well kept and the appearance of the band brought the house down. Next morning the papers were full of it and the Daily Express filled its whole front page with the story, headlined "Jack's Back" above a half page picture of the final curtain of the Command Performance. Appearance at the Royal Command Performance is, of course an honour, so consequently unpaid. But, typical Jack Hylton, everyone who had taken part in the band's performance received a £5 note -and an invitation to supper that evening at the Mayfair Hotel. One great joke for me here was that I had played in the band at the Mayfair for 5 or 6 weeks before going into Her Majesty's so I was able to enjoy "Lording it" as a guest. The party was quite hilarious, the wine flowed and again, typical Hylton, he arranged with the management and paid the hotel band a "few bob" to stay on until about 2.0.a.m One of the Sax players was called Freddie Sweitzer (who became a star in music hall as "Freddie the Clown".) He would finish his act by dancing and playing two saxophones simultaneously. Also a big feature of his act had been a. mad solo Can-can , so as the night warmed up he was persuaded to do this and to encore it to enormous applause. I should think a lot of guests in the Mayfair that night were getting a lot more entertainment value than they had expected. The very much down-side of this was that Freddie Sweitzer died of a heart attack two days later.

Thinking of my brief spell in the band at the Mayfair, the singer engaged when we started was Alma Cogan, who was not too bad but was sacked in the second week because she had no real repertoire, -only knew about 3 or 4 songs. She went on to become very well known. The band-leader was a trumpet player called Greisha Farfel who had been lead trumpet with name broadcasting bands and had perfect pitch. Alan Claire (who was the pianist) and I

decided to play a trick on him one night which fell decidedly flat. We started each night by playing a tune in B flat and after the 1st chorus Greisha would leap on the stage and take over with his trumpet. This night we started in B major and waited for the fun to start. Greisha simply played the
chorus through and when I said afterwards, "Didn't you notice anything different? he simply said, "No. What?" We had forgotten and he certainly proved how good was his sense of pitch as he simply played in the key he had heard ….. P.S. B major is a bloody hard key on a B flat trumpet anyhow.

On one of the weeks there we had a cabaret which consisted of two people, Larry Adler and a fantastic dancer called Paul (?) who was then a tall handsome middle-aged man who specialised in balletic tap dancing and was reputed to have been the model for Fred Astaire. Paul danced all round the room and Larry accompanied him at the piano (playing Blues) solo and with the band and of course also playing his harmonica. The B.B.C. had us all along to "Ally Pally" -Alexandra Palace - to do a T.V. show .... probably one of the last from that famous venue but another "first" for me. I remember, in my ignorance, being astonished that to produce a show with only two Stars and a five piece band there were some nineteen people in the studio moving things around, not counting engineers, director and assistants in the balance
room.

Greisha, who was Jewish but married to a Christian girl, (they had a lovely little daughter) lived less than half a mile from my digs in Elgin Crescent and l continued to see a lot of him and his wife and mentioned that I was looking for a flat of my own. He immediately took me to see a friend of his, a Mr. Beams, who had premises in Goldhawk Road, Shepherds' Bush, very near the Lime Grove T.V.Studios and Shepherds' Bush Empire which later became studios. Mr. Beams, also Jewish, had arrived in England with only the clothes on his back and had started in business selling ladies' lingerie. He developed the business rapidly, soon had the shop in Goldhawk Road, (and a branch shop) and employed twelve women

CHAPTER FIFTY NINE

The flight from Rio was another "experience". We flew overland for the first few hours and marvelled at the extent and majesty of the jungle which just "stretched forever". Someone actually said, at that time, there was more jungle in Brazil than in the rest of the World put together.

I don't know if this was a regular route or a "treat" from our pilot - something they regularly did - but when he picked up the Amazon he flew along it to the Delta thence out to sea. The Delta is around 200 miles wide (composed of myriad riverlets) and even more astonishing, when it meets the sea (the Atlantic) the force of all this water creates a visible stain from the silt stretching for 200 miles beyond the coast.

We travelled on to the Caribbean, landing in Trinidad where we were to give our first concert. On entering the Airport lounge we were taken to a special bar which had a "River of Rum" - Rum actually flowing from an artificial waterfall (Rumfall?!) and along a stream beyond which the staff were offering unlimited John Collinses etc. etc. We then staggered out of the air conditioned lounge into the usual "wall" of heat and humidity where a large Steel Band were playing to greet us.

In our honour they played Sibelius' Finlandia and movements from a Beethoven Quartet as well as traditional Calypsos etc. Astonished was the only word for our enjoyment of this concert as they were marvellous. We found out later they were the "Old Oak" (Rum) Band, and were trained by a German Bandmaster and were the winners of the competition run and sponsored by the various Rum Companies from all over the Caribbean ... rather like our Scottish and North Country Brass Bands were sponsored by firms and collieries etc.

Being a Malt (or Cognac or Claret or Burgundy or wines of the

When I mentioned that I would like to go to a traditional restaurant (which I try to do everywhere) they took me to a splendid place outside the City where the ambience and food was delightful. Even more so were the staff of waitresses, who were all light brown skinned beauties (what in pre- P.C. days we called Octaroons) and I found it hard to concentrate on the excellent food as I was mentally eating the waitresses. All in all I had a f abulous time and I was reluctant to leave Rio and these beautiful people.

We had supper together after our last concert and I took my ex-Glaswegian girl-friend home in a taxi. We had become quite close in this short time but I was a married man and a bit old-fashioned (particularly in today's climate) I suppose, but when she phoned me at the Hotel later and suggested we meet again, I felt like Pinkerton in Madame Butterfly and despite ribald encouragement ("We'll pay for your taxi!" etc.) from my colleagues, I had to say we had a very early flight so it wasn't possible.

in the basement making the garments. When he had problems with supplies of the material (from Ireland) he bought machines, taught himself, then employees and produced everything from the yarn to the point of sale. He married his shop manager and they lived in the flat above the shop, but now as they had adopted a baby he had bought a house in Kenton, North London, which was being refurbished (somewhat garishly I must add, complete with "Chinese" room in the roof) and he wanted a tenant for the flat. He was a classical music fanatic so when Greisha told him of my Academy background he was delighted to air his knowledge in this area and I was even more delighted to go along with him and occasionally flatter him by admitting not to know a lot of things he did.

He decided I was just the chap for the flat. (He really only wanted someone he could trust to be on the premises at night) and let me have it for an unbelievable £3 per week. It was fully furnished, Lounge, Bedroom, Kitchen and Bathroom and included all heating and lighting which of course went through the shop meters. It had its own door at the side of the shop entrance but I did suffer a bit of leg-pulling from my colleagues about my bachelor pad in a ladies' lingerie shop.

CHAPTER NINE

A fine alto sax player, Tommy Bradbury, who had been lead alto in the famous war time "Squadronaires", the R.A.F. Dance Orchestra., and with whom I was playing in one of the Hylton shows, recommended me to Bert Ambrose. The Squadronaires had been formed around seven members of Ambrose's Orchestra, who "joined up" into the R.A.F. at Uxbridge They were players such as George Chisholm (trombone), Jock Cummings (drums), Tommy Mcquater (trumpet), Tommy Bradbury and others. Ambrose was taking a band into the select "Ciro's" Club, at that time still probably the most exclusive club in the world. (All the waiters were head waiters in their own right and the wine butlers were connoisseurs.) Ammie offered me a six months contract at £18 per week - 50% more than I was earning -plus broadcasts etc. so although it was not quite what I intended it had a certain cachet and the money was just what I wanted to buy my first car. Temptation was too strong, I accepted and fairly soon bought my 1937 "Flying" Standard 12 for £300. It is strange to understand nowadays how scarce cars were then, but few new ones were being made and most of the pre-war ones had been laid up "for the duration". People who still owned a car could get the original pre-war price for them.

Ambrose was a real character and had been, as a name, probably second only to Jack Hylton before the war. He still had a magnificent flat in Grosvenor Square - in his wife's name! (had had a chauffeur driven Rolls) and a suite of offices in Ablemarle Street, just off Piccadilly from where he also acted as agent f or well-known singers and artistes. He had previously shared his time between Monte Carlo & exclusive restaurants and clubs in London and at one, time was part owner of one with another famous band-leader. Unfortunately he was an inveterate gambler and managed in one particular season at Monte Carlo to gamble away a quarter of a million pounds (including most of the band's salaries) equivalent nowadays to several million. As a consequence he was made bankrupt, but of course kept his flat and offices. He was still a big "name" so his creditors encouraged him to work so as to recover some of the debts. He was loved by the West End Set and members

know that". Also, as you might expect in South America, the]and of Manana, the cog wheel train (only travelling about 2 miles per hour anyhow) had to stop whilst a. cow was shooed off the line.

Sandwiched between our Rio concerts was one in San Paulo (the industrial capital) and I mention this for two reasons. First, Sao Paulo, - a huge sprawling industrial complex with a somewhat tatty centre - although the largest City, appeared to be as sordid and unlovely as Rio was spectacular and beautiful. Second, we flew from the internal airport (not the international) in two planes and they were D.C.4's, that grand old commercial workhorse derived from the military "Skymaster" of my 1948 trip to the American Zone of Germany. How huge it had seemed then and now so quaint after our giant jets.

In the midst of our stay in Rio whilst trying and failing to get a waiter in a snack bar to understand, (the natives speak not Spanish as everywhere else in South America but a type of bastard Portugese) even sign language (for the first time) being to no avail, I was approached by a young man who asked in perfect English if he could help. This chance meeting led to the last two and a half days of my stay being the most exciting yet. It transpired that he was a young musician (a. budding conductor!!) who told me he intended to come to England and he was coming with his girl-friend to our concert that evening. He came backstage after the concert and suggested we meet next day and they would bring her friend to make up a foursome. The rest sounds like fantasy but was gospel truth. It was during the period that "The Girl from Ipanima" - Herb Alpert and Tijuana Brass? - was THE big popular hit and his girlfriend lived in a house overlooking Ipanima beach. Even more fantastic was that her friend was an aubur haired beauty who came from ... GLASGOW, was now working in Rio and had a flat across from Copacabana beach. We all got on like a house on fire and enjoyed swimming from and lounging around both beaches.

CHAPTER FIFTY EIGHT

We all liked John Barbirolli, despite some idiosyncracies about string bowing and I had worked with him many times - King's Lynn Festival which he ran with help from his wife Evelyn Rothwell (Oboist) and on recordings, the most famous of which was the English String music, Elgar Introduction & Allegro etc. I had a special soft spot for him as he had been a bosom pal of my old teacher in Glasgow, Harry Baxter, and during the stay in Rio he several times came and joined me in the interval of concerts, on a bench behind the stage and chatted about his days in Glasgow and his old musician friends - many of whom were before my time and simply legends to me. He had always been a fine cellist and in fact was one of the original cellists (with Ambrose Gauntlet) in Anthony Bernard's newly formed London Chamber Orchestra in 1921 ... Small world the music business. He was an excellent cook (his hobby) but unfortunately had a more than normal liking for and indulgence in "Uisquebaugh", which although "the water of life" in moderation, "got him" as it has so many, in the end.

As he had only joined us in Rio he naturally wanted to rehearse his programme and insisted on full rehearsals on each of the first three days. With no change of conductors the material for tour concerts is normally rehearsed beforehand and only "seating" (accoustic) rehearsals lasting 30 minutes or so, are required in each place. But - in Rio of all places - we felt like "naughty children being kept in school". However, it was only fair to him, we were all pros and we had lots of free time for the rest of the stay.

We enjoyed the usual tourist trips, the chair lift across the bay to Sugar Loaf Mountain and the cog driven rail trip up to the Christus monument. This last was a fantastic sight, especially at night when floodlit and it seems to float in the sky above the City. Incidentally, for the first time I saw bananas growing wild by the side of the track and was mildly astonished to discover they grew "upside down", again with acknowledgement to Michael Caine "not many people

of the Royal Family such as Princess Margaret used to come into the club and I recall seeing the Princess Royal at that time, who was regularly "squired" around Town by that famous conductor, and social climber, Malcolm Sargent and being amused, as when dancing past they would stop and chat to Bert, at seeing these two "great" musical minds together… Bert used to scrape abominably on the fiddle, usually as a duet with Jim Durante (not the Snozzle one) who played Baritone Sax, but he was such a fun guy we had to forgive him. Small aside: normally if people asked for a request number they would give Bert a tip for the band. This was usually a fiver and Bert always scrupulously put it towards a drink for "his boys". One night a young man who had had a request played handed him a. half crown as he danced past. Bert looked at this as if he had never seen one before, then got another out of his pocket and when "M'Lord danced past again Bert gave him them both with murmured words to the effect that "I feel you need this more than we do," ... end of aside!

We had a regular weekly cabaret with artists such as Hutch, Hermiones Baddeley or GingoId and a chorus line for bigger shows. One of the chorus was a tall leggy girl called Audrey Hepburn. She was always the one out of step, and so seemingly unco-ordinated that we all felt sorry for her. A few years later she showed what she really could do, in "Breakfast At Tiffany's" and other famous films.

One Cabaret rehearsal was running late and the producer started begging the band to stay on. We complained that we had to get washed up and changed and have a meal before we started (actually the delay as usual was due to incompetance) but Bert said he would ask us to give another half hour only if the Club provided us with a first class meal. That is when he coined the phrase, "This is a band of Prime Ministers". When we sat down to the meal upstairs, bottles of beer had been put at our places. Bert came and stood behind me and said, "What is that?" and despite my protests, as I quite fancied a beer, called the waiter and said, "Remove this stuff; these men will have champagne".

Ciros closed at l.0 a.m. each night and until I had my car I used to catch an all night bus and walk the last half mile. As it was winter time this could sometimes be a wee bit rough so you can imagine my joy and relief when I eventually owned my own transport ... we didn't call it "wheels" in those days. One thing that never ceased to amaze me, being a provincial lad at heart, was being able to buy the next morning's paper from late evening onwards, and I enjoyed reading this on the way home and fantasising about getting it early enough to put a bet on a winner. Some guys who were into buying instruments etc. used to get the Exchange & Mart first edition and get on to prospective sales before the public had woken up. -- I must stop this habit of digressing or I will never complete this History.

When I had my car, (it is like first love I suppose) I went through the young man about town syndrome. In later life I owned five or six B.M.W's (I was a fan before they became status symbols -nowadays driven mostly by "Wannabees" who have cheapened the reputation of a still fine car), a Mercedes and several other "prestige" vehicles until I grew up and probably became an inverted snob with my bread and butter machines. I passed very near Grosvenor Square on my way home and soon I was giving Bert a lift home. One night I said, "How do you feel about having a lift home each night from the Bass player when you used to have a Chauffeur driven Rolls?" He turned with a. twinkle and said, "Dear boy, you earn more than I do now; my creditors collect £500 per week for my services and after expenses they give me £12 pocket money."

After a very short while I got bored to death with this job. Imagine playing the current "hit tune" from an American show e.g. "Wash that man right out o' my hair" four, five or six times per night. Definitely not my scene and I could hardly wait for six months to pass. Actually, Bert had a 3 months option in the contract and his run was extended but I couldn't face any more so I recommended someone else and cleared off home to Scotland where he couldn't contact me. I have only signed two formal long term contracts in my career and regretted both. The second was with the L.P.O.

CHAPTER FIFTY SEVEN

Buenos Aires was everything we expected. The Theatre Colon is world famous and has seen many Operatic First Performances and we had informed and appreciative audiences who greeted us with great applause and wonderful hospitality at post concert receptions. The City is magnificent with (another of my firsts) the widest street in the world, incongruously named after an Irishman (who was their great liberator). This is really several streets running parallel with only verges between and lined with excellent shops and open air restaurants where we had several interesting meals. The nearest to it I suppose is Los Ramblas in Barcelona. Also interesting is that it is the largest Spanish speaking City in the world and publishes most Spanish publications. We enjoyed investigating the City and like most tourists went looking for semi-precious stones for which the City is famous (aquamarines etc.) and saw many fine emeralds shown to us by the jewellers we visited in the process.

Rio de Janeiro :- Keeping up our tradition as "intrepid aviators" our approach to Rio was not without incident. The Airport again is literally at sea level - actually an artificial island and at that time just long enough for international Jets, and our Pilot got it slightly wrong, overshot and we again had the scream of engines at full throttle as he had to take us up again to the consternation of many of the orchestra. He had to make a complete circuit of the Bay in order to try again and Jack Macintosh (Trumpeter), another experienced flyer, and I who were sitting together, thought it well worthwhile as we had a fabulous scenic trip all round Sugar Loaf and an aerial view of the whole Bay with its famous beaches. Most people salivate at the thought of a week in Rio and to have it with all expenses paid and a fee on top is really "rubbing in salt" to my reader. However, at the risk of never again being able to claim how hard musicians normally work, I must describe my week in Rio de Janeiro.

three days in Lima so there was no time to make any real expedition. Before leaving Lima I must mention some of the "goodies" so far. We had flown over the Andes once and were to do so again, had seen Popacatapetl and Lake Titicaca, - milestones for me as my father (who was a. great reader) used to enthral me with the Inca stories I have mentioned and was a font of information of facts such as the World's highest Volcano and highest Lake.

On to Santiago di Chile which was extraordinarily like a large prosperous Yorkshire City. Grand severe stone buildings and it rained and was cold for pretty well all of the three days we were there. People were actually catching colds and the incessant rain was making things miserable. We were now halfway (timewise) round the tour, often a low point as the initial excitement is lessening, thoughts of home are becoming more intrusive and you haven't quite started back yet. We tend to think of South America as a continent of constant sunshine, forgetting that much of it is as far south as Britain is north.

One thing I tried to do in Santiago was to try to look up a British (Scottish) musician who had become famous in London for his expertise in Latin American music. He was one Bob Inglis, "Roberto Inglese", who had emigrated to Santiago and opened a restaurant (a. fine imposing place) but it was closed and I never did manage to contact Bob. So, no disrespect to the fine country and lovely people of Chile but it was the wrong time of year to have visited and we were pleased to leave. Again over the Andes - ("Gee! What views! Even better than before!") to somewhere quite different .... Buenos Aires.

I now realised that this "fun" life was all very well but I had to get back to some series study and practice. There is an old saying that "genius is one per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration." Like most "old sayings" it contains a large grain of truth and after a year of really hard work I got some way towards proving it and began playing fairly regularly in the many small orchestras around London at that time -e.g. the Capriol Orchestra, several broadcasting good light music bands and chamber orchestras and one in particular called the "Kalmah" Orchestra in which played many future "stars" of the orchestral and chamber music world. One of the clarinets in the Ka1mah was Colin Davis who got his first chance to conduct in Children's (Schools') Concerts with this group. The first Horn was a girl called Lydia Gollanz. She organised occasional chamber music evenings where we would play the Beethoven Septet, Schubert's Octet etc. with Lydia as Horn and Colin as Clarinet. She went on to a successful playing career at Covent Garden and later joined the family publishing firm.

This kind of free-lancing led on to tours with small companies such as Carl Rosa Opera, BaIlet Rambert and short (2 or 3 weeks) London "seasons" of Ballet, Spanish Ballet (very popular then), and exciting groups like the Martha Graham Dance Company. In fact I played for everything from the Morley College "English Opera School" to the Magic Circle Festival at The Scala Theatre (off Tottenham Court Road) to the very last week of variety at the old Metropole, Edgware Road All of this was to prove invaluable experience years later when as a "session" musician I would be called upon to turn out everything from a bit of rhythm stuff one day to Vivaldi the next or even on the same day as in a session for Robert Farnon. Bob Farnon, who had come to Britain as Glen Millar's equivalent during the war with the Canadian Forces Orchestra, was a lovely guy, a fabulous musician and everyone's hero. One arranger, who was one of the best in Town said to me once, "I would give an arm to be able to write one coda like Bob Farnon." At the time of writing Bob is still around, lives in the Channel Isles and still writes marvellous stuff. One of the last

things I did with him was in a large orchestra recording the backing for a George Shearing album.

In late 1949 through “old” Jim, I was offered the chance to do a two week trial in the recently formed Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra, as they were a bass short in their section. The Y.S.O. was an ambitious project which lasted some 8 or 10 years but for various reasons, one of which was that some City and Town Councillors, unaware of how orchestras operated, only wanted concerts and couldn’t really appreciate why orchestras had to “waste time” with rehearsals. They wanted their music “by the ton”. Furthermore, rivalry existed between various cities and towns, for instance it was based in Leeds, -“Ow ‘baht Sheffield and Doncaster like lad?" and although all municipalities contributed financially the smaller and more distant communities lost out on the concert rotas. Difficult for a musician to accept when you think of the German, Swiss or Italian practice where every town or city of reasonable size supports an Opera and/or an Orchestra. Even Malmo in Sweden has a full scale Opera with a permanent orchestra of Symphony strength.

I did the fortnight in Yorkshire, most of which was taken up by the Opera, “Hansel and Gretel”, gave an audition to the Conductor Maurice Miles and was offered the job. Another pupil of Jim’s, Gerald Drucker, had been appointed Principal Bass. He was not very experienced, but a brilliant player and fine all round musician and quickly learned on the job. I came to know Gerald very well in later years. He became Principal Bass of the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra. and although one of our most outstanding soloists as he had only ever worked in contract orchestras, he was somewhat naive when the time came when he wanted to freelance in the big world outside. In this respect I was able to advise him and eventually was able to help him become principal of the “New” Philharmonia by “lobbying” for him with members of their committee whom I had known well when a member of the original Philharmonia. Gerald and I became regular colleagues in later years in various enterprises and have remained friends up to the present day.
The Philharmonia had been formed by Walter Legge, who was a

extraordinary and ingenious timber estate car body built on. It was driven by a native Indian with his wife alongside and three delightful small children in the back which we then shared. We spoke no Spanish and they no English but we got on famously with signs and constant smiles.

We had not realised how vast the salt mines were but we were driven right inside into a large area alongside the actual Cathedral cavern itself. This was complete with altar, pews and church regalia and must have held several thousand people with space around for as many cars - all underground. The walls were like black glistening marble but were of course solid salt and we were invited to verify this by rubbing them with our finger and tasting.

Our driver was so carried away by the sense of occasion that, on our return trip he made a detour off the main road through his home vi11age so that he could proud1y show his “distinguished” passengers to his neighbours. We drove slowly through the village and we realised we must have been (to the locals) the nearest thing to the “Queen Mum” as they all waved to us and entering into the spirit we similarly acted our part.

On another occasion a City business man and his wife took us down to the beach (near the Airport) where the heat was so intense one had to cower under awnings or other shade and the drill was to keep ones sandals on, (the sand was hot enough to strip your soles) kick them off just before dashing in the water and collect them on return. It was so hot that the mercury in the car inside thermometer had burst through the top!

Lima was somewhat of a disappointment as, nurtured in my boyhood by stories of the Incas, I am not quite sure what I expected but it seemed to be largely a tourist trap with too many souvenir shops, even though they were staffed mainly by charming and attractive girls. I should have realised that the most interesting archaeological experiences could he found only in the interior, particularly in the mountains. Unfortunately we only had two or

CHAPTER FIFTY SIX

Two days in Panama was fun -(midnight swims and parties in our luxury hotel) and the pattern of “Holiday atmosphere” began to be established in Caracas where we stayed for three days. Unfortunately some of the band, despite warnings of the strength of the sun did overdo it with the consequence of terrible sunburn. Caracas itself had no great interest for us as it is simply a great modern city, founded on oil riches, which the “Brits” had largely lost when it was nationalised.

We enjoyed going on to Bogota in Columbia for several days and also gave one concert in Cali. I have briefly described Bogota in a previous chapter but must remark on the lovely sight from our Hotel window of a gentleman crossing the main square in morning suit, (pin stripes etc.) bowler hat, with brief case and rolled umbrella... presumably one of the Diplomatic Corps who was still upholding the dignity of the British Empire for the benefit the natives.

Also in Bogota I met an American lady of indeterminate age with her handsome, younger Columbian boyfriend. She asked if my colleague, Gerald Drucker, and I would like to see the famous Salt Cathedral. This was a genuine Cathedral, complete with Bishop and full services, created in the enormous cavern which had been the main part of the salt mines. It was a fair drive out of the City and after a few miles her car (an old American compact) broke down. Gerry and I, who were both fair amateur mechanics, then found ourselves trying to restart it. We even disconnected the fuel pipes as we suspected carburettor trouble but to no avail and we figured it was probably the fuel pump. The upshot was that, as she insisted we go on and see the Cathedral and we had to be back for the concert, her friend flagged down a passing car, explained the situation to the driver (I suspect a dollar or two changed hands) and we duly got into the vehicle. Meanwhile the couple said they would stay with their car until a garage cam out to rescue them.

The vehicle we got into was an old Ford (in front) with a most

senior producer in E.M.I. with the ambitious aim of creating a world class orchestra which he could use for recordings, and of a standard to attract the world's most famous Conductors and Soloists. In this he was successful to an
unimaginable degree as history subsequently showed. Some time after my five and a. bit years there Walter gave up running the orchestra and wanted to wind it up but the players decided to keep it going and as Walter owned the title, did so under the legal technicality of “New” Philharmonia, reverting to the original title on Walter’s death.

Meanwhile, “back to Yorkshire”. Following my trial fortnight, the Yorkshire Symphony asked me to join the orchestra in a few weeks’ time as they had a forthcoming 3 week period with some important concerts, including a week with Malcolm Sargent as guest conductor, a big concert in Newcastle and finishing with a Concert in the Royal Albert Hall. I wasn't completely keen on the idea of “burying” myself in Leeds and as chance would have it, within days of my return to London I had a telephone call from Jim Merrett Junior (“young” Jim) to ask if I could do a concert with the Philharmonia. I choked out something like, “Who? Me?” and he said his Dad had recommended me and it would be 10 - l.0 and 7.30 and tails at the Albert Hall. I said I didn't have tails, only a. dinner jacket, and he said, “O.K. just wear a white tie with your dinner jacket and no-one will notice behind your Bass.”

CHAPTER TEN

I must now take a moment to explain that London Orchestras then, such as the Philharmonia, L.S.O., Royal Philharmonic and chamber orchestras, London Chamber, London Mozart Players, Boyd Neel and Jacques were all free-lance... as were The Sinfonia of London and The Decca New Symphony, (brought together specifically for Film and/or prestige recordings.) Much later the same applied to the National Philharmonic. I draw attention to this now to explain how any one musician could have played in so many orchestras as I shall mention throughout this history. In fact, only the B.B.C. Orchestras and Covent Garden were, as they still are, contract orchestras. The L.P.O. was when I joined in 1956, but by around 1958 or '59 had become "free-lance" like all the others. In my time there the L.P.O. had 70 contract members, each having a £1 share, which amount was deducted from the first week's salary and reimbursed on leaving. Members were in a permanent contract with a 3 months notice option on each side. If personnel had to be increased for specific engagements, extra players were engaged on "single" engagement basis. The contractual system was obviously uneconomic and uncompetitive as it required holidays and insurance etc. hence the eventual adoption of the free-lance system by the L.P.O.

Whilst not formally contracted, the nucleus of the players in the Philharmonia et al were offered all engagements in advance (thereby if accepted, creating short term contractual obligation to both sides) and in return, agreed to give their orchestra first choice of their services, usually subject to small conditions such as being released for SOLO or CHAMBER MUSIC engagements. This may seem to be a somewhat haphazard method and lawyer friends of mine hold up their hands in astonishment and horror, but it has always worked well and continues to do so. These larger orchestras seemed to have enough engagements to offer their players a reasonable living so loyalty was maintained on both sides. Elected members of the orchestra. constitute the board of management and full time professional office personnel secure the engagements and carry out

desperate longing by expats (mainly female members and wives of the Diplomatic Corps) to meet and converse and hear the latest gossip about theatre shows and other events "Back Home".

taken on trips to see the Aztec Pyramids and other famous sights. (Surely more than coincidence with the Pyramids of Egypt and I am rather inclined to agree with the theories of Thor Heyerdahl.) Of particular interest was a trip into the desert where we saw how the people harvested the "Century" plant. These giant Cacti, from which the sap (obtained by scooping out the centre and allowing it to fill naturally) forms the basis of their splendid Tequilla. The leaves can be shredded to make canvas like cloth and even the spiky spines are used as needles. Another coincidence with the indigenous people of Egypt and their (recently rediscovered) art of making Papyrus.

Many people have written more full and interesting accounts of Mexico but before leaving I would like to mention one instance of personal hospitality. After one of our concerts I was approached during a food and drinks reception by two charming middle-aged ladies who asked if I would introduce them to Alan Civil - the Orchestra's principal Horn who had played a Mozart Concerto in the concert. They then asked if we would care to come to their home next day for a drink and to meet their family. We were happy to do so and next day were collected and driven out of Town to a magnificent walled Hacienda with fine grounds and swimming pool. Being both keen swimmers we asked if we could have a swim and they were amazed that we should wish to as the water - to them - was cold ... so much so that when we dived in they sat around in pullovers, then when we got out, insisted (not against our wishes I must say) in getting the whisky decanter out AND lighting a fire. We had some difficulty explaining to them that 70 or so degrees was quite normal for us to swim in. During all of this the owner (husband of one of the ladies) came in and we were introduced. Not only was he a General, but the Chairman of the Mexican Bar and his son, a charming young man who then appeared, was also a lawyer - who had studied law in England. They were all great Anglophiles and all spoke excellent English, the son without trace of accent.

This first taste of individua1 hospitality was something that was to continue throughout the tour, occasionally to the extent of almost

day to day management. Far from being a possible disaster area as lawyers would see it, it may well be 50 years ahead of its time now that more and more "enlightened" buinesses are beginning to adopt similar practice. Forms of works councils have been the norm in Germany for years and Paternalism/ loyalty arrangements seem to work well in Japan.

This was why I had been directly asked by Young Jim to do this Albert Hall concert. He had taken over as Principal Double Bass from his father, who had been the original principal but was too busy elsewhere to tie himself to the Philharmonia. I found that the programme - to be conducted by a relatively unknown conductor who was presumably guaranteeing any deficit, (a practice then when conductors wanted to establish a reputation), contained the Bartok "Concerto for Orchestra" (a fabulous work) hence the requirement of a large orchestra. Not knowing the work then, although later a favourite of mine, I took the precaution of borrowing a part from Boosey and Hawkes' library (where I had friends) and then found out at the rehearsal that it was new to all of the players. Thanks to my foresight I did very well and the next time I saw Old Jim he said Jim had told him,
"That boy of yours did very well; he is a bloody good sight reader and we must book him again." Actually, I was a good sight reader thanks to my varied "apprenticeships" but getting the part in advance certainly didn't do any harm.

I now had to make a decision. If I accepted the Yorkshire job I would have security but I could have become "buried" in Leeds and miss the chance of future Philharmonia extra work and other bits and pieces that might come my way. Decisions! Decisions! I thought I should take the gamble so wrote to the Yorkshire management to say I was returning the contract (which had then arrived) as I had decided to stay in London. They were not best pleased but graciously offered me the aforementioned 3 weeks' work (without strings attached) ending with the Albert Hall concert which could not have worked out better for me.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

From 1949/50 onwards I began to get more and more "extra" work from the "Phil" but not yet enough to occupy me full time, so had to continue with my odd jobbing. One of the first of these was a very enjoyable week at the first ever Canterbury Festival which meant playing for the pageant every afternoon which was acted out in the ruins of the Abbey. All the locals had been rehearsing for a year and the men, to suit their period costumes, had all grown beards and they had a beard growing competition which was adjudicated just before the opening show. The excellent "period" music had been written by a local teacher. Also, I was engaged to play for the Rambert Ballet Company in a new ballet by Peter Racine Fricker (well-known modern composer then) at the Marlowe Theatre every night. The Ballet aptly enough was "A Canterbury Tale" based on the original by Chaucer. (It was good -I wonder what happened to it - I never heard it again.) It was a terrific scramble to get from one venue to the other and on the Wednesday and Saturday when there were two shows of the Ballet, I and 3 other musicians to whom I gave a lift had ha1f an hour to do this. My "Flying" Standard then had to really fly and my poor Bass was rushed naked to the Marlowe -- no time to get the cover on or off. I earned something around £52 for the week (and free digs at the famous School of Church Music alas no longer there) - a lot of money then but I certainly worked for it. Nowadays, if one could get it, the same amount of work would be worth, with extras (travel, porterage etc) at least 15 times as much. I thoroughly enjoyed it all and made valuable contacts at the Church School which led to many pleasant future engagements in Canterbury at the Cathedral and King's School.

The relative1y "loose" arrangement of orchestra1 engagements had its advantages in that one could also build up a free-lance connection in as much as one was able to consider engagements with other groups. For instance I started doing concerts for the London Mozart Players and ended up playing principal bass there for some 4 years. When Legge formed the Philharmonia he used the

CHAPTER FIFTY FIVE

The concerts were all in principal concert halls or Opera. Houses, all played to packed houses and in every place we, received tremendous hospitality - many giving a. fine supper after the concert and without exception concert-goers who invited us to their houses or for excursions in our free time.

We were in Mexico City for 4 or 5 days and luckily had been strongly warned, by Kletzki, about the effect of the high altitude. Initially, we had a free day so as to allow us to acclimatise, so, although we looked around the City we took things relatively easy. The strings noticed relatively little difference, but the wind did and the Brass section had to alter some of their phrasing to accomodate the thinner air. This last was not helped in the streets by the level of pollution from traffic fumes exacerbated by cheap fuel and very many old vehicles. I believe this has become increasingly unbearable. Related to this is the fact that in order to save exchange costs against the mighty Dollar all South American countries had near prohibitive import tax (as high as 100%) on "consumer durables" in particular U.S./Foreign cars and luxury items such as gramophone records. These last were almost unprocurable and the main thing our concert-goers asked for. This also led to "pirate" editions of recordings on sal in music shops, in one case we came across (on the L.C.O. tour) a recording of the orchestra with Paul Tortelier. We had never recorded the pieces with Tortelier but had played them at a Fairfield Hall concert which was broadcast by the B.B.C. Obviously some "entrepreneur" had taped the broadcast and pressed the discs from it. There were also, always people in our audiences with part-hidden and sometimes obvious recording machines and it was difficult for us to get them to understand that this was not allowed in European Countries under Copyright laws.

Mexico City impressed us with its many fine buildings, particularly their modern Pyramid style and we enjoyed a visit to the University, built on a foundation of solid volcanic lava - (probably the most substantial foundation of any building anywhere.) We also were

whatever happened to the V.C.10 as a passenger jet? - I know it is still -1997- used by the R.A.F.) one of the finest and fastest large jets at the time. The Captain was a lovely chap (on non chartered flights they always specifically welcomed Orchestras and one actually gave us a song and a Pan Am Pilot offered his services if we ever needed a guitar!) as always delighted to have an Orchestra on board and thoroughly enjoyed walking amongst us whilst explaining, with a twinkle in his eye, that the plane was fully automatic, had actually, for the FIRST TIME taken off on its own, was now flying itself and was even able to land automatically. He also took great pleasure in pointing out Boeing 707's as we sailed past them at a cruising speed some 50 knots faster than theirs. We changed at New York to an Air France 707 to fly south to Mexico City. Presumably because their schedules were similar to ours we frequently, later in the tour, found the crew of our B.O.A.C. plane staying at the same hotels.

John Barbirolli was to have done the tour but he was tied up with the Halle during the first part so Paul Kletzki (very good conductor but with an unfortunate "chip on his shoulder" re Karajan whom he referred to as "That man") conducted in Mexico, Panama, Peru and Chile. John Barbirolli joined us in Rio and came on to Buenos Aires, Columbia, Caracas and the Caribbean. We then flew back to New York for a final concert at the Long Island Festival (in a great marquee) again conducted by Kletzki, had a free day and flew back to London overnight.

same "fixer" as had Harry Blech so many of the players initially p1ayed in both orchestras, several string players, "Stars" such as Dennis Brain (Horn) Jim Bradshawe (Timps) and various wind players. This meant I was in good company which kept me on my toes. It also gave me the opportunity of playing at the opening week of the Festival of Britain in the new Festival Hall with two separate orchestras namely the Philharmonia and the London Mozart Players which was the only chamber orchestra allowed to play in the Roya1 Festival Hall and which (because of the London Mozart Society's unique ability to fill the house at every concert) continued to do so even after the Queen Elizabeth Hall (intended as a venue for Chamber Orchestras) was built years later. The L.M.P. at that time was a good band and many future leaders and other section principals got their chance playing for Harry Blech who despite many failings (probably laziness being the worst) had "an ear" for talented musicians, particularly string players.

One memorable series of events was when the L.M.P. was booked one year to give three concerts at the Edinburgh Festival. Three conductors had one concert each. The first which was broadcast was conducted by Rudolfe Kempe who gave a marvellous concert, including the fabulous Strauss "Metamorphosen for 23 Solo Strings". The second concert was all Mozart conducted by Harry and the third was conducted by a "new man on the block" Colin Davies. Colin conducted a programme of Mozart and Stravinsky (Dances Concertante) and the BBC suddenly realised they had missed the chance of another fine broadcast concert. Consequently on our return to London some ten days later we recorded Colin's programme at Maida Vale Studios. This was probably Colin's "discovery" by the B.B.C. as he was appointed conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony soon afterwards later the B.B.C. Symphony, Covent Garden and, as they say, the rest is history. I worked with Colin from time to time afterwards, e.g. in a week of performances of "Dido and Aeneus" by Purcell in the Tapestry Room in Hampton Court Palace, on the Covent Garden recording of Berlioz's "Trojans" and in a week of concerts in Athens with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

The reason we couldn't record the Edinburgh concert for the B.B.C. straightaway was because a nucleus of the L.M.P. stopped off to do the inaugiura1 concerts in the newly built "Rosehill" Theatre near Whitehaven - actually in the garden of "Nicky" Seikers' (later Sir Nicholas) house. Nicky, who was a patron of Glyndebourne had the bright idea of creating a "Glyndebourne of the North" and persuaded several Northern business men to part sponsor this endeavour. Despite some local rumblings about Nicky's exclusivity it seems to have lasted and on my second stint with the L.M.P. (ten years later) we went back to give a 10 year celebratory concert. This concert was conducted by Georg Solti whose massive ego leaves me completely underwhelmed. Imagine! playing Mozart's Jupiter Symphony with only 15 strings - Mozart's largest symphony - leading the way to Beethoven - for which Klemperer used a full symphony string section. I did four years with the L.M.P., "got four years off for good behaviour" and then did another "stretch" of four years with Harry Blech.

CHAPTER FIFTY FOUR

South America (Philharmonia 1968)

Although I left the Philharmonia in 1955 I was occasionally invited back for interesting trips and recordings such as the recording of the Mozart 2 Piano Concerto in E flat with the fantastic Clara Haskill and brilliant Geza Anda as soloists, both of whom I had worked with previously either with the Philharmonia or the London Mozart PLayers. Haskill had to be heard to be believed and Geza was the perfect partner for her. Other enjoyable sessions were when the Orchestra (by then having dropped the "New" prefix - another story) did whole series of recordings with Klemperer as permanent principal conductor. He was failing by that time and helped enormously by leader "Manny" (Emanuel) Hurwitz who as I have said before was a tower of strength in any ensemble.

Equally enjoyable for a different reason was when the fine Wagnerian Soprano Gwyneth Jones recorded with the orchestra in Abbey Road Studio. I had met and become a friend of Gwyneth when she was an absolute beginner, when she sang on a concert in Wales with the Boyd Neel Orchestra. She had then decided to go to Europe for study and experience and had never met her since although aware of her career and emergence as one of (if not the leading) the World's finest Wagnerian Sopranos. It was a little embarrassing, but a tremendous boost to the ego, when she suddenly saw me in the orchestra and waved and in the first break made her way through to the Bass Section and greeted me with an enormous hug. Needless to say, my colleagues enjoyed the subsequent leg-pulling but I "affected to behave in the nonchalant manner becoming to a recognised player of status."

My earlier reference to a previous tour of South America and the Caribbean was another of these invitations. This tour lasted seven weeks - longer than usual and the longest I have ever done. We started by flying to New York with B.O.A.C. in a V.C.10 Super (-

(although he did agree that the case should go forward, Mr.Gubbay capitulating before the actual hearing) by his grasp of the facts in our case. We also had an interesting insight on the rigmarole that passes for legal procedure.

It would appear that for some archaic and nonsensical reason, only the opposing Barristers are allowed to address His Honour during an "Interogatory" even though the opposing parties and their Solicitors are (or can be) present. It may be that Mr.Justice Scott considered our case a "small beer" but I would have thought (even if not much interested in music) he would have taken a little time to bone up on various matters such as pronunciation of well-known composers' names (e.g. Ravel) and similar small points. Because of the above-mentioned restriction on addresses the following ludicrous exchange took place:-

Justice Scott asked our Counsel, "What IS a Chamber Orchestra?" Counsel then whispered to our Solicitor and as neither of these learned gentlemen seemed to be sure, the Solicitor whispered the question to me. I then explained (whispering) to the Solicitor the fairly obvious origins of the description e.g. Camera, Chambre, small enough to play in one etc. He then whispered my explanation to the Barrister who then (no longer whispering) imparted the information to the learned Judge.

In common with many lay persons, I firmly believe that the legal profession regularly "takes us for a ride" - usually an expensive one, even if we "win".

The L.C.O. is now alive and well again and going from strength to strength. They recently had the prestigious honour of being the only British Orchestra to be invited to appear at the Olympics Festival in Atlanta and have made several tours of the U.S.A. and in Europe.

CHAPTER TWELVE

I gradually got more work from the Philharmonia and eventually became a "regular" in as much as I was offered, in advance, most of the work. This was pretty well all recording work as that was what the orchestra was created for. No orchestra before or since has ever done so much recording and the Artists and Conductors were Legion. The Orchestra was undoubtedly the finest in the world, so much so that Conductors such as Toscanini came to London especially to conduct the Philharmonia on the recommendation of his protege and friend Guido Cantelli.

I shall try to describe the period until late 1955 when I left the Orchestra. This was quite a hectic period, probably the most important in its history for the Philharmonia and looking back, certainly for me. It also biased the future outlook of everyone who took part at that time as in sheer excellence the period has never been equalled or repeated.

The list of conductors and artists who appeared with the orchestra is mind-boggling and success continued to breed success. I am unable to list them all but would like to mention some of the more outstanding……. Furtwaengler, Klemperer, Karajan, Cantelli, Toscanini, Kletzki, Fricsay, Clutyens, Markowitz, Monteux, Savallish, Debroven, Heifitz, David and Igor Oistrach, Menuhin, Flagstadt, Swartzkopf, Fischer-Diescau, Edelman, Arthur Bliss, Kachaturian, Walton and other composers conducting their own works, Soloman, Clara Haskill, Geza Anda, Walter Geiseking, Clifford Curzon and other fine pianists.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Probably the most outstanding personality was Herbert von Karajan, so I would like to begin with the man who became a legend in his own life-time. In the 50's he had a whole issue of "Die Welt" devoted to him from COVER TO COVER. He was at one and the same time, Musical Director of the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonics, Artistic Director of the Vienna Opera, regularly conducted in the Wagner season at La Scala, Milan and at Bayreuth. Saltzburg could well have been renamed Karajanville as there was a period when practically every shop and building had their windows taken up by posters, displays and photos of the great man. A visitor from space might well have wondered who this chap Mozart was, whose works formed part of the Karajan repertoire. He also toured extensively with the Berlin Philharmonic, learned (in his 50's) to fly his own plane, had a Mercedes "Gullwing" sportscar delivered by his factotum (a man with a readily forgettab1e disposition and manner called Mantoni) and an American copy when in the U.S.A. The German nation, more than most, have a desperate need to create heros; they had the material here and as always they went "over the top" and as always, the legend fed on itself.

He made very good use of his connection and period with the Philharmonia. His main ambition was to conduct the Berlin Phil, which he was unable to do as long as Furtwaengler was Principal Conductor, so he took the mountain to Mohamet by letting Berlin hear him conduct the (at that time) World's finest orchestra.

I first met - when I say met, I mean came into contact with - Karajan on a recording of Beethoven 7. Junior Double Bass players, as I was at that time, did not officially meet great conductors although I was later to have a couple of chats with him when he stood beside me in the coffee queue. He occasionally showed his egalitarianism by joining the troops in this manner. The Beethoven 7 was the first piece he chose to record with the orchestra which showed off his own talent (he had done a few things before this but main1y as an accompanist) and to establish his authority he spent a session and a

probably more sinned against than sinning and lost a small fortune through this debacle. He desperately wanted to keep the L.C.O. running as a vehicle for his undoubted talents, so originally through an emissary and later in person came to Devon with proposals to make peace and secure my help in various legal tangles he had become involved in. With help from the Musicians' Union, a settlement was arrived at and Mary Bernard and I (who still enjoyed the beneficial ownership of the title) agreed to a new agreement to take the place of that which had previously existed between us and Christopher and Nigel. I have always had an avuncular relationship with Chris Warren-Green - (John F1anagan and I gave him his first start on the ladder) so we came to an amicable arrangement and had a legal deed drawn up whereby I still retain an interest and the Orchestra is now run by a Company limited by Guarantee with Step Parikian (the aforementioned emissary and son of my old colleague, Manoug of that ilk) and Jonathan Williams, Cellist, as Directors and Christopher as Musical Director.

Mention of legal agreement reminds me of when we had to take up a court case against Raymond Gubbay, a well-known promoter of "popular" classical concerts in London. Mr.G started presenting concerts with a group he called "The Chamber Orchestra of London" and would not accept this would be "likely to cause confusion in the public mind". In most European countries and to their citizens coming here, the title would translate exactly. Accordingly we had to take a "Passing off" action against Mr.Gubbay who eventually agreed to refrain from ever using this or any similar title.

The case had an "Interrogatory Hearing" which was heard by Mr.Justice Scott – now Lord Justice Scott of "Spycatcher" and "Arms to Iraq" renown. I am not much impressed by his "judgements" in the Iraq business but he must be a clever lawyer as he appears to the lay person to reconcile conflicting and opposite points in the same lengthy enquiry. In reluctant fairness I must observe that he may well have been wearing the hats of prosecutor and defendant and not the wig of a Judge. I was even less impressed

take sides and said it would be better if both resigned. On our return to London I discussed the situation with Ken and Charles. They agreed with my decision and further suggested that the partnership he dissolved and revert back to Mary and myself but they would continue to play in the Orchestra if and when required.

This was done and I took the L.C.O. name under the C.A.R. umbrella. We carried on for some years with the Orchestra being directed mainly by Emmanuel Hurwitz (probably the most underated Leader/Conductor in England, although he had led the Philharmonia for Klemperer to whom he was indispensable) and occasionally Raymond Cohen (Tommy Beecham's former leader) or Eric Gruenberg and lastly by Christopher Warren-Green. We did some fine concerts with these Directors at home and abroad, but as I was still pursuing a playing career, which was becoming busier and busier, so leaving less time for management, shortly after our "legal eagle" left, John Flanagan and I decided to call it a day and wound up Concert Artists Representation in 1980.

I "semi-retired" to Devon soon afterwards whereupon the L.C.O. was run by a management Company (Chairman, my old L.P.O. buddy Jim Brown) under an agreement from Mrs.Bernard and myself. This was not very successful so the agreement was terminated and Christopher Warren-Green was invited to become Musical Director. Unfortunately he insisted that his brother, Nigel, (who ran a "fixing" company) should be Manager. Nigel had "Delusions of Grandeur" and made a colossal mess, (a story on its own) ending up losing a small fortune of his own and particularly Chris' money including both of their houses and Christopher's fine Italian Violin. He also managed to lose many times more belonging to other "Investors". Nigel was finally proscribed by the Musicians' Union because of money owing to Musicians. His Company was wound up and he absconded to Ireland with at least one Court judgement against him and several people to whom he owes money would like to see him should he return to England.
Christopher Warren-Green, although a. brilliant musician is no business man and although not entirely free from blame was

half on the first page. The opening chords took over 3/4 of an hour to satisfy him. CHORD - too loud, CHORD - too soft, CHORD - too long, CHORD too short "und so weiter" as they might say in Berlin. It took three sessions to complete the first movement after which, having asserted his personality to his satisfaction, he got on with the recording. We eventually recorded all the Beethoven Symphonies with him,the 9th being a story on its own, all Tchaikovski's, all the Sibelius' - and a repertoire from Mozart to Stravinski. There is no doubt he was an impressive musician and a man of enormous charisma. Later, when we did concerts with him this latter became very obvious and he literally had audiences eating out of his hand - (as did Frank Sinatra in a completely different field as I shall describe later). The obverse was his jackboot side which often became apparent and his arrogance and self-confidence was such that he didn't seem to he aware of this. When we recorded "Pictures at an Exhibition" - Mussorgsky/Ravel which, as always, he did superbly, this facet was shown when we came to "Goldenberg and Schmule" and he leaned over the violins (some of whom were Jewish) and said "No - it must be *FAT* and *SLOBBERING* like a Jew". This "Nazi" arrogance was normally kept in control but occurred again at the end of the famous American Tour in 1954 of which more anon. He was a stickler for balance and "ambience" and this became something of a joke as on SEVERAL occasions the recordings were interrupted because he wished to reverse the balance and we had all to clear the deck, with our instruments, whilst the recording staff re-arranged the seating with the upper strings and the Bass end reversed and again when it was put back as it had been. This experiment might have been valid ONCE but eventually it became an obvious ego trip. He always, cleverly, seemed to end each period of recording (usually 2 or 3 weeks) with some uncompleted material - one movement unrecorded or even only a first movement completed which then had to be completed on his next visit. On one occasion we were to complete a Sibelius Symphony - (he did them all marvellously and No7 quite sent a chill down your spine) but he decided after the first take hat the ambience was wrong. It didn't match the atmosphere on the previous material so we packed that in until another day and

went on to record some Beethoven instead. Presumably damper - or drier weather was more suitable for Beethoven.

I have already mentioned that his repertoire was unlimited and one of his L.P.'s was of Opera Intermezzi. Included was the Intermezzo from Cavalieri Rusticana in which the solo organ was played by Dennis Brain on the organ of Kingsway Hall. Before becoming a horn player (like his famous father Aubrey, his Uncle who went to America and his Grandfather) Dennis was an excellent keyboard player. Alan Civil, another famous horn player (who took over after Dennis) and my close buddy Jim Brown (Principal of the L.P.O.) were also good (in Alan's case brilliant) pianists. Probably they all learned keyboard as a first study as it was reckoned that the horn shouldn't be attempted until their teens when their physique had developed.

CHAPTER FIFTY THREE

On the advice of Lawyer Geoffrey Heggs to allow me to manage the orchestra, Mary Bernard made me a partner in the title (in those days a registered partnership trading under that name.) We then agreed to run the Orchestra as a partnership of the five principal string players, - Jack Rothstein and Trevor Williams as Co-leaders, Kenneth Essex, Viola, Charles Tunnell, Cello and myself and Mary, but in effect all management was left to me, with agreement from the others on general strategy. We had a regular nucleus of players and unlike most ad hoc groups, decided that at all times we would only perform as L.C.O. if 75% of our normal chaps and at least one of our Co-leaders and three of the partners could appear. This worked out well for a time but subsequently broke down due to continuing disagreement over playing style between Jack and Trevor, culminating in a blazing row (in which I had to intercede) in the middle of a rehearsal in Lincoln Center N.Y. of all places.

Shortly before this, an old friend of mine, John Flanagan, who had been a well - known drummer with "name" bands had, in partnership with John Dankworth, established a Company called "Music Activity Management". This Company booked musicians and artists for Jingles (T.V. commercials) and Films and orchestras to accompany artists on tour in Europe such as Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davies, Jack Jones etc. John F. suggested I help him engage the "serious" musicians (aka L.C.O. members) for these enterprises which I duly did. We then established another small company, "Concert Artists' Representation", operating from the same office in Red Lion Square. The Company was set up for us by a brilliant young lawyer who remained a Director (sleeping partner) until he was "kicked upstairs" (eventually to become a Judge) and had to resign from all commercial enterprises.

Mary Bernard had mainly been interested in keeping the L.C.O. alive and in particular my suggestion of thereby creating a memorial to Anthony, so when Rothstein and Williams said they could no longer work together and it had to be "one or the other" I refused to

play only string pieces in the first half whilst the Oboes and Horns frantically scribbled out their parts from one of the scores so that they could at least join in a Symphony in the second half. Yours truly had to step forward at the start of the concert and explain the situation and to our surprise this got a big cheer and fulsome applause. The Caribbean people, particularly Trinidadians and Barbadians, are so marvellously relaxed it isn't true and, I suspect, thoroughly enjoy a good "balls-up" particularly by a distinguished London Orchestra. In retrospect the concert we gave was as good as any we gave, despite the change of programme, but I for one could well do without such dramas. This particular tour was full of excitement, we even experienced a slight earthquake, - another first for all of us, - and being my second trip to these parts, although not so grand was even more fun than the first.

My first trip to South America and the Caribbean was with the Philharmonia conducted by Kletzki and John Barbirolli in 1969 and lasted for seven weeks and covered most of South America. I hope to describe the highlights of this tour in a later chapter but meantime would like to continue with the "L.C.O. story" up to the present time.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

This seems to be a good time to devote a chapter to Dennis who was undoubtedly the finest horn player in the world at the time and the player all horn players tried to emulate. Another virtuoso player who is a good friend, Barry Tuckwell, said to me once that his ambition was to be remembered like Dennis. Oddly enough Barry is now also establishing himself as a conductor and Dennis was just starting to conduct when he was killed. Other players such as Alan, Jim and Barry may have developed a bigger sound than Dennis (who played the old French piston valve horn for most of his career) and Ifor James developed his "freak" high note embouchure which enabled him to play stuff no one else could - e.g. when Dorati recorded all the Haydn Symphonies with the Philharmonica Hungarica he let me into the secret, whilst he was touring with the London Chamber Orchestra and travelling in my car, that he had booked Ifor and a colleague as 2nd to over-record the "Alto" parts back in England. Normally they are played "Bass".

Dennis however had unbelievable control and the horn seemed to be an extension of his body. We were good friends - (had a great common interest in cars) and on the American Tour he and I were the only two members to accept an invitation to go round the Ford Motor works in Detroit …. in 1955 a real eye opener. From the delivery of IRON ORE to their own docks, on their own ships, through Steel Smelting and Milling to the FULLY synchronised production lines, electronically timed according to the dealer network orders, they could produce a finished car (with all necessary variations and "add on bits") every 48 seconds!

Dennis never seemed to tire and unlike most principal horns, despite the increasingly current trend, he refused to have a "bumper-up" to play in the tuttis. I NEVER heard him crack a note and he went on day after day astonishing conductors and colleagues with his skill, finesse and stamina.

Typically, we had sessions at Kingsway Hall morning and evening and Dennis regularly "fitted in" other sessions in the afternoon. On one occasion he popped along to a B.B.C. studio between sessions, where for 4 hours - one hour being broadcast - he gave a performance exhibiting the Horn and its History. Starting with the original hand horn (and even including the piece of gas piping with a funnel on the end) he went through single horn, double horn, French horn with piston valves and modern German horns with rotary valves. He played movements from concertos on each and finished with a concerto for two horns with his buddy Neil Saunders. Neil was another fine player who played second with Dennis BECAUSE it was Dennis and after Dennis died played only 1st horn and eventually went to America like many of the original Phi1harmonia wind players such as Arthur Cleghorn, phenominal F1autist, and Reginald Kell, clarinettist and Benny Goodman's idol.

Karajan appreciated Dennis' great talents and regularly took him with him by plane from place to place when the orchestra toured Europe.

Sadly, Dennis was killed in a car crash when within 5 minutes of home. The Philharmonia had been playing for a week at the Edinburgh Festival - something it did year after year for about 7 years - and although I had left by then I was also at the time in Edinburgh with another group. Dennis was practically "commuting" by several times driving home overnight to take part in sessions in London. I felt devastated, particularly as only 3 days before we had discussed the best way from Edinburgh to London (this was before Motorways) and he reckoned that being a local boy I would have this worked out.

CHAPTER FIFTY TWO

I had a close friend, one John King who was London Sales Manager for a large firm of office furniture suppliers. When John heard of our intended tour he said he had always wanted to go to South America. and the Caribbean .... Hadn't we all?!

As I had to take care of management chores as well as playing, I needed an assistant, - on short trips I usually paid one of the players a few bob to act as librarian and general help - but on this tour there were a lot of contracts, travel and hotel arrangements, money to be collected and subsistance to be given out and checked. So I offered John the chance to come without a fee but with all expenses paid and the same subsistance allowance as the musicians, provided he helped me in general and looked after the music in particular. He jumped at the chance (in fact dined out amongst friends and colleagues for months afterwards on the strength of his anecdotes) and came along to rehearsals beforehand when I showed him how to distribute and collect the music and my system of book-keeping for fees etc.

We did two concerts in Caracas - the first in the main concert hall and the second in the hall of the Piano Museum. Although a fair size this last was absolutely packed with people sitting all round the strings with the wind players sitting on a sort of shelf to one side. When we came back from the interval we found a very stout gentleman actually sitting on the 1st Cellist's chair and I had quite a job getting him to relinquish what he thought was a prime seat and only after much sign language by myself and the Cellist Ben Kennard did he reluctantly give up.

We flew off the next morning to Trinidad and it was not until the seating rehearsal that the horns asked where their music was. Frantic search then showed that, as the oboes and horns had been sitting on the "shelf" section, in the "kerfuffal" of getting out of the Piano Museum, John had missed collecting the wind "pads". This meant we had to re-arrange the programme from the one printed and

an Island in the Caribbean some 90 miles away where we stayed for 3 or 4 hours until the storm had passed. There was no trace of the storm on the island or when we eventually did land at Bogota Airport in brilliant welcoming sunshine.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Karajan did three grand tours with the Philharmonia, two of European Capitals and the third of the great Cities of the American Eastern Seaboard as far west as Chicago, south to West Virginia and north to Toronto.

The first European Tour was in 1952 which included four Swiss cities – Geneva, Bern, Lucerne and Zurich. My first visit to Switzerland could not have been better as it was Spring and the snows were melting on the mountains. Although proud of our Scottish Highlands I had to admit this was "something again" … scenery on a Grand scale with the cascades making it seem like Fairy land. I loved Switzerland and still do after many visits, despite its rather too professional hospitality and high prices. The tour included Vienna, Linz, Milan, Paris and Berlin. A few days before we set off the Berlin blockade was re-established by the Russians and there was a likelihood we would be unable to get to Berlin although all the other places were O.K. At this Karajan said if we could not go to Berlin - the whole tour was off as, as I have suggested before, that was his main ambition and objective. He went as far as to say he would waive his fee if we could go to Berlin but if no Berlin -- NO TOUR. (I do not know what his fee was then but I do know he had received an unprecedented advace for his first recording of £10,000 - a lot of money in the early 50's when the norma1 player's fee was around £3 or £4). Eventually we were cleared to fly along the corridor and Karajan had his way. This was my second trip along the corridor, this time more uncomfortable as we were in a noisy converted York with its backward facing seats, rather than the larger Skymaster. At least it was a civilian charter and the journey was more low key than had been my previous trip with the gang of Americans in a Military plane. Regarding the actual concert, Cecil James (1st Bassoon) put it very succinctly "Talk about beating at the door of Europe!"

Karajan took a varied and interesting set of programmes, from

Mozart, through Britten, - another of my favourite works, "Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge" which I was fortunate enough to also play with Boyd Neel for whose orchestra it was written, (Karajan also did a first class recording of this with a full symphony string section instead of the Chamber size orchestra), to Strauss – "Till Eulenspeigel" and "Don Juan". The Berlin concert was an absolute "tour de force", hence Cecil's remark. Imagine the scene. The Orchestra assembled : Karajan STRODE on to the platform, swept his hands down and the orchestra errupted with the magnificent opening of Don Juan. "Follow that, Furtwaengler!" he seemed to be saying. All the concerts were "events", the two in Milan being the opening of the Opera season (seemingly a tradition to open the Opera season with Orchestral concerts) and the ones in Vienna and Paris being the high spot of their seasons.

After these, other stories about the tour pale somewhat but two small anecdotes may bring us down to earth. In Vienna we shared the orchestra room with the Vienna Symphony (not the Philharmonic) who had just come off the platform after a rehearsal and we were about to begin ours. There was an understandable melee as musicians packed and unpacked their instruments and after we got on the platform Peter Mountain, one of our fine violinists, couldn't find his rare old Italian instrument. (- another case of Karajan's lack of "sympatico" was that when he was told, he couldn't care less). Obviously in the hassle backstage, he had laid it down for a moment - and bingo – "It were gawn!" As Vienna was still an occupied City (I was present on another occasion on "Frei Tag" - Freedom Day - when the occupying forces moved out and I actually sent postcards home to friends and colleagues, some of whom collected stamps so they then had Frei Tag stamps) - we figured afterwards it had probably disappeared behind the Iron Curtain. Unfortunately it was never recovered and because the premiums were so high, as many string players did, Peter had only insured it for half its value, in other words to cover possible damage repair never imagining it would completely disappear. One small item which showed how seriously Austrians take their music was: … Next day, a colleague and I went into an instrument shop in Linz

CHAPTER FIFTY ONE

On one occasion we had all got up at "crack of dawn" to travel out to the airport only to find that the very early flight scheduled AND on our tickets had, some months before been changed to an afternoon one without us, or our agents being told. Otherwise, despite South American "manana" our travel arrangements were good, - apart from coming in to land at Bogota Airport. I have already described Bogota., which is even higher than Mexico City by 1,000 feet. Unfortunately, the Airport is a long winding drive away and down at sea level, surrounded on three sides by cliffs some thousands of feet high - normally, (in good weather) no problem as was the case when I went there with the Philharmonia in 1968 (..more news of this trip later). Bogota has the reputation of being one of the most difficult Airports in the World if conditions are bad as the flight path is obviously somewhat restricted and on this L.C.O. trip we hit the "Mother of all Storms" as we approached. The plane, an Air France Boeing 727, was being buffeted around like a small boat in high seas and everything was in darkness outside because of the storm. I could only think of one similar experience which was the Alpine electric storm I mentioned earlier. Knowing of Bogota's reputation I was none too happy but as an experienced traveller (and "Gruppen Meister") I had to appear nonchalant and finished up with our younger cellist actually hanging on to me f or dear life whilst I kept assuring him there was nothing to worry about in these large modern jets - Not like in "them old days" my boy!

I was particu1ar1y impressed by the magnificent and extraordinary calm of a South American gentleman, who had his young son of around 5 or 6 with him, ~ whilst all around people were literally counting their Rosary beads, - when we got off he said HE had been watching ME. My experience told me, by the engine sounds etc, that the pilot had decided to try to land and I could only think, "The silly bastard, I hope he knows what he is doing." After what seemed like ages, we sudden1y had all four engines roaring flat out, with tremendous lift, and I knew he had given up the attempt and prayed he had given himself enough room. Half an hour later we landed at

our money in the morning but only after a lot of chasing from one office to another and it seemed there was something of a feud going on between two parties in their Society and we were the “piggies in the middle.”

to buy some strings and (as an example of how fast the Police moved) the manager immediately showed us a description of Peter’s instrument which had been wired to all instrument dealers. Oddly enough, in 1971 when I (then player manager) took the London Chamber Orchestra to New York as part of a tour of South America and the Caribbean, a similar thing happened to Trevor Williams, our co-leader, in Kennedy Airport, where we had stopped to change planes on our way home. Trevor was luckier as his instrument was recovered some months afterwards, thanks to the quick wit of the manager of a Pawn shop who smelt a rat when a dissolute type brought an obviously good violin in and wanted only a couple of hundred dollars for it. He held on to the violin and kept the chap waiting whilst he ‘phoned Wurlitzer’s (the “Hills” of New York) to check, and the character ran off.

The last anecdote (really sublime to ridiculous) was that instead of the scheduled rail trip from Vienna to Linz we were offered the opportunity of a “scenic” tour by coach at an extra charge of (to those who wished to avail themselves of the scenery around Salzburg etc.) 30 Austrian Schillings - about 10/- or an eighth of our concert fee then. There were enough of us to fill a coach and we travelled through heavy and impenetrable mist all the way - seeing absolutely nothing, and when we met up with the others it was to find that the rail route had been through brilliant sunshine with fine views. After the outcry, hillarious on one side, the management reimbursed the crestfallen victims on return to London.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

We did one other short trip with Karajan between the two European Tours. This consisted of two concerts, one in Aix en Provence and the other at Les Baux de Provence. The latter was in the open air in a gigantic amphitheatre which could probably have been part of an old quarry. Again it was an event of the season and the "great and the rich" rolled up in their limousines from as far as Paris. The programme was Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique" and with Karajan's showmanship and the setting, could not have been better, particularly as after the short rehearsal the organisers had invited us to view the cave villages and given us a fine meal afterwards, with over-generous supply of liquid refreshment, to the extent that the players and even the teetotallers were "a wee bit fu' " - including Karajan.

The concert really went with a swing particularly as we had the World's loudest cicada choir joining in and the dust churned up by the cars had turned our tail-suits into something resembling the Black and White Minstrel Show. The off-stage oboe (played by Michael Dobson) was even more fraught than usual with the fear that Michael might get completely lost wandering behind that monumental scenery.

We had stayed in Hotels in Marseilles for the two nights and our next engagement was to he at the Lucerne Festival in a week's time. We had the option of travelling back to London for a week off, then out to Lucerne, but a few of us decided to take the opportunity to make it a week's holiday and travel at leisure along the Cote D'Azure, thence through North Italy to Switzerland. Alas, - "The best laid plans o' mice and men" as our National Poet would say….. Deciding to stay one more day in Marseilles, I went to the Lido next morning quite early and was having a wonderful time until around midday when a French man said, "Excuse me, monsieur, but I think you should go in now; you are becoming very red." He was only too right. I was O.K. until evening then the sunstroke started … alternate fever and shivering at increasingly fast intervals … the

CHAPTER FIFTY

Our most successful tour lasting 21 days began in New York with two concerts at Lincoln Center as part of the now well known "Mostly Mozart" season, again to rave reviews. (This led to an approach from "Columbia Artists Management" for future U.S. tours which fell through as we could not agree on terms without sponsorship and they could get Government sponsored Eastern European bands for "peanuts". From New York we went to Panama (delightful) and Columbia, Bogata, Meddelin and Cali - all lovely then, in 1971, particularly Bogota with its "perennial Spring" .... the altitude balanced by its nearness to the equator. Nowadays, unfortunately, all three cities are infamously known by their dreadful connections with Drug Cartels. After two concerts in Caracas, Venezuela, we flew on to the Caribbean, Trinidad, Jamaica, Barbados and three of the Virgin Islands. This tour was like an extended holiday with 1st Class accommodation at Holiday Inns and Hylton Hotels all with their own beaches and/or pools, and is sill talked of as the best ever, anywhere.

As previously mentioned, I had our contracts specify that 90% of our fees be paid in U.S. dollars - (some South American currencies could be "dodgy" and not always allowed out of the country) and paid in the interval of each concert. (We usually went off really early next day to catch a. plane to the next venue.) This generally worked well but in one of the concerts in Columbia the money did not seem to be forthcoming and the interval dragged on somewhat. When I asked the Agency secretary (who spoke excellent English) what was happening she said there was a minor hitch and took me to meet a group of distinguished-looking men in full evening dress standing chatting behind the stage. She then interpreted to me that "Il Presidenti gave his word that all would he well and in the morning we would be paid." I, assuming him to be the President of the Music Society, said to her, thankfully not too loud or impolitely, "I didn't care if he was the President of the Country - we should abide by our agreement. She replied quietly, "But he is." Bows all round and smiling retreat by the Manager of the L.C.O. We did get

We toured Wales with Dorati and had many other successful engagements but without sponsorship or regular Record Company backing it was an uphill struggle to keep an elite group going. The group was superb. On one of our concerts, out of n ine violins we had four Strads, and a Del Jesu Guarnerius, also a Gaspar di Salo Viola, a Guarnerius Cello and two matching “Vuilaumes” and other fine Italian instruments. Even my Bass was a Gabrielli (unusually) labelled and dated 1760. This prompted me to have the names of the players and their instruments listed in our programmes until one of the violinists pointed out I was inviting a hi-jack as we were carrying hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of instruments.

bedroom ceiling coming down and up and the walls coming in and out and dreadful hallucinations all night. The Hotel management called a Doctor and I was kept in a darkened room with sedation for 36 hours until the worst of the fever had passed. I was then allowed to go -- PROVIDING I kept out of the sun. SYMPATHY PLEASE!! .. my first and only chance, with unlimited time to explore the fabulous Cote D’Azure - before it was the Tourist Trap it eventually became - and I spent my time on the shaded side of the busses, daren’t look at the sun reflecting on that beautiful water in Les beaux petites plages and crippling from tree to tree to find shade. To crown it all, funds had been somewhat depleted by unexpected Doctor and Hotel treatment so I travelled through North Italy to Lucerne by train on a 4th Class (student) ticket in carriages with wooden slatted seats like park benches, still suffering from the aftermath of serious sunstroke. This I called my “Hot” as it had very similar symptoms to a head cold, dried up sinuses, slight headaches and still an aversion to bright lights. By the time I reached Lucerne I felt better and thought O.K. I now have 3 weeks to make up for losing out on all that nice sunshine and swimming etc. I had not allowed for or even known about Pilatus – Lucerne’s famous mountain which I then learned made Lucerne the Manchester of Switzerland. Except for one whole and one half day (when we all rushed to the beach for a swim) it rained constantly for three weeks.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

This wasn't too bad as with "six jockeys riding the same old horse" we had plenty to do but it nearly caused divorces for the chaps who had brought wives. As they didn't want to come to all the rehearsals, tickets were limited to only a few concerts and by the time they had seen all the films in Lucerne's few cinemas several times they were wondering yet again why they had married a musician - who by common agreement is slightly mad in the first place. On top of everything, would you believe, who was the first of the famous jockeys at the Festival but our old pal Herbert von Karajan in ebullient form as usual. We a1so had Fricsay, Clutytens, Kube1ik, Edwin Fischer, every one a star, and the Master himself, Wilhelm Furtwaengler. Despite my complaint about the weather, this first ever Lucerne Festival was on a truly grand scale with a series of concerts any one of which would have been a treat to music enthusiasts. We were famously entertained with a trip to the top of Pilatus and its fine restaurant, (first time I ever LOOKED DOWN on a rainbow - and yes it is upside down. I have seen this again since but from a jet plane) a trip around the Lake and a separate trip by boat to "Tribchen", Wagner's house when he was exiled, where he lived with Cosima and wrote Siegfried Idyll for her birthday and which was played under the stairs in the house for the first time with people like Richter playing trumpet in the small orchestra. He also wrote several of his operas whilst there and if you are ever near Lucerne it makes a lovely day out.

We were even treated by the Gods to a night-time electric storm over the Alps which had us all out of our beds to watch the unbe1ievable spectac1e. (Easy then to appreciate where Wagner had the inspiration for some of his orchestration.) The Festival Committee gave us a sumptuous farewell dinner at the famous Sweitzerhof Hotel, when they presented each one of us with a facsimile copy of the title page of Siegfried Idyll.

The farewell concert was (re-arranged from the printed prospectus)

CHAPTER FORTY NINE

Unfortunately for the L.C.O. Unicorn hadn't the funds to promote the records so despite "rave" reviews, not enough records were pressed and John Goldsmith had no distribution so had to go through E.M.I. on a fifty~fifty basis. It goes without saying that any major company is not going to promote "outside" material as vigorously as their own. So despite the reviews, including Felix Aphrahamian's choice of one record as one of the best six of the year, when people couldn't buy them in the shops they gave up as there is always another "flavour of the month" in the record business.

We were also invited to record two pieces by Sir Arthur Bliss for his 80th Birthday. Sir Arthur attended and advised on the sessions. This was to have been the first of a series of 12 but Pye, (who had been dithering in and out) abandoned their classical section completely. We continued with a B.B.C. broadcast concert (repeated twice on air) from Fairfield Halls with Tortellier (again directing from the Cello). The programme was all Baroque and I devised a. programme of Composers of the period writing in the "Italian Style" who had known (and/or been influenced by) each other - e.g. Telemann, J.S.Bach and his son C.P.E.Bach. We also appeared in Brussels Philharmonique Hall and Strasbourg and made two trips each to France and Spain. The French trips were exciting, playing first in Salle Playel and later in L'Eglise St.Roche (then turned into a. concert venue) where Jean Cotte (Paris' toughest critic) gave us a terrific review, beginning:- "You must go to the L.C.O. Concerts at L'Eglise St. Roche."

cellist around at that time. He regularly chewed glucose tablets and once when he had none, insisted on having sugar lumps – "for energy"!

He was indeed a Master musician with a phenominal "ear" and great nerve - and sensitivity. I corresponded with him frequently and was delighted to be able to collaborate with him on choice of material and he regularly asked me to explain or advise him on English phrases such as "It behoves one" which he loved.

Although no longer in touch, I was devastated when he died. Like Anthony Bernard (it took years to accept his death) people of such energy and talent seem as if they will go on for ever. A good thing that came out of our collaboration was that John Goldsmith wanted to have Tortelier record the Bach Cello Suites for his label but knew that Paul had recorded them for E.M.I. some years earlier so he contacted E.M.I. to ask. If they did not intend to release them would they mind if he recorded them. Tortellier, although a. household name thanks to his splendid Masterclass series (never equalled in popularity) on B.B.C. T.V. and a big attraction at concerts (with him and twelve strings we filled Fairfield Halls to capacity) had not had any records issued for years. Suddenly E.M.I. woke up to the fact that they had a. great artist on tape and –"surprise, surprise" the Bach Suites were suddenly issued and they went on to record Paul playing the larger Cello Concertos - Elgar, Dvorak etc. which Paul played superbly and had wanted to record for years. My own small regret is that I wish he had re-recorded the Bach works for Unicorn as although he had always been brilliant there was a striking maturity in his interpretations in later life - as with all artists you may say - but with Tortelier his later control transcended that which is customary with age and experience.

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony conducted by Furtwaengler and with al1 star cast such as Edelman and Swartzkopf. The concert was broadcast by Swiss Radio and as recently as late 1995 (41 years afterwards) I received a cheque from the Musicians' Union as payment for a record that had now been made from that Broadcast. Furtwaengler is my choice as the all time greatest but more of that anon and on with the Karajan saga.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

"A clash of Egos". We had recorded all the Beethoven Symphonies from 1 to 8 with Karajan and were about to embark upon the 9th which was to include the Huddersfield Choral Society. At that time Malcolm Sargent was conductor of the Huddersfield (as he also was of the Royal Choral Society) and he refused to allow the choir to take part - UNLESS HE CONDUCTED. In the circumstances this was a nonsense.

The first the orchestra members knew of this was at another recording session at Kingsway Hall, when, four days before we were due to begin recording the 9th, also booked for Kingsway Hall, Jane Withers, Walter Legge's secretary, announced without warning that the recording was now to take place in the Musikverein in Vienna. We all thought this was a joke but seemingly negotiations had been going on unbeknown to us and indeed we du1y f1ew to Vienna, - some again in a converted York Bomber, the others in a converted Lancaster. It was the start of a tru1y marvellous week. We had ten sessions, 2 each day, morning and evening in the wonderful accoustics of the Musikverein with the excellent Vienna Choir and Boys' Choir and great soloists such as Swartzkopf and Edelman. The sound of this superb Bass singer when he came in with the great recitative after the announcement by the Basses of the Orchestra was absolutely incredible in that Hall. I still do not think that the recording, very good though it was, quite captured the magnificent voice in the ambience of the room at that moment.

In one of the lesser parts (probably a chorus lead) was a young baritone called Dietrich Fischer-Discau, then just coming to prominence and my friend and desk partner, Adrian Cruft and I had the pleasure of briefly meeting him and his charming wife as they were billeted in the same Pension and we often met them in the lift … the typica1 metal gate type still found in some older buildings. His great charm which he has never lost was obvious then and soon

CHAPTER FORTY EIGHT

The L.C.O. did only a few concerts, with guest conductors and soloists after Anthony's death. Then in late 1968, on a concert with another small orchestra with an undistinguished and ineffectual conductor, Trevor Williams, Jack Rothstein, Ken Essex and I were commiserating that in order to play chamber orchestra pieces we had to work with such people and how marvellous it would he to be able to "do our own thing".... the suggestion being that as I had been involved in management couldn't I get something going. I had kept in touch with Mary Bernard and despite several approaches from other people, when I mentioned our idea she was pleased to agree that we use the title and revive the L.C.O. in memoriam to Anthony. To cut a long story short, we got together a first class group of players and thanks to an introduction by Dorati to John Goldsmith, owner of the new "Unicorn" records and my friendship with Paul Tortelier (who I talked into the idea) we made a couple of excellent records with Paul as Soloist/Director.

I spent quite a lot of time with Tortelier. We got on so well he actually asked me to become his personal manager and travel everywhere with him. I was very flattered but explained to him, which he understood and accepted, that I still enjoyed playing in general and particularly in our own chamber orchestra. I frequently picked him up in early mornings at Heathrow and took him to his "digs" in Regents Park - he always stayed with the same people when in London. This gave us time to chat and arrange concert programmes and record details. He was a splendid chap: although not Jewish, he spent 6 months in an Israeli Kibbutz and would have remained longer but his wife Maude (who used to teach many of his pupils) wanted to leave. He loved English things and we often enjoyed a glass of beer together ... "Good eh! Chon!" (John). He was pleasantly eccentric and was fascinated by the polite English habit of queuing and would join one on the slightest pretext. I lost him once in Kings Cross Station when I went t get something, then discovered him standing in a queue for tickets? or something which he certainly didn't need.
He was full of energy and I think he was probab1y the most exciting

Brunswick. The company was “taken over” before their release and the new Directors “in their wisdom” thought they were not a commercial proposition - - nowadays, probably (after Vivaldi’s “Seasons”) the most commercially recorded pieces ever.

Anthony was a lovely man who was always willing to help other performers, even if, as with Boyd Neel with his string orchestra, they were about to set up in opposition. He had no concept of money and it was only thanks to his second wife Mary (who was a lovely Scots lady from the Beatty family in the Borders) that he ever survived financially. He even went so far as to sell to an American collector for a mere $200, the complete set of orchestral parts for “La Bonne Chanson”. Although originally written for a string quartet, Faure arranged and wrote out the parts in his own hand for string orchestra and piano for a concert given by Anthony and the L.C.O. in 1931.

He seemed to fly through life like a bird and I once said, “His feet never seemed to touch the ground” - a remark which Mary adopted and used many times later. Sadly, after a long battle with cancer, he died in 1963 aged 71. The orchestra had been very much Anthony’s and although the first serious group to broadcast (many of the newly formed B.B.C. Symphony had been L.C.O. members) and with an uninterrupted sequence of broadcasts - particularly on the 3rd Programme as it was known - for over 30 years, it did less and less in later years and being the fickle business it is, few but the very old and/or dedicated musician or music lover can remember or have heard of Anthony Bernard.

we found ourselves working with him on other occasions as his special talent became more recognised.

It was a truly splendid week as we had every afternoon free to see the sights including all the Denkmallen of famous composers, and, finishing each evening at 9.0.p.m. which is when Vienna is coming to , we all made the most of the time to enjoy the wonderful restaurants and nightlife, including the newly restored Opera. Thank you “Flash”.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Later that year (Oct '54) we did the second grand European Tour with Karajan which was a triumphant repeat of the 1953 one with visits to all the important European Capitals plus adding several cities to the Italian part. We again gave two concerts to open the Scala season in Milan (the first for the tiara set to see each other and the second for Music Lovers). De Sabata and Cantelli (who were doing the opera season) came to hear us and it was interesting to see Karajan strutting his opinion to the quiet and polite Cantelli in the interval. We went on to Rome then Perugia - probably the most beautiful Opera House in the world and although smaller - like a beautiful wedding cake inside out and the model for La Scala and later Covent Garden and many others.

Our next stop was Naples where, as the concert was running VERY late (even by Italian standards), we were worried about catching our ship to Palermo in Sicily, until, standing on an outside balcony discussing this, we were joined by the impressario for the concert who said, "Not to worry, the ship will wait for you, - I own the ship." It transpired that he had had his fleet of ships replaced as reparations ….obviously, although Italian having been on the right side in the War. I have never been on such a luxurious and QUIET modern motor liner and we crossed the Med. overnight as if sailing on the proverbial Mill Pond.

The Palermo concert was also a success and we had a free day to spend seeing the many sights and great antiquities such as the fabulous mosaics and the eerily impressive Catacombs of the "Capuccini". We think England has a history; after Etruscan Perugia and Sicily both with histories before even Rome had a wolf to suckle Romulus and Remus, we realise that we are mere beginners with much of our 19th and 20th Century "traditions", colourful though they are.

Again to the ridiculous, I must add a small adventure of which I am

CHAPTER FORTY SEVEN

I first played for Anthony Bernard and his London Chamber Orchestra in 1956 as 2nd Double Bass with "Old" Jim on B.B.C. programmes. Later, on Jim's retirement I did all the work the orchestra had for the B.B.C. and some recordings, notably recording the Bach Violin Concertos with Giaconda di Vita. I got to know Anthony well and as he didn't drive took him to a few "out of Town" concerts such as a memorable one in the Cloisters of Canterbury Cathedral.

The L.C.O. was formed by Anthony in 1921 and originally played to Society audiences such as the Astor and Guinness families in their London Salons and grand houses on the Solent and elsewhere. A real chamber orchestra was a novelty then and the L.C.O. was the first and the oldest still running. Anthony was a. fine keyboard player and a great scholar who was consulted regularly by the best singers and players on ornaments and style.

He worked with Elgar, helping him to score the original "Starlight Express" and was a. close friend of contemporaries such as Manuel de Falla, Villa. Lobos, Faure and most international artists and composers of his time. On one occasion he conducted a. concert of Falla's Keyboard Concerto with Falla playing the Harpsichord version in the first half and the Piano version in the second with Stravinski in the audience! He introduced well over 100 first performances in England (many of them World firsts) of works by composers from Vaughan Williams in 1926 to Malcolm Arnold in 1954, through Lennox Berkeley – no less than 7 pieces between 1926 and 1950 -, Debussy, Ibert, Janacek, Moeran, Warlock, Roussel, Stravinski (including Pulcinello and the Octet), Messian and even the first performance in England of Mozart's Idomineo (sung in Italian). The orchestra made many recordings here and in Paris, including the first ever recording of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos in 1929. Now the rarest of collectors items, (Walter Geseking came over to play keyboard) they were recorded for

stop so he could draw a round house we were passing. I noticed he was drawing with his left hand and when I said I hadn't realised he was left handed, he simply said, "Oh, either!", immediately changed to his right hand and carried on. The only other person I knew who was completely ambidextrous was an old instrument repairer called Harry Young who found it extremely useful when working inside the "awkwa.rd - i.e. right side of an instrument but had a small problem when his bank had to have copies of both of his signatures.

unashamedly proud. After "doing" the Catacombs, the mosaics and other sights, although it was late October it was so warm that a group of us went to a nice beach where people swam in the season. Although no one was swimming then (their season had ended) the old boy in charge - who spoke no English - intimated that he had no objection to our having a dip. What he didn't intimate was that, as we later learnt, there was a powerful undertow and my pal Adrian Cruft (who went on later to become a professor of composition at the Royal College, having been a contemporary of Malcolm Arnold and a pupil of the great Gordon Jacob) got out of his depth in a deep hollow and was drowning. I have always been a pretty good swimmer (I used to go to the swimming baths every morning in Glasgow with my near blind trumpeter pal Jim Morgan), there was no time for niceties and I swam over and saved Adrian by the simple expedient of pulling him by the hair - at least keeping his head up - until I could get an arm round him and anchor us both to a leg of the pier until we got our breath back. I am no hero but in some circumstances one just does what one can and afterwards I told Adrian I had to save him because although I spoke a bit of German and a couple of words in Italian I depended on him to make our way in France as we had elected to book all our own hotels on Tour as we preferred to "met the locals" and found it more interesting and enjoyable away from the organised party with the constant feeling of England abroad.

CHAPTER TWENTY

On the way back from that tour we gave a one off concert in Zurich (?) and next morning Adrian and I had a carriage to ourselves on the train until, stopping at Lucerne we were joined by a charming girl, Ursula Strebi.

Ursula's father was Chief of Policee and Chairman of the Festival Committee and she had now finished school where like most Swiss she had learned German, French and Italian and a1though a1ready speaking it well, was coming to London for a year in Walter Legge's office to brush up her English. She struck up an immediate conversation and soon asked me why we had the bottom button of our waistcoats undone. She was amused and impressed (- these strange English customs) when we told her it was a regular fashion stemming from the Prince Regent who had forgotten to do his up over his rather expansive waist so everyone had followed suit. I remained good friends with Ursula for many years. After her initial year in the Philharmonia office she stayed on in London became a Director and Manager of the English Chamber Orchestra and married Philip Jones the trumpeter and very successfully managed his affairs and those of his well-known Brass Ensemble. Philip was the son of Jack Jones (ex trombone player) who was Orchestral Manager of the L.P.O. and who was to be the man who later invited me to join the L.P.O. (in which Philip was then 3rd trumpet) as Sub-Principal Double Bass.

The next big tour with Karajan was the triumphant tour of the Eastern Seaboard of the U.S.A. It was quite hard work, but tremendously exhilarating. Most of our travel was by coach, 3 coaches with very different drivers - the main one being a real laconic East coast type, the 2nd a nice quiet man and the 3rd, who we christened "the young lad", so scatterbrained he was always last, i.e. stuck at a ford instead of a bridge and once seen, from our coach which was high up on a "spaghetti junction" in Detroit, speeding several layers beneath - - in the opposite direction. The coaches

Schloss Elmau is an amazing place with a. fascinating history where weeks of concerts are given as part of the parcel of entertainment for guests in the Hotel. It lies above the snow line in an unbelievably romantic setting and one can still travel on horse drawn sleighs. On one occasion Louise and I took a sleigh down to Mittenwald, famous for its woodcraft and good string instruments and on the return journey the sleigh driver, who spoke little or no English stopped the horse and gesticulated to us to see the most fantastic sunset over the mountain. I then learned from him that he stopped there every night on his return and each time it moved him like a religious experience.

Yehudi and his wife Diana turned up halfway through the week and we had their company for a couple of meals, whilst Diana nibbled on her few pieces of grass or nuts or whatever kept her so slim. Yehudi offered himself to play the Mozart G major Concerto and a flute player from his entourage (Helen Schaffer) played a (very nervous) Mozart Concerto. I tried to chat her out of her nerves between the rehearsal and concert but to no avail, possibly because our orchestral flautist was Patricia ? who normally played principal flute at Covent Garden and was as unassuming as she was brilliant.

I remain convinced that Dorati, who behaved impeccably and after all was the "star" of that week's show, was not overpleased at these events and suspect that Menuhin who had done similar weeks there with a chamber orchestra was "looking after his interests". I suppose I am something of a cynic, but Yehudi seemed to have a knack of turning up in interesting situations.

When I started to manage the London Chamber Orchestra in 1970 I was able to invite Dorati to conduct the orchestra a few times. One engagement consisted of four concerts in Wales (through Roy Bohana of the Welsh Arts Council) and one at Fairfield Halls Croydon on our return. I took him in my car and Trevor Williams (ex B.B.C. Symphony Leader and now co-leader with Jack Rothstein) also travelled with us. Dorati was keen on sketching and he carried his pad everywhere and on one occasion he asked me to

CHAPTER FORTY SIX

Dorati was a brilliant man and conducted some things better than I have ever heard elsewhere, particularly music with a Slavonic flavour or background. He did enormous research into all the works he conducted but was occasionally too clever for his own good and often quite illogically irascible. He spoke and read seven languages fluently and I was amazed at the extent of his library in his London flat (which he later gave as a wedding present to his beautiful daughter Tonina). He also had "served his apprenticeship" (a la Karajan, Furtwaengler, Toscanini, Kletzki) in the lesser opera houses of Europe as repetiteur who "sat at the feet" of their various master musicians until they were "let loose" on a matinee or when the master was taken ill.

At that time I was "riding a wave" and being invited to parties with members of the Amadeus Quartet - then at the height of their fame, and soloists such as Fou T'song - then married to Menuhin's daughter, and Joseph Suk - violinist grandson of the composer .... this last given by Tonina Dorati at her father's flat.

I got on quite well with Dorati and met him again on a recording session, when I was playing as an extra. with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra which he was conducting. He sent a message after the session asking me to come and see him at his hotel. (He loved living in hotels, and always stayed in the Carlton Towers, probably why he gave his flat to Tonina.) At the meeting he asked me if Louise and I could organise a small orchestra to play for a week in the famous Schloss Elmau in Bavaria. This we did and we gave four orchestral concerts of splendidly varied programmes conducted by Dorati and in gratitude for the splendid hospitality, two "presents" of unscheduled afternoon chamber concerts including "The Trout" in one and the Schumann quintet in the other.

were very comfortable and of the same design as the famous "Greyhounds".

We went as far south as West Virginia and west to Chicago. Most of the concerts were one night stands but we did spend several days in each of the larger Cities e.g. New York, Washington, Chicago and Boston, with a marvellous trip to Toronto, taking in Buffalo and stopping to see the Niagara Falls on the way back. We also played at several Universities – Yale, Ann Arbour, Amherst, Burlington, Boston etc. and were lucky enough to see at its best New England in the Fall.

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

Random Impressions of America:-

We found America very impressive for many reasons, for instance, the actual scale of everything. We travelled for an hour or so along the side of a river as large as the Thames at Sunbury, which was a tributary of a river which itself was a tributary of the Missouri.From West Virginia (Charlston) on November 1st where we were in shirt sleeves one day to Columbia, Ohio the next where it was like pleasant Autumn in England, then Toledo, Ohio, again like English Autumn - but cold and wet, and on November 4th, Chicago where walking on Lakeside I was advised by a local gentleman to get earmuffs as my ears were turning blue. (Deja-vous, Marseilles in reverse). It was bitterly cold with a freezing wind blowing off the Lake (and Boy! are they Lakes) so in Toronto I bought my first fur hat complete with ear flaps. The Cities were exciting and having four days in New York I was able to "do the Town" as I had close friend, an English Bass Player called John Drew, for whom I had found a couple of good Italian instruments, before he went to the States. John took me to all the best clubs, bars and jazz spots. He was at that time at the Copa Cabana with Neal Hefti, played in a weekly T.V. show (enough in itself to live on at American T.V. rates) and was Gene Krupa's favourite Bass Player so had toured extensively with Krupa. He loved America and was very popular with the New York musicians but sadly came home to England three years later to die of Leukemia within a further six weeks.

The pace of everything seemed much faster than poor old Britain (we had never recovered from the war, whereas it practically recreated the American economy) but we came to realise that although waiters, for instance, were rushing about (as were most people) our meals were not really being served much faster and people were largely just being busy "being busy". I wondered then (and still do) if Americans copied what they saw in their films or if their films reflected their lives.
Several small things also added up to create substantial differences.

CHAPTER FORTY FIVE

Lena had booked Stravinski to repeat the programme in Oxford as part of her Festival but, Stravinski, pleading ill-health, (he was very old and frail), cried off at the last moment so we were faced with the problem of finding a Conductor within 48 hours who knew the pieces - particularly Oedipus Rex. The only people I knew who had done it were Colin Davis but he wasn't free and Antal Dorati who eventually agreed providing the rehearsals were arranged around his free time - i.e. in London (although the concert was to be in Oxford) as he was engaged in the morning of both days.

We hastily called an afternoon rehearsal at Cecil Sharp House (much telephoning of Singers and Musicians) and Dorati worked hard and marvellously well. Some of the singers were appearing at Covent Garden in the evening so their solos had to be rehearsed out of sequence to allow them to rush off. The Baritone soloist, getting ever more worried as time went on, eventually told me he just had to go, whereupon, tired of the whole timing problem, I said, "Then go up and tell him." As he got to his feet to do so, mouth open in protest, Dorati started his introduction and instead he swung into his big aria then turned and rushed through the swing doors ... Real Film Comedy stuff!!

CHAPTER FORTY FOUR

Airlines including B.E.A., who were none too civil on a trip to Sweden, were not all quite the polished performers they are today. Amongst the best was Pan Am., T.W.A. and the old B.A.0.C. but near to the bottom of the list was the Greek National Airline and the Greek National Airline and the final straw was having to endure a most uncomfortable couple of hours sitting in the plane on the tarmac in the blazing sun without any explanation. I had to insist on getting off to try to get an explanation and it seemed that some bureaucratic argument was going on about the loading of John Marson's new American Harp. There had been no problem coming from London (by the same Airline) and we never did find out what it was all about. There seemed to be a recurring problem with airport bureaucrats over "problems" which the pilots and cabin staff could solve in minutes. With the London Chamber Orchestra I p1ayed on a small chamber Bass by Gabrielli (unusually) labelled and dated 1760 ... (now owned by a. member of the Berlin Philharmonic). Consequently I refused to allow it to go in the hold where the baggage used to be practically tipped in. If a flight was full we would even buy 2 tickets (one for "Mr.Bass" and one for "Mr.Cello" for the two Cellos). On another occasion (B. A. 0. C.) the Captain instructed the staff to remove the door from one of the "Loos" to accommodate them. On another, in the Carribean, I had to threaten to take all of the orchestra. off if a ground official insisted the Bass couldn't go inside. This was after half an hours argument with this little Hitler in the airport and up to the plane itself ... the most annoying part being that the aircrew had said it was no problem.

Nearly all Aircrew loved having musicians on board and used to welcome us vociferously on their Tannoy. One Captain asked if he could become our Guitar player and another insisted on letting us hear his tenor voice. Our problems only seemed to be with ground officials. As Eric Sykes put it so well in one of his sketches, "Give them a peaked cap. . . "

The variety of food was (then) incredible compared to Britain. For instance at one roadside "Howard Hardart" (the much superior equivalent of our motorway restaurants) there was a choice of nine varieties of bean on the side dish. The Hotels and restaurants in early 50's had all got real central heating so you could walk around the Hotel in light clothes and only put on overcoats and hats to go out. In places like Detroit (admittedly the Car Capital of the World) there were miles of second hand car lots where you could buy cars little more than one year old for around half the price of new ones. Built in obsolescence was already well established. In all the Cities cars were parked end to end in all the residential areas, something which gradually began to happen in London throughout the next ten years.

Adrian Cruft and I tried for weeks as soon as we got to a new hotel to find something "decent" – *anything* - on one of their dozens of T.V. and radio channels. Everything was absolute ……(fill in your own missing word). After three weeks of fruitless search, Adrian had gone into the bathroom, I switched on, pushed buttons and suddenly there were the opening bars of Beethoven's 5th. I shouted, "Adrian, come out - quick –I've got something at last!" but Adrian rushed out only to hear the announcer say, "That was great music and now we have for you a great car". Most definitely "nothing was sacred". It seems now (this was pre- I.T.V. and Channel 4) here in Britain, albeit slowly, we are catching up. Unfortunately most Americans (where their T.V. has always been commercial) know no better but the small percentage who do would give an arm for the good old B.B.C. - "Birt's and all".

Travel by plane was commonplace. Businessmen regularly took "the breakfast flight" to Washington from New York, in fact Adrian did so once and the first trombone of the New York Philharmonic flew to Washington one day every week to teach there.

The charge for “service” seemed to be approximately the same for everything, - a plumber, dentist or cleaning lady - around $5 per hour and the cleaning lady would drive to work in her own, pretty good, car.

In “Tie World” in New York (in 1955) I bought some ties which seemed normal on the streets there but which I couldn’t wear in London because they were so “gaudy”. Now, in 1996 even a quiet, responsible person such as my favourite newscaster, Jon Snow, can wear them without comment. I also bought slacks which one chose to fit waist, hips etc. and the unfinished legs were then cut and finished to suit one’s inside leg - whilst you wait. At that time in London such sensible and convenient service was quite unheard of.

I loved visiting America and the fine people we met but, despite the many good things it was “not my scene” and I couldn’t live there. I have made several visits since and my opinion has not changed. There was still something special about “stodgy” old Britain which is more than simply, home is where your heart is.

probably did more than any other composer to change attitudes and open new doors and his independence and carefulness was reflected in his music. He deservedly received enormous respect and once again I felt privileged (as did all my colleagues) to work with a. truly great man.

by the British Council Rep. to a. splendid meal on one of the floating Fish Restaurants in the Harbour of Piraeus.

The Herodus Atticus theatre is an open air amphitheatre sitting just below the Acropolis so you may well imagine the atmosphere on a beautiful Athenian evening with the legendary Stravinski conducting his own monumenta1 work, Oedipus Rex, with a first class orchestra. He sent us his congratulations afterwards, said the orchestra was marvellous and he had heard parts, such as low wind, that he had never really heard before. This may, apart from (modesty be damned) the fine playing, have been due to the marvellous acoustic… Pause for thought:- The Herodus Atticus, as was the great Arena in Verona, was built by the Romans some two and a. half thousand years ago yet the acoustics are phenomenal and we do not seem to have bettered them since. There was one small negative incident in the concert which only the orchestra. and Stravinski himself would have noted. In his score, although the text is in French, Stravinski suggests it should be declaimed in the language of the country in which it is being performed. Therefore, the Actor, who was Greek, declaimed his part in Greek and Stravinski - expecting to hear "Le Roi e le Roi", brought his hands down too early for a lower string entry and a couple of Cellos and Basses fell for it. Luckily the rest of us remembered the phrase from the rehearsal and righted it so no real damage was done.

Like my old Scottish mentors mentioned in a. previous chapter, Stravinski, who had also known harder times, was a canny old soul and I have already mentioned his scheme for renewal of copyright. He also insisted on his fee ($3000 at that time) being paid in U.S.Dollars, wherever he performed. A few years later when I managed the London Chamber Orchestra I adopted the same condition - which, in countries like some in South America, was a necessary precaution.

Stravinski's colossal contribution to music in the 20th Century

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

On the last part of the tour prior to our final concert in Boston we played in one or two lesser venues - a couple being in converted swimming pools or a Town Hall where the acoustic left much to he desired. Karajan seemed to feel that these places were beneath him and at the end of these concerts he gave a particularly ungracious and abrupt reception to the applause. There was a fine violinist called Peter Gibbs who had come as an extra. Peter had been a Battle of Britain fighter pilot so presumably had not much time for "stroppy" Germans. A1though normal1y a quiet, mild-mannered and gentlemanly chap he seemingly became particularly resentful of this behaviour by Karajan.

At the end of the rehearsal for the last concert in Boston, he stood up and in restrained and polite fashion asked "Mr. Karajan" if he could address a few words to him. I immediately thought, what a good idea, instead of the "vote of thanks" coming from the leader, Manoug Parikian, as would have been normal, the address was to be made by a back desk player. As Peter's quiet but firm speech went on we began to realise this was no eulogy but in fact a strong complaint and "dressing down" of Karajan for his rude behaviour after the last two concerts which Peter pointed out had offended a number of his friends in the audience, who had looked forward to and made some effort to come to the concert. He finished by asking Karajan to offer an apology for his recent behaviour and sat down. Karajan made his usual muttering and spluttering sound when at a loss and dismissed Gibbs with a shrug and indeterminate wave. Peter stood again and quietly said, "I do not consider that that constitutes an apology, Mr. Karajan" whereupon Karajan stormed off and sent Jane Withers back to the platform to announce that Karajan had instructed her, "If that man played in the concert he would not conduct."

The orchestra had an immediate impromptu meeting at which it was decided that there was a definite fault in Karajan's behaviour but that Peter could have chosen a more discreet method of showing his

displeasure. Most of the members were beginning to regard Karajan's arrogance as more than tiresome so it was agreed that it would be left to Peter Gibbs to decide if he wished to take part in this last important concert and we would support his decision either way. He said he had contracted to do the tour so he would prefer to complete the engagement. This was relayed to Karajan who eventually conducted the concert in a normal and orderly fashion.

Lena was Greek and moved in exalted circles in her native land amongst whom were Government Ministers of Culture and other high officials and she had persuaded the Minister of Culture to allow her to present a concert of his own work conducted by Stravinski as part of the Athens Festival. This turned out to be a stroke of luck for us as she had mentioned (but not confirmed) the date to the L.S.O. who had gone and booked another engagement by the time this was finally confirmed. In desperation, finding the L.P.O. and other orchestras also engaged, she turned to Louise and I. I knew the Philharmonia brass were free, as were the London Mozart Players, so we were able to build a. splendid large orchestra. around the nucleus of the L.M.P. with the best Brass and Horns in London (led by Alan Civil). This needed Harry Blech's consent and at a meeting at our house in Sunbury-on-Thames (actually walking on the Island opposite) Harry and I came to an agreement. Harry had stipulated he should conduct a concert as well so he had a Mozart concert with a. well-known Greek pianist and we had the privilege of working with the great Stravinski himself. He was very old and extremely frail and sat behind his music stand so that all we could see was his hands and his face with those splendid eyes.

We were there for a week. On the second day we rehearsed with Robert Craft, a thorough but uninspiring American who was Stravinski's Emanuensis, who took us through Oedipus Rex (which Stravinsky personally conducted in the concert and short rehearsal with soloists) and Symphony in C with which Craft opened the concert. As the Brass and other extras such as Contra Bassoon, Clarinets, Harp etc. were only required for the Stravinsky concert, they had virtually a week's holiday as they were paid for the week but only worked on one concert.

The temperature in Athens is so high that we had to rehearse early in the morning before the sun became too strong (something regularly done in Egypt, South America and other very hot places) so we had plenty of time for sight-seeing, particularly as there was a complete free day between concerts. We were also lucky enough to be taken

CHAPTER FORTY THREE

One such personality was Lena Lalandi, who, apart from being a keyboard player was something of an impressario - perhaps that should be impressaria ….students of Italian please correct. With the stalwart and faithful support of her husband, Ralph, who, other than financially, remained very much in the background, she established the Oxford Bach Festival. This grew into an important annual event with (later) some of the concerts being repeated in the Q.E.H. One lovely innovation was Lena's idea of presenting costume concerts (with subsequent supper) for several hundred wealthy patrons in the long library of Blenheim Palace. As a small band of some 8 or so players we played 18th Century music dressed in the authentic 18th Century costumes including full wigs. To see the lined and craggy faces of Raymond Clark (Cello) and Cecil James in full regalia. was worth going for on its own.

The concerts were directed by "young" Carl Pini (a fine violinist from that remarkable family) and after he went to Australia, by Neville Marriner - who was beginning to make a name for himself as a director and who was an old "fellow sufferer" in the London Mozart Players with Harry Blech. Lena liked to feature herself in an organ concerto which presented a problem, particularly for the wind players as the organ was well below normal pitch. The strings could (reluctantly) tune down and for all the other pieces we had a harpsichord played by a fine keyboard player, Courtney Kenny. Appropo - Lena and her organ playing - For one of the repeat concerts at Q.E.H. she elected to play a Handel concerto. As you will know, these concertos have a very long introduction and on this occasion the improbable, but hilarious happened. When we had churned our way through the seeming interminable introduction, Lena., with great style and aplomb brought her hands down on the keyboard and - NOTHING -. They had forgotten to switch on the (electric) Organ. So, struggling to keep straight faces we had to play the introduction all through again, whereupon Lena "Womanfully" (one must now he politically correct) struggled through to the end.

CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

We had flown across in two planes. This was still the era of piston-engined planes and the outward journey had taken sixteen hours London to New York - with a half hour stop at Shannon to take on enough fuel for the big hop. Because of the time change we had the amusing experience of the cabin crew giving us breakfast at 8 a.m. then for three or four hours jokingly announcing it was now 8 a.m. and "Breakfast would now be served". In order to complete the return "hop" from Boston it was necessary to fly to Goose Bay or Gander to refuel as on the outward journey. Those of us in the first plane set off for Gander and arrived just as a snowstorm was starting. Everything was rushed through (we only had time to walk to the reception huts, have a coffee and board again) and we managed to take off and out of it just as the storm really got going. Unfortunately for the other plane (which was nominally slightly faster so had set off later expecting to catch up) they landed into the snowstorm and were unable to tke off again immediately because the Tuba player, Clem Lawton (remember he of Jack Hylton fame) had a minor heart attack so they had to remain in Newfoundland for 24 hours.

We of the first plane were asked when we arrived back (by this time the news had preceded us) to ring round the wives and/or other kin to explain the situation. All was eventually well, including Clem, and they duly arrived 24 hours later.

The fina1 chapter in the Karajan saga was as follows. Shortly after our return to London and again at a session in Kingsway Hall, we were told by Legge that a letter had arrived from Karajan's solicitors in which he accused the orchestra of having "gone on strike" in Boston and insisting that all members should admit this and sign the enclosed document, which was in effect an abject apology to Karajan. A meeting was held at which various members expressed their opinion of this further example of Karajan's arrogance. Dennis Brain and other leading members including Manoug Parikian (who had bad flu but got out of his sick bed to express his objection to this

unprecedented display of Prussian behaviour by Karajan). Manoug was probably the best Leader (Concert-master) in England, - a very pleasant man who said little but whose authority re bowing etc. was never questioned. He came originally from Armenia - (consequently the orchestra gave itself the "insider joke" name of "Foul Armenia" Orchestra) and when we recorded a series of works by Khatchaturian conducted by the composer, a charming man, Manoug "spoke the lingo" ("ian" - get it?) and was able to precisely interpret Khatchaturian's instructions. When Walter Legge tried to smooth things over and persuade the orchestra to sign, I pointed out that we would he the laughing stock of the orchestral world if we signed this intolerable document. One could easily imagine Karajan sadistically framing it and hanging it like a trophy in the Musikvereinsaal. The result was that it was returned to Karajan unsigned and without further comment although unbelievably there are always some creeps in every organisation, some of whom were prepared to sign. One (true to his norma1 form) said, when I remonstrated with him, "Well, he brings us a lot of money."

Karajan made no further reference to the matter, after all he had got what he wanted thanks to the Philharmonia. He simply issued a statement to the German press as follows:- As he had now been appointed to the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonics, he no longer had time to work with foreign orchestras such as the Philharmonia.

In retrospect, Karajan was not a complete monster, although he was supremely skilled at manipulating people to achieve his ambitions and his ultimate world fame proved this, helped no doubt by the German national psyche as I have hinted earlier. He was certainly extremely intelligent and on occasion could be humorous - although not in the class of Klemperer - as the following short anecdotes will show.

As I mentioned in Chapter 9, a number of us played in the London Mozart Players when possible to fit in with the Philharmonia, - the original "fixer" (orchestral manager) having been Joan Ingpen who collected the nucleus of players for Harry Blech's Mozart Players

suggested to Harry that he employ her as his "fixer" - orchestral or players' manager. (Louise subsequently went on to establish a new career as a free lance orchestra1 manager.) Initially this worked well as I knew all the best players and she was an efficient and enthusiastic (latterly almost obsessional) office worker. In the first year she relied on my advice, in the second she began to question it and in the third she started to tell me. By no means a unique experience cynics amongst you will say and eventually her "independent" attitude coupled with financial "misunderstandings" led to the end of our collaboration and eventually our marriage. However, that is past history and whilst we were together we worked on many exciting engagements with interesting people.

case stolen in the melee outside a concert hall after the concert whilst all the players' suitcases and instruments were being loaded onto a coach. When the theft was discovered we then spent most of the night (into the wee sma' hours) looking everywhere and at the police station (where my school-boy German was stretched to its limit.) The brief-case which contained several passports and all the rail tickets, was never found, but with the help of the police and local agents who vouched for us, we completed a long tour of many rail journeys without tickets ....in fact meeting with nothing but kindness and sympathy from the various rail officials - until we. arrived back in Dover - where the Station Master was the first to question the facts and we were subjected to the indignity of having to sit in carriages in a siding for several hours whilst calls to London were made checking our credentials.

Sweden was every bit as exhilarating as I had imagined and we loved the trip, except for the most inconsiderate and rude cabin staff we had ever encountered - on B.E.A. - Not surprising it eventually folded. Also we were amazed that Malmo, a city roughly the size of any of our large towns or sma1ler cities, had a full time Opera House with full time Symphony size orchestra., chorus and staff. Perhaps my viewpoint is biased regarding the difference between musical appreciation in England and Europe, but the delivery boys in Milan really do or did whistle tunes from the. operas.

This was my second period of four years playing in the orchestra with a. four year break in the middle - (I used to joke that I had 2 x four year sentences with Harry Blech with four years off for good behaviour) and now the orchestra was pretty much simply a touring band with no longer any recording or T.V. sessions. During this latter period Harry confided to me that he had problems with his book- keeping and I introduced Louise to him as she had been a tria1 balance book-keeper. She straightened out all his accounts and Harry was so impressed by this (I don't think he had ever seen a proper balance) that he went around studying it as if it were a musical score. The children were young and Louise was dying for a part-time job which she could occupy herself with from home, so I

and subsequently recommended many of them to Walter Legge. (Joan's agency "Ingpen and Williams" was taken over by her secretary when she – Joan, became the artists' manager for Covent Garden.) On one occasion the L.M.P. were recording at E.M.I. and when a small group of us came out of Studio One we were met by Karajan who had been in Abbey Rond editing some of his material. He asked us what was this group and Arthur Davidson (violinist) said, "The LONDON Mozart Players". Karajan immediately returned with "London MOZART Players! I should start the VIENNA Shakespeare Company."

He had been to the Victoria and Albert Museum and had seen the gigantic Octo Bass (which is or was a feature as you go up the stairs to the Musical Instrument Section). He asked us how this was played and Jim Merrett said, "It needs three men." Karajan said, "Three men?" and Jim said, "Yes, one to finger the strings, one to use the bow and the third to read the music." It took a moment for him to grasp this in English but then he exploded with back-clapping chuckles.

It is a small world; when I gave an illustrated talk to the Tavistock Recorded Music Society in 1993 their Chairman produced a Roya1 Festival Hall programme (with my name in it!!!) of the concert given on the eve of our departure to America with Karajan. He had then lived in London and had been a fan of the Philharmonia.

The most droll of all conductors I worked with was Klemperer. He conducted the orchestra on numerous occasions whilst I was a member, and after I had left and when the band changed its name to "New" he became the permanent Conductor for many years. He was another of the German School like Furtwaengler but with his own interpretations which were different but also had that elusive ""authority". I understand from older players that he had been a real martinet in his younger days but he had mellowed much by the 50's. Despite two massive strokes and setting himself on fire in bed (he refused to give up his pipe) he kept his "canny" sense of humour and loved to tease - and he teased vis a vis English v German. On

one occasion the first trumpet was late and when in his deep growl he asked, “Ver is Mr. Jackson?” Dennis Clift who was then the 2nd trumpet said, “We are not sure what has happened, Doctor Klemperer, but he has a German car!” which Klemperer thought very funny. Another time, Raymond C1ark, the principal cellist (a magnificent player of World standard who could bring a lump to the throat when he played a short solo phrase), a dour but loveable Yorkshireman, stood up and said very pedantically, “Dr. Klemperer, if you would kindly give us a clear beat perhaps we could get that passage together for the first time in History”. Klemperer immediately came back with, “For the FIRST time in ENGLISCH History”. He was truly a grand old man and the rapport between him and the orchestra was really something special.

CHAPTER FORTY TWO

I have already made reference to the London Mozart Players which orchestra was started just after the War. The idea of a small orchestra playing Mozart, Haydn and smaller Schubert works was an instant success and rapidly became a part of the London musical scene. The idea of a regular chamber orchestra had been initiated by Anthony Bernard with his foundation of the London Chamber Orchestra (more of this anon) but the specialisation of the L.M.P., which in later years proved somewhat inhibiting, appealed to a large public. Harry Blech, who had been a successful violinist in the B.B.C. Symphony and leading quartets, proved to have a good ear for string players in particular and many of our leading professionals were “discovered” by Harry. Furthermore he was initially able to call upon many of London’s finest players who were returning from War-time service in Military Bands and Orchestras ... ably assisted by Joan Ingpen of the agency Ingpen and Williams – (I never knew who Williams was although I knew well and liked Joan).

Harry Blech’s first wife, Enid, was a marvellous organiser and an outstanding personality - she learned to fly in her 50’s - who went on into Artists’ personal management, and her energy and enterprise had much to do with the orchestra’s success. The formation of the Haydn/Mozart Society was a real brainwave as, with its very large membership it could guarantee full houses at the newly built R.F.H. for all ten of the annual L.M.P. concerts subsequently given there. No other London orchestra could do this and it proved to he a great bargaining chip for Harry when the South Bank management tried to shunt the orchestra over to the Queen Elizabeth Hall which had been specifically built for chamber orchestras. His argument was further strengthened as his was the only small orchestra. honoured with a concert in the R.F.H. during its opening week.

The orchestra did many fine concerts and I well remember tours of Italy, Germany and Sweden, all of which were well received and great fun. Anecdote time:- Early on during one tour of Germany, my first wife, Louise, who had become the “fixer” had her brief-

We were “fitting in” one of these recitals in the morning en route to an afternoon rehearsal and evening concert with the L.M.P. on the South Coast when suddenly halfway through I was hit by an agonising pain in the lumbar region.

I struggled through the show - Bobby said afterwards it was the first time he had actually seen someone turn green with pain - but had to abandon the L.M.P. concert and return home. A kidney stone had started moving which caused damage inside and resulted in all kinds of complications and was a prelude to the somewhat protracted uncomfortable and painful period referred to previously. In one respect it did me good as enforced idleness and real suffering brought home to me the fact that the World could actually manage without my frantic non-stop charging around.

CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

Life after Karajan:- Important though he was, Karajan only represented a very small part of the Philharmonia’s engagements as the orchestra was now so successful that it was working non-stop with nearly all the most important Artists in the World, - so much so that Walter Legge booked Kingsway Hall (the best recording venue in London and much sought after by all the leading orchestras) for a MINIMUM (always exceeded) of 300 sessions each year, in advance. I have already mentioned some of the conductors the orchestra worked with and I would now like to paint a small picture of Guido Cantelli, who was probably the most talented ever, with an unmatched sensitivity and unbelievable memory. Sadly, in November 1956 (the year after I left the Philharmonia), he was killed at the heart-breaking age of 37 in an aircraft disaster. He had just accepted the post of Music Director at La Scala, where his immediate predecessors had been Toscanini and de Sabata and the plane crashed on take-off from Paris en route to New York where he was returning to conduct at the Met, again succeeding Toscanini as Music Director.

He was a joy to work with and his interpretation of Rossini Overtures, (one of which he did in most concerts) were of a gaiety, lightness and brilliance never experienced before or since. It takes an artist to lift these works (often simply “pot boilers”) to the heights he achieved.

He told us he studied his scores for the coming season for three months in advance then having committed them to (his absolutely photographic) memory, never opened them again. In the most complicated works he could stop (and/or start) at any point and say things like, “In bar 544 the 2nd trumpet should be la be moll” - (B flat … he always worked in the continental Sol Fed) and sing the appropriate passage.

In three concerts with him one year at the Edinburgh Festival he conducted nine major works, including Schumann, Brahms and

Tchaikowsky Symphonies, the Bartok Concerto for Orchestra (a tour de force for any conductor), Mathis der Mahler Symphony of Hindemith without a score at REHEARSALS and Concerts. He was dedicated to his music (non-smoking, non-drinking - except milk) and his interpretations were all fantastic.

The finest musical experience I have ever had was a concert with him at the Royal Festival Hall which ended with the Hindemith "Mathis der Mahler" Symphony. After the final choral with its magnificent brass had ended there was not a sound to be heard in the Hall, then after a breathless pause the applause erupted. I looked around and saw old "hardened" colleagues with actual tears in their eyes and even the memory still fills me with emotion.

Years later I heard Manoug Parikian (a man I got on with very well and probably the best leader ever) being interviewed on the B.B.C. and he specificaly mentioned this concert as having been the most memorable and emotional he had taken part in. We had never discussed this and it was good to hear him also select this particular event as his finest performance.

Cantelli insisted on his recordings being done in whole movements and would not allow "patches" as is usually the case as he wanted only to record a performance. The only other artist I have played with who also did this was Jascha Heifitz, another of my all time Heroes who could bring a lump to the throat and when he played "spoke with the voice of God".

was even taller and built like Clint Eastwood whereas Johnny was around five foot six or seven, so as we walked to the recording room with Johnny between us I winked at Tim and we put a hand under each of his elbows and just raised him off the floor for a few steps. He laughed like a dray and came back immediately with, "You guys are the best Bass players I have ever heard, your pizzicato is phenomenal and I gottasay that because you are both over six feet tall!" After that we couldn't look back and quickly polished off the other items on the tracks. When we had finished Johnny said, "Where have you been, man, for so long?" and I explained I had had an operation for kidney problems caused by a stuck stone and a Diverticulum on the Bladder. His reply was, "Man,- a Bladder Diverticulum: that is the Greatest, the absolute in-thing in Hollywood right now!" Nice to know I was right in there with the top Hollywood fashion!!

The above mentioned illness started during a demonstration recital with Flautist Wilfred Smith. Wilfred played in the London Mozart Players and for several years presented really excellent demonstration concerts for Schools using players mainly from the L.M.P. in different little combinations to demonstrate all the instruments. He played on and presented all of the little concerts which lasted an hour and we regularly did two or three per day around the South East London and Bromley/Beckenham area. They were hugely entertaining and instructive for the children and the group members (always 4 or 5 strong) gave individual demonstrations and solo pieces on their instrument and played marches, which Wilf had arranged for the various combinations, as opening and closing pieces. His wife, Daphne Ibbotson, was a fine pianist (one of the B.B.C. accompanists) who played on all of the series so you could have a group of Trumpet, Cello, Flute and Piano or in our case Double Bass, Flute, Percussion and Piano. The Dummer, Bobby Howes, was the Tympanist in the L.M.P. and like all modern percussionists, played all the tuned instruments e.g. xylophone etc.

CHAPTER FORTY ONE

Oddly enough, the large orchestra required was engaged by Phil Jones who was "fixer" for Malcolm Arnold amongst others. I did all Phil's work so I was asked to do principal Bass for the film anyhow - to Eric's delight when he found me on the set. I cannot say the co-operation between Eric and Johnny was entirely happy but the music was good and they just about managed to work together although Eric had to be talked out of resigning several times.

This film was unusual in that we recorded much of the music in advance for the singers and dancers to work to, unlike the normal procedure of fitting the orchestral score to an already completed film. Because of this the music went on with a few fairly regular music sessions throughout the entire shooting of the film. It was my bad luck to he taken seriously ill after the first month or so (more of this anon) so I missed 3 or 4 months of it. Shortly after my return to work I had a call from Phil Jones to ask me to come to Shepperton for a session to add "Sweeteners" and to recommend another player to come with me who had a "with it" style and outlook. "Sweeteners" are overlaying a particular track (possible through multi-track recording) on a tape to replace the original, so have to be pretty accurate. Anyhow, I booked Tim Bell who was pretty well "on the ball".

When Tim and I turned up at Shepperton sound stage we were surprised to find no-one except Johnny Green in the huge room. We were supplied with "cans" (earphones) and Johnny strangely at a distance on the podium, started things off. It soon became obvious that he was out of his depth trying to follow the tape so I suggested each piece be played through a couple of times without us playing so I could get the tempi and judge the cadence hiatuses. Tim kept perfectly with me and we made the first take. Johnny then invited us into the recording booth to listen to it. I am over six feet tall, Tim

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

The chairs in Kingsway Hall were old wooden ones and ruined many a quiet passage by creaking at the wrong moment, - not conducive to relaxed playing. It wasn't until Cantelli insisted that they were all changed that new metal (silent) ones were duly installed. Although it had the best acoustics, Kingsway Hall did have other problems. For instance, there was an occasional rumble from the underground so recordings had to he organised so that quiet passage were not interupted. Also, building work went on for months at one period in the Connaught Rooms next door. This became so bad that the sound engineers had to rig a wire from the recording room with a red light at the end to the building site and Walter Legge had to PAY the workmen to STOP WORK each time the red light came on and we were making a "take". Oh, the joy for an Irish builder to be paid to <u>not</u> work and I suspect that building job was prolonged considerably.

The next anecdote took place in E.M.I. Studio One (Abbey Road) where we were to record Ravel's "La Valse". It opens with a long atmospheric "grumbling" passage in the Double Basses and Cantelli had spent some 3/4 hr tuning, balancing and rehearsing the section (which was one short, 7 instead of 8) and was just about to start a trial take when the studio door swung open and an old Bass Player who had been engaged as an extra came striding in with his instrument strapped to his back, in gentlemanly fashion doffed his trilby to the Maestro, explained he had got the message wrong and gone to Kingsway Hall, marched round the orchestra, in behind the Basses, undressed his cover, addressed his instrument towards Cantelli (who had been watching all this in utter bewilderment) and intimated he was now ready. He hadn't even tuned his Bass and had no idea that Cantelli had spent all this time exclusively on the Basses. Cantelli who ad been giving the orchestra a nice speech of encouragement prior to the first take, continued to do so in his slightly fractured English until realising the enormity of the sitution, got more and more depressed eventually coming to tears … (he was Italian) whereupon he was led off by Walter with a towel round his

neck and the Ravel was postponed for that day and Siegfried Idyll was recorded with a smaller band when he had recovered.

Also at E.M.I., - very soon afterwards, after many attempts to record something during which he kept saying, “I no get the sound here (the recording room) I have there (the studio)”, he refused to record ever again at Abbey Road. It was a difficult studio and over the years a fortune was spent re-arranging and trying to improve it. They even completely removed the fine organ which took up a large part of one side. There had been constant complaints but most people “made the best of it” and it was another measure of Cantelli’s integrity and constant search for perfection that he refused to record there. Strangely enough, I learned later, 30 odd years before (probably before Cantelli was born) Toscanini had said and done the same thing. This brings me neatly to Toscanini and the famous last two concerts he gave in London at the Royal Festival Hall.

I was also playing for Laurie Johnson in all his film work and in every episode of the trail-blazing “Avengers” series with Patrick McNee and its several leading ladies, now all household names. Laurie was one of the nicest guys one could meet and a mate to all musicians. Unfortunately his “fixer” was not and things were going on that Laurie was not aware of. Suffice it to say, I fell out with this individual and after the Avengers he cut me out of Laurie’s work. Laurie eventually discovered how this “empire building” chap was operating - (he was subsequently banned by the Musicians’ Union and made bankrupt) and dispensed with his services. He then had his “fixing” done by his own office secretary whereupon I was “back in” and did all his work again right up to my “retirement” in 1986. I was finally only going up from Devon to London to do a few “reunion” sessions for him and his partner Jack Parnell and I.T.V. “fixer” and lovely chap Frank Reidy.

Going back to Eric Rogers, he had done all the music for the stage production of the musical “Oliver” which was successfully transferred to Broadway and Eric rearranged his score for the larger orchestra used in New York and went to America to attend rehearsals there. M.G.M. then decided to make it into a film and Eric expected to do this as well (which in retrospect, he should have done) so promised all his buddies that they would be booked for it in due course. Unfortunately, the powers that be at M.G.M. decided that they should have their Musical Director, Johnny Green, to direct the music for such an important picture.

Eric was understandably somewhat “miffed” but agreed to work with Johnny Green, whom he had never met but respected for some of the marvellous song numbers he had written. Incidentally, he, John Green, was in charge of M.G.M. music when Andre Previn (a brilliant young pianist) was appointed as his assistant.

CHAPTER FORTY

Mention of Actors brings to mind the short period I worked in the band at the Mermaid Theatre in the production of “Lock Up Your Daughters” produced by the inimitable Bernard Miles. The cast was tremendous and worked on a co-op basis, helping out with sets etc., for salaries which must be laughable to them now. Hy Hazel (now sadly no longer with us) and Bernard made a marvellous pairing and others included Una Stubbs, her (then) husband Peter (?) and Joss Ackland ... all individually famous now but a lovely happy bunch then and we were all pals. I was in the midst of decorating my house and so were Una and Peter and they had an uncle or someone “in the trade” who supplied the ever popular Dulux Magnolia at trade price - which discount they kindly passed on to me. God only knows how many gallons of Dulux was universally slapped around during that early 60’s period.

The show was a tremendous success (music by Laurie Johnson) but as the Mermaid had City backing on a non-profit making basis it had to be taken off after around three months ... (originally scheduled for three weeks). “By popular demand” - what a lovely phrase - it was put on again later (to even greater acclaim) for a. short season and eventually transferred to the West End as a highly successful commercial production. The band conductor was a talented pianist/arranger called Dereck New. The band was only wind, no strings apart from the old “Dog Box”, Harp, Piano and Percussion, and this gave Dereck the idea of presenting a group featuring the Harp as a solo instrument in rhythm and popular music. The Dereck New Quintet came into being and for several years we did regular weekly series for the B.B.C. John Marson was the Harpist, Roland Harker - Accoustic (Spanish) Guitar, yours truly - Bass, John Blanchard - tuned Percussion and Dereck himself played piano. It was an unusual and delightful sounding combnation and great fun to do.

CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

Cantelli was a protege of Toscanini, but, he insisted, not a pupil. (He had lived all his young life in North Italy whilst Toscanini had been in America.) He claimed that Toscanini had heard him but he had never heard Toscanini. However, they had become good friends in America and Toscanini said, (-he was no blushing violet), “When I die this man will wear my mantle.” It was through Cantelli’s description and praise of the Philharmonia as the best orchestra in the world - he couldn't believe the sight-reading as well - that Toscanini was persuaded to come to London and conduct the two memorable Brahms concerts … Symphonies 1 & 2 and the Tragic Overture in the first and the Haydn Variations and Symphonies 3 & 4 in the second. As a measure of the popular anticipation for these concerts - the R.F.H holds 3,500 people, i.e. 7,000 for the two concerts - there were over 100,000 postal applications alone and people queued for 3 days and nights (in sleeping bags and taking turns for each other). The queue stretched right along the side of the building past the Arstist’s entrance and the (then) underground car-park. And they were there only in the hope of RETURNS. Normally, Orchestra members can have tickets (sometimes free) but we were allowed only 48 pairs (24 pairs per concert) at a guinea each for an orchestra of 100 or so players. It was decided that we should have a raffle for them and Charles Verney (a violinist pal) and I agreed that if either of us won we would have one each. Charles won so I had one ticket which I gave to my Irish landlady at the “League of Nations” digs. In retrospect this was a dreadful waste as good Irish soul that she was, it was all a bit above her head and the main thing she seemed to notice from an unique event was the hat worn by the lady in the row in front of her. I shouldn’t be unkind but it was rather “pearls amongst swine”. Again to the ridiculous, on the evening before Toscanini’s first rehearsal the orchestra gave a concert in Bedford and as each of us was dropped off the coach back in London people were saying (as a stupid joke), “See you at 2.30.” (The rehearsal was actually

scheduled for 2.0.) This false time fixed in my mind, I got there nice and early (around 2.10) I thought, only to find the orchestra playing and one other player, George Crozier (Flute) still back stage. He had fallen for it as well. The Orchestral Manager said, "Don't make a fuss, wait until the break and slip in." There were 10 Double Basses for this concert and someone had got my cover off so I wasn't missed and George's mates covered for him so all was well … not an auspicious start to my first experience of probably the World's most famous conductor. As it happened, he was nearly blind (only peering at his scores from time to time at rehearsals and probably why he was one of the first to adopt the habit of doing concerts without) so probably would not have seen us anyhow. He could hear very well though.

He particularly disliked the trombones, as did Cantelli, because they still all played the small bore instrument (known as peashooters) and the Italians and Americans by then had all adopted the large bore instruments as also used by Jazz players. This last led to an unfortunate incident when we recorded Ravel's Bolero (which contains perhaps the most difficult solo in the repertoire for trombone) with Cantelli. He had asked for a Jazz trombone, meaning the instrument, but the management misunderstood and booked Jock Bain - a very famous Scottish jazz player. When Jock turned up at the studio, unbeknown to the trombone section, they were naturally upset and insisted that their principal play the solo, which he did very well if not with the fullness of sound that the big bore instrument would have had. It was traditional for orchestra players (as opposed to Dance band) in Britain still to play on "peashooters" and the Bass trombone used was still my old friend with the handle, the G. The trombone section soon changed to the larger bore instruments including the Bass and since then I don't think any player has played the old small bore - excluding the "cobweb" people (early music specialists) with their sackbuts. Toscanini had one extra rehearsal scheduled for each concert on the afternoon before each. He should have also had the normal morning

My "pupil's" only demand on me was that she should play part of "The Swan" so we worked on this "assiduously" during our half hour morning lessons until she could manage, (after a fashion), the opening bars, and just before one "take" she unexpectedly called for silence and played this theme to the entire cast - to tumultuous applause. I think some may even have recognised what it was meant to be! For my part I was staggered at the marvellous professionalism of the actors, who could be all chatting away about everyday things and suddenly at the magic word "ACTION" would swing straight into a complicated scene (even an intense Love scene). Until then I had thought only musicians on recording sessions could do this.

men, had an alcohol problem and was doing less and less and Eric more and more, until eventually Eric took over all the “Carry On” music. Erie liked a dram himself and had a famous violin case fitted out to take two bottles of Scotch plussilver cups etc., but was never “over the top”.

Towards the end of Bruce’s musical career (he. suffered a complete breakdown and disappeared from the scene - moved to Devon and lived in virtual isolation, although still writing a. few short thrillers) he wrote the script and the music for a film which he sponsored himself and which was filmed at Pinewood with the “Carry On” cast. It was set in a Music Academy (-wonderful sets by a brilliant lady designer which were a composite of the Royal Academy, Roya1 College and Guildhall Music Schools) and had a plot!! Somewhere between “Doctor in the House” and an average “Carry On”. It ended with a seeming “Dumb Blonde” turning out to be brilliant and winning the top prize. This part was played by Liz Eraser who was supposed to be a Double Bass student and this was where I first came in. It was my job (in a few easy lessons! ! !) to make her look like a real Double Bass player ... Whoopee! do 1 hear? ... In fact, when Hugh Bean (well-known leading violinist) heard of my good luck, he offered to come and give her violin lessons free. Afer my first day Bruce asked me to be “Musical Consultant” on the set. - How about that? In fact all I had to do was to make sure, before shooting started, that all the music on the stands matched up, similar small details and that the actors looked like they were actually playing their various instruments. But it was great for the old ego; whilst strolling around in my best lightweight blue suit, when the Director, Gerry Williams, and the cameraman and the sound engineer (Mac, who I knew very well) sought my final O.K. before shooting. For my part it was the easiest two weeks’ “work” I had ever done, the only hazard being trying to avoid Bruce’s ever increasing invitation for a. quick drink. He normally started at breakfast time and even had his key to the producer’s drinks cupboard for those periods when the bar wasn’t open – 1ike 8.15 a.m.. when he would start “lightly” on Sherry, which he reckoned didn’t count as drinking.

one on the day of the concert but the extra ones went so well that he said each time, “You know these pieces very well gentlemen and I also know them, so tomorrow we shall rest and meet for the Concert.” Another sign of a great conductor is one who does not believe in rehearsal for its own sake because he has faith in himself and more importantly, the orchestra, unlike the majority who are really so insecure in themselves that they over-rehearse, often spoiling the freshness and atmosphere of the performance. Klemperer, Furtwaengler, Boult, (German school of course) and a very few others had this. Furtwaengler actually went as far as to say, “There are no BAD orchestras only bad conductors” - an overstatement perhaps but containing a large grain of truth.

CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

As I have mentioned Furtwaengler I would like to give my impressions of him. I only met him during the last 10 years or so of his 1ife but have long considered him as the greatest of all, and have already described some of the work with him in Lucerne. There was no-one to touch him in his interpretations of German music. This included Beethoven, Wagner and the more romantic Brahms and Mahler. When one played "Eroica", No7 or any other Beethoven Symphony one felt, "This is the definitive version of the work". In other words, he conducted BEETHOVEN'S Symphony, not Beethoven according to Joe Bloggs. One could FEEL the tradition. A poor conductor who is best nameless, but who stayed at my home overnight once, asked me what I thought was the most important thing for a conductor. Resisting the hoary but partially true reply, "A wealthy wife", I said, "Integrity" - (meaning musical) and as he couldn't grasp it I changed the subject. I could have gone on to say he must be confident of his own abilities as a musician without being arrogant, able to inspire the players whilst treating them as master musicians and not students, show his sincerity towards the composer, efface himself to the extent that he is only the medium and not the focus. The qualities are as difficult to pinpoint as genius but when/if there, are soon recognisable achieved by the rare few (I would say very rare) which is why we have so many "puffing billies" primarily intent on their own self-aggrandisement.

Furtwaengler's 1954 recording of "Tristan & Isolde" is still accepted as the definitive recording and was chosen as such yet again in a very perspicacious review in the B.B.C. Music Magazine in early 1996. I took part in the making of this masterpiece and like my colleagues, enjoyed it so much (not always the case) that for two and a half weeks (two sessions per day) I couldn't wait to get back to the next session. I, and I know others, found passages easy to play which had previously been difficult because the tempi were absolutely right (not just slower), the "feel" was right and the inspiration was coming from that tall 1anky distinguished man who was INTERPRETING Wagner's Masterpiece as if Wagner were

Bob Farnon by all his fellow musicians and of the remark by a fellow composer/conductor. This musician was Eric Rogers, perhaps best known for his scores for the "Carry On" films. Eric was entirely self-taught and played Clarinet and Sax - he led the band at the Trocadera for years on these instruments - and piano, to the extent that when a. short serious piano piece was required for a film, next day Eric produced a. book of some 20 Chopin studies and said, "Which one would you like?" His great pal was pianist/ arranger/conductor, Gordon Franks, brother of leading trumpet player Alan. Gordon had an "Ear" like Bob Farnon, both of whom, when I occasionally "added" a low C on my fifth string, would look up from across the studio and put their thumb up in instant recognition and approval. Pardon the expression, but Bob's phrase for this sound was "big pair o' balls."

An exceptional "ear" is not always a completely good thing as I have explained re Jan White. Another who "suffered" was brilliant Cellist Jack Shinebourne as he found it almost impossible to "temper" his pitch. Also on one occasion Eric and Gordon were enjoying a. trip to Paris together and being entertained in a Strip Joint. Eric who was enjoying watching the "girlies" was suddenly startled when Gordon said, "We have got to get out of here; I can't stand that Bass Player, - he is playing all the wrong notes."

I knew Eric slightly when he was at the "Troc" when he was beginning to write a little for films and was working as assistant, orchestrating etc. for Bruce Montgomery. Bruce was in charge of the music for all the early "Carry Ons" and was a charming man with a tremendous intellect, (Cambridge educated, as were later composers John Cameron, Daryl Runswick and others who used their talents to great effect in Film and Theatre scores) who also wrote very clever thrillers under the name of Edmund Crispin. I got to knew Bruce quite well as the Sinfonia did the music for the early "Carry Ons" and I was also asked to do one particular session which called for Rhythm Bass (another occasion when my "miss-spent" youth paid off) and Eric was in charge. Bruce, like so many brilliant

CHAPTER THIRTY NINE

I left the L.P.0. in late 1956 and became entirely free-lance with a "connection" which widened over the succeeding years, so it is difficult to keep this history in strict chronological order. I must therefore entreat the reader to accept my story from now on as a series of anecdotal memories, some of which have already crept into previous chapters ahead of their time.

With the Sinfonia as my mainstay my increasing connection included engagements as disparate as chamber concerts to backing tracks for the early Beatles records and other pop groups. This last impressed my young American cousins much more than having played for Toscanini, Karajan, Stravinski or anyone else. They later claimed they had earned much cachet amongst their contemporaries by having a cousin (albeit twice removed) who had played with the Beatles - not strictly true as the backings were always done later and the only time I played for a "Beatle" in person was when they had disbanded and Paul McCartney was "doing his own thing". These last recordings were done at the Beatles own "Apple" Studios in Saville Row whereas all the earlier ones were done at E.M.I. Abbey Road.

I was also a regular player with the London Mozart Players, (two spells of 4 years with Harry Blech with 4 years "out" for "good behaviour"!!!) Dr. Paul Steinitz's - perhaps the best and most sincere interpreter of Bach of all - London Bach Society, Anthony Bernard's London Chamber Orchestra (from 1956 until his untimely death in 1963) and for Geraldo and other popular Bandleader/ Conductor/Composers. The best of these was undoubtedly Robert (Bob) Farnon whom I have already mentioned and whose tremendous talents and personality need be extolled no further by me.

I have already touched upon the extraordinary high regard held for

there. No-one should ever underestimate real tradition especially in music, because after all Furtwaeng1er (and Klemperer) were only one step (generation) away. Lack of this tradition is probably what handicaps our (English/American) young conductors most. Where are they supposed to learn? The continental greats of the past were part of a direct line from Haydn and all sat at the feet of THEIR masters/predecessors sometimes for years before being let loose on an orchestra. I know all of those mentioned (probably except Cantelli who was an exceptional genius) have done. A cellist, Norina Semina, in the Philharmonia who was Italian actually played in La Scala as a girl when Toscanini was also a cellist there and remembers him getting his big opportunity to conduct a matinee. Dorati told me himself he spent years as repetiteur, Karajan worked in small operas etc. etc. Furtwaengler was criticised for having an unclear beat, particularly at the beginning of movements which started with a heavy chord or a series of strong impulses. This slowness of his downbeat never worried good players and the effect was to achieve a cumulative release of sound (particularly from strings) when he reached the bottom that was quite unique in its weight and intensity. I am sure this was the effect he aimed for & it was impressively successful. On the other hand I was amazed and delighted when he conducted the Bartok "Concerto for Orchestra" at the R.F.H. as his beat in the intricate work (time changes every other bar) was quick and precise. This was no old stodgy interpreter only of German Classics but a skilled musician with impeccable technique showing a lively spirit as if half his age.

Going back to "Tristan", Isolde was sung by the legendary Kirsten Flagstadt. Though her voice was as rich and powerful as ever, she was having some difficulty with her high register. One particular aria was left over from the main recording because she couldn't reach the top of the scale run. It was recorded separately some time later and I shall explain in a moment how this was done. The recording was duly issued and rightly acclaimed as a masterpiece with no-one (including our "expert" reviewers and critics) objecting to or even noticing this point. In the opinion of the real experts, e.g. the musicians and artists who took part, the slight

"assistance" (explained in a moment) was inconsequential and lasting only a few seconds, well justified in a work lasting several hours featuring the World's most famous Wagnerian Soprano. It is well known that the best Wagnerian Sopranos start as Altos (which gives the depth, strength and fullness of tone to the voice) and by degrees is raised to soprano range. (Flagstadt was one of those who could sing on her own the famous Handel aria from the Messiah – "He shall feed his flock.") The secret of this recording was kept completely (no-one considering it important enough otherwise) until one critic learned of it MANY YEARS later and made a minor mountain out of this mole-hill -(probably to try to impress people with his keen perception - somewhat late in the day). Consequently this issue is raised in reviews to this day but none of the experts have ever noticed some more important points. Namely, it was recorded in a different studio and with a different conductor. The Opera was recorded at Kingsway Hall but one session was called some time later in Abbey Road for this insert which was conducted by another conductor (Dobrowen). All that happened was that Flagstadt sang the aria with Elizabeth Swartzkopf (nicknamed "Mum" by the orchestra as she was Walter's wife) standing alongside her and when the scale passage was reached Flagstadt slowly moved back from the mike and Swartzkopf picked up the scale run. Brilliant – from both singers – who were the closest of friends, and by the sound engineers who are so often overlooked. The main thing in my mind from this session was not the minor but clever deception but the brilliant playing of my friend Dennis. The aria was introduced by a quite difficult, Siegfried type horn solo which Dennis played brilliantly as always, once then twice, whereupon Dobroven, in slight awe, asked Mr.Brain if it was O.K. to go again. Dennis looked up over his copy of Motor Sport (always on his stand) and simply said, "Yes, fine." And played it perfectly as previously. To get the sinc right the piece was played 13 times by which time the conductor was looking at Dennis Brain in absolute astonishment. He had never heard (and couldn't believe it was happening) such impeccable playing. Perfection on every take!

I have dealt at some length with a few of the leading conductors I

didn't ever use them. He did the same with "odd" instruments. For instance, he wanted accordion, mandoline, guitar etc. for certain passages and although they would normally he booked for the sections of music only in which they were required, he would insist on having them there for days on end without doing their part. The Film Company Secretary, going "spare" by this time, and not knowing they hadn't been used would not book them for the next sessions. Tchiomkin would "blow his Russian top and insist they be brought back whereupon they would probably sit for another couple of days before playing their bit.

changing his mind over dynamics and take out or add various instruments as he went along to add “Kolor” - a kind of “composing on the hoof” which few composers had the luxury of doing. Although an enormous Ham, he did produce some fantastic results - (the lift scene in “Guns of Navaronne” for instance where he creates tremendous suspense and then uses sudden silence at the most dramatic moment) so most musicians were quite happy to accommodate his whimsies.

Some of his ideas were downright crazy and wasteful but he played on his reputation and was almost childlike in his attempts to score points and show off. For instance, at one run through we found he had written a short passage up in the treble clef for the first desk of Basses, obviously hoping to catch us out. When my colleague and I successfully played it he asked to hear it again and when we proved it wasn’t a fluke he asked me, “What is it from?” and when I said, “Salome” he simply grunted but was satisfied and he left us alone thereafter. Although he was well into his seventies he would have no old men in the orchestra and he told the “fixer” that two of the Basses (out of a section of 8) were not to be booked again because they had bald heads; one was over 60 but the other (prematurely bald) was only around 30 and a very fine player - on top of which Tchiomkin was as bald as a coot.

On another occasion he took a dislike to the principal Clarinet whose part had been written in the wrong key and Tchiomkin imagined he was “taking the mickey” and he had to go. He also told Eddie Walker, 1st Flute and “Fixer”, that he preferred the player the day before (who had been deputising for Eddie) so Eddie had to (officially) temporarily sack himself until “the heat was off”. He started on one film with 70 players, decided he wanted more strings so two desks (2 players to a desk) of 1st and 2nd Violins, and one desk each of Viola, Cello and Basses was added to each section next day. When we started next day he said the new players should not play as they had not rehearsed the day before. Consequently, he forgot them and these extras sat there all day waiting to play and he

have met and before moving on from my Philharmonia years I would like to briefly mention in the next chapter some of the other fine ones I have had the pleasure of playing with.

CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

The Philharmonia had by now established a big reputation for its playing of more modern works (although not "squeaky gate" modern) so we did come across some specialists in this field. The first of these I would like to mention for an odd reason, is Igor Markevitch.

He had practically made a career out of Stravinski's "Rite of Spring" which he conducted all over the world. For two years in succession we performed this marvellous but exacting piece with him for the B.B.C. - rehearsing for several days then giving a live broadcast (they were nearly all live then) from Maida Vale Studio. Markevitch was most impressive and he had learned the whole piece and performed it from memory. We also recorded it for E.M.I. with him. We had assumed that someone of this sort of brilliance would have been a good "all rounder" but then we were booked for a broadcast with him for the B.B.C. with Isaac Stern as soloist in the Tchaikovsky Concerto and (my memory slightly fails here but I think) a Tchaikovsky Symphony. This was not a live, but a pre-recorded concert (the old B.B.C. were catching up) and the Symphony went well but when it came to the Violin Concerto, he just COULD NOT accompany Stern despite all kinds of help and encouragement by the latter. It was bad, so bad in fact that Stern refused to allow it to be broadcast. I listened to the broadcast released a few days later and the B.B.C. tactfully got round it by playing the Symphony conducted by Markevitch and followed it with A RECORDING of Stern playing the Concerto with an American Orchestra. This was quite sad and surprising because it has always been my contention that a good conductor has GOT to be a good accompanist. Many fall at this hurdle (even if not so badly as Markevitch) and there is nothing more frustrating than playing with a conductor who cannot (or is unable to) wait for the soloist "to breathe" and to go with the cadences. There is a famous conductor still doing very well (whom I hope has now learned better) but who really "got up my nose" years ago for his impetuosity and inability to give a solo 'cellist "room" in a concert with a chamber orchestra.

Nazareth" with an excellent score - my Bass section being "featured" in the opening of Lazares' tomb. Now then, no cracks about "How appropriate!" ... violas and double basses get enough of these from fellow musicians. To lighten this "Histoire" here are one or two :-

1. What are the world's 3 most useless things?
   Ans. A vote of thanks for the orchestra, a viola solo and the Pope's balls.
2. Bass players have no friends, - they only have other bass players.
3. The L.P.O. viola player was in hospital and suffering from seeming incurable insomnia - until someone suggested putting his viola under his chin.

As Jimmy Durante would say, "I got a million of 'em" - but this is supposed to be a serious history, so back to work.

Several war type films, not necessarily in chronological order were:- "The Dambusters", "The Eagle Has Landed", "A Bridge Too Far" and "Battle of Britain". This last, for which William Walton wrote the famous "Spitfire Prelude and Fugue" was interesting because apart from one or two other small sections, Walton's music was not considered suitable as background or incidental so Ron Grainger (a very popular composer) was engaged to write most of the score. This did not often happen but "Watership Down" was completely re-recorded (seemed to go on for ever) and an early film I played for had the music written by the outstanding composer (and real gent), William Alwyn, which was literally "too good for the film".

Tchiomkin was the last of the famous European (predominantly Russian) musicians and composers such as Korngold who gravitated to America, particularly Hollywood. He was unbelievably idiosyncratic and something of a hangover from these days. He had many clever tricks and his scores were arranged for him from his top line by professional arrangers, quite common practice then and nearly always had the themes in all the solo parts whereupon he would play the section over several times, constantly and irritatingly

hundreds of films plus the occasional gramophone recording - a particularly good one being of English music e.g. Elgar "Introduction and Allegro" with John Barbirolli which became quickly recognised as an exceptional recording of this piece.

Although the films were too numerous to mention individually a few memorable ones are worth recalling:- "Fire Down Below", "Ryan's Daughter", "The Italian Job", "Zulu", "The Elephant Man", "Night Station Zebra" and a series with a crazy conductor named Dimitri Tchiomkin beginning with "Guns of Navaronne". The action in the story is over some two days; thanks to Tchiomkin, who was a veritable money spinner for us, it took three and a half weeks to record the music. It was such a marvellous story that I bought the paperback (the music on films is always added last and done in sections, seldom in sequence) to find out what was happening and went on to buy many of Alistair McLean's and other books. The next Tchiomkin effort was "51 Days to Pekin" (music took nearly as long to record - 5 and a half weeks) and the final epic with him, by which time David Lean and the Film Company had been practically bankrupted as he insisted on a full orchestra of 70 to 90 players, was, appropriately, "The Fall of the Roman Empire" (music took 7 and a half weeks!)

I did one more film with Tchiomkin, a Circus Film, booked by a different fixer. This time he was putting up money himself so it was recorded much more quickly and with an orchestra of around 30 players.

In sharp contrast to Tchiomkin was our own Malcolm Arnold who was so efficient he could write the music from "the top left hand corner to the bottom right" and everything fitted and he would complete recording a score in as many days as Tchiomkin took weeks ... "Bridge Over River Kwai" for instance. More about Malcolm Arnold anon.

A spectacular film (also not with the Sinfonia; I was now being engaged by many different "fixers") was for I.T.V. "Jesus of

CHAPTER TWENTY NINE

I enjoyed playing in a fine B.B.C. production of Prokofiev's "Love For Three Oranges" conducted by Malko and an even finer production of Debussy's "Pelleas et Melisande" conducted by that charming old gentleman and fine musician, Pierre Monteux. I had never even heard of this opera, let alone performed it and I was suitably impressed by this "antithesis" of Wagner - (which strangely, and probably because of Debussy's determination to be contrary, nevertheless does suggest Wagner.) A truly fabulous piece, and 1 now recount another silly little anecdote which took place at this time. I have previously mentioned my close friendship with Bill McGuffie and my dabbling in a bit of Jazz and Swing in year past. There was a good programme on the B.B.C. once a week around 6 p.m. called (aptly) B.B.C. Jazz Club and introduced by Steve Race, well-known as a Pianist and Arranger then. Steve dreamed up the idea of presenting a programme given by "straight" musicians (Academy trained) who had (or still) played in Jazz outfits. Anyhow he asked Bill, myself and one or two others to take part in this. It fitted in well for me as rehearsals for "Pelleas" had ended and we had the performance booked for 7.30. Consequently I did the Steve Race programme which went out at 6.0 to 6.30. Unfortunately Steve announced the names and even that the Bass player would be appearing again that evening in a very different incarnation. In those days there was much more snobbery by classical players towards the Jazz fraternity so on my arrival in Maida Vale 1 I was greeted by a chorus of, "Here comes the Jazz Boy". Interesting - because if they were so snooty about it, how was it they had listened to the programme and heard my name? This attitude has all but vanished now, thanks to enlightened efforts of people like my old friend John Dankworth - (John D was a graduate of the R.A.M. and the pianist and Bass player in his quartet both had University Music Degrees) and others which have given younger

players a more catholic outlook and the great talents of some jazz players have been recognised.

Without wishing to overlard the cake one need only ask how many pianists can play like Art Tatum; also we should not completely overlook popular music as our great classical tradition descended from dance and song. Admittedly, the pioneers did not have to suffer modern “pop” groups.

I remained with the Sinfonia until it was disbanded in the late 60’s. At the same time I was generally free lancing for other fixers and playing with Chamber Orchestras such as the London Chamber Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra and the Virtuoso of England. This last was the brainchild of John Boyden who had run Music For Pleasure (budget records) for E.M.I. and had now branched out into “Classics For Pleasure”. Basically this was to gather together small groups of London’s outstanding players to record Baroque classics e.g. Handel, Bach etc. It was extremely successful as there had been a strong revival of interest in music of this period and John gathered together players such as Ken Sillitoe, Hugh McGuire, Ken Essex and others of similar calibre. The group was directed by Arthur Davidson and the enthusiasm was such that some very fine records were produced by John on what I referred to as his “pocket Grundig”. Most were recorded at Conway Hall where John would set up his mobile recording unit and with one assistant would produce records of a standard to make the “big” recording people quite envious. These players were all busy chaps and dates and times had to be carefully arranged to get those he wanted all free at the same time. On one occasion when he wanted to record “Eine Kleine Nacht Musik” with only 5 players, it took six weeks of ringing to get the group together, eventually we started at Conway Hall at 11.0 p.m. - (Ken Essex actually arriving in his tails from a Chamber Concert) and recorded until 1.30 a,m. The players were Ken Sillitoe, Brendon O'Reilly (2nd violin in Ken’s quartet), Ken Essex, Joy Hall and yours truly ... and doing it with only 5 players gave it a clarity which was quite outstanding. Everyone acquitted themselves well and it was a “tour de force” for Ken Sillitoe. The group also recorded many sets of concertos e.g. all Mozart Horn Concertos played by Jim Brown, numerous Oboe Concertos and Concerti Grossi featuring Sidney (Jock) Sutcliffe, my favourite oboist from Philharmonia days, - and pieces featuring David Munrow shortly before his sad and terribly wasteful suicide.

Meanwhile the Sinfonia was recording the music for literally

CHAPTER THIRTY EIGHT

I mentioned in an earlier chapter that I had had to turn down the invitation to join the recently formed "Sinfonia" Film Music Orchestra as No.2 because of my contract with the L.P.O. Although I enjoyed the cameraderie in the L.P.O. the constant "one-nighters" were getting me down - (the L.P.O. was nicknamed "the World's finest system of Birth Control" e.g. you seldom slept in your own bed) - and once again "Old Jim Merrett asked me to join the Sinfonia, this time as No.3 as John Walton had taken the No.2 position. The L.P.O. committee talked me out of it at first but after a few weeks I made a definite decision and handed in my notice (3 months!) in writing with a request that they release me sooner if a suitable replacement could he found. One of the extras regularly booked was ex-Royal Phil Principal Jack Sylvester and I persuaded Jack to accept the job so I could join the Sinfonia sooner and as he had a reputation as a principal player and played regularly in our section, the Committee could not easily refuse so I was able to leave after six weeks of my notice. Although I had "changed ship" not entirely for mercenary reasons, I must mention that in my first week with the Sinfonia I earned £73 - a considerable improvement on my basic L.P.O. salary of £16 per week, which with extras could average around £20 - £25. Fo this we had to work hours that our Russian counterparts refused to believe. We worked out that on an average day, with travel time and rehearsal and concert we earned around 3/- to three and fourpence per hour, less than the average skilled artisan e.g. bricklayer or plumber.

The Sinfonia became quickly famous for its high standard of playing, probably taking over the elite status previously enjoyed by the Philharmonia and was invited to make a few selective gramophone records. A strange by-product of this fame was that people wanted to hear the Orchestra in public ... the Philharmonia history repeating itself. Consequently (also "partly to defray excess profits") a concert was organised at the R.F.H. Expected to show a loss, this concert, due to the orchestra's high reputation, was a sell-out and showed an "embarrassing" profit.

CHAPTER THIRTY

I left the Philharmonia. in 1955 and joined the L.P.O. The L.P.O. then was extremely hardworking and was nowhere near the standard of the Philharmonia. Obviously, as in all professions, the best work attracts the best people, and the best people the best work and so on ad finitum (to borrow from Ogden Nash). The attraction for me was that Jack Jones (whom I have mentioned earlier) asked me to do a trial week for the Sub-principal position during which I would be required to play personally for Sir Adrian Boult who was then principal conductor. Without being too disparaging, although the L.P.O. did not compare with the Philharmonia, for me it was a chance (whilst still young enough) to establish myself as a front desk player with the added promise that I would become Principal when the present player retired. This started very well as after 3 or 4 days playing with the orchestra (and sweating over "party pieces" I intended to play for Sir Adrian), I asked Jim Carpenter, the principal bass, "When am I to play the solo audition?" He then told me this would be unnecessary as "Sir Adrian liked you" (this was after a day's rehearsal and a fine concert at the R.F.H. with him) and the job was mine.

Most of the work was out of town concerts and very tiring although I enjoyed the repertoire which was different, more traditiona1 pieces many of which I had never met in the Philharmonia's more rarified scene. I soon settled in and made friends with the lst and 2nd horn players, Jim Brown and Iain Keddie. Jim's father Andy was a. violinist who had spent much of his career in the B.B.C. Scottish in Glasgow so Jim had attended the "Athenaum" just before me. Although we had never met there we had much in common and shared hotels etc. throughout my period with the L.P.O. and remained firm friends until Jim's early death in 1994. Iain Keddie was a Scot and had also attended the "Athenaeum" just after me so I also felt "at home" with him -he subsequently became my son Iain's Godfather. MY son was called Iain (with the gaelic spelling) partly because of Keddie and also because the eldest son in our family was always called John (-when my Grandfather was alive there were 6,

with uncle and cousins at one time) and as my Mother had “hielan” blood, (from the. McCleods of Lewis) we thought it would he a good way -as Iain is Gaellic for John -to end the “tyranny” of Johns in the family.

Out of 6 regular (shareholding) Double Bass players, there was only one apart from myself around 30. The other four averaged over 60 so although I got on well with them I naturally drifted into the company of the horn players, so much so that I was known as “fifth horn”.

Although most of the work was relatively boring one night stands with long (unpaid) travel times, the coaches had a happy atmosphere and I enjoyed many of the concerts, one of which was an early concert of Carmina Burana (Carl Orff) with an American conductor at the Royal Albert Fall. Other interesting dates were the Hastings Festival (a whole week in one place) and a. tour of West Country Churches. This started my interest in Church Architecture. We also did many recordings with Sir Adrian who was always very professional (trained in Germany) and easy to work with. We spent some weeks recording with him at Walthamstow Assembly Hall, (another venue being increasingly used for recording) mainly of the less often played Berlioz Overtures. Another interesting piece was the “original” version of the “Firebird” by Stravinski.

Stravinski (for whom I was later to play in person) was a canny old guy who rearranged many of his early works so as to extend the Copyright period. He did this by making minor changes such as revoicing parts which did not materially alter them but made them “new” arrangements. For instance the original string parts were divided with one part one desk only and the other Gli Altri (the others) whereas the later and normally played version was straightforward divisi. On another series of recordings we did Sibelius Symphonies and Tone Poems, particularly interesting as I had done all of the Symphonies with Karajan. We also recorded a number of works by Vaughan Williams. I later had the great pleasure on several occasions of playing for him conducting his own

We were all becoming somewhat travel weary by the end of six weeks and thankfully our next engagement was a week of recording with Sir Adrian for a French company - in Paris. This was a marvellous ending to our 7 weeks away and for the second time in only a. few years I had a week in “Paris in the Springtime” - (Cue for a song!) Many of us had our wives join us in Paris and knowing the City fairly well from my previous visit I “went native” for a week and booked us into a pensione in the Left Bank.

CHAPTER THIRTY SEVEN

The tour referred to above was around the principal Cities with, as soloist, the remarkable Ely Ney (pronounced Nye). The programmes were all of Beethoven works with Ely playing two concertos (including the splendid "Emperor") every night and a Symphony (usually No.7) conducted by her husband, a Dutchman named Hoogstraten. She was 84 years old and he a mere stripling of 72. Ely Ney had been an international Star before the war and a great favourite of Politicians and other "Top" people, including the Nazi Government. Because of the understandable anti-Nazi feelings after the war she had never been invited to perform again outside Germany - where she was still a great favourite and played to packed houses everywhere we went. It is always sad when politics interfere with art and the loss was ours. She was a German so she played for the German people - and their Governments, and we could as easily have said Dame Myra Hess should not have played for the leaders of Britain. No war has ever been started by musicians or Artists, unlike the greedy politicians and so-called industrialists from all countries.

The concerts were a terrific success and despite the occasional technical stumble she played inspirational Beethoven. She was called to give an encore every night and she always played charming Beethoven Bagatelles with a touch as if being played by a young girl. These were so super that the Orchestra, (a fairly "case-hardened" lot) came back onto the stage to listen to this superb artist.

The weather was good and despite a lot of coach travel we enjoyed the tour but one funny part was that in order to make us feel at home and welcome, the restaurant of every Hotel we stayed in, almost exclusively offered us Roast Beef (Englische) or Snitzel (Deutche) until, near the end of the 3 weeks I went to the kitchens in one Hotel and begged the Chef to make me a simple omelette.

"Tallis Fantasia" and in the "St. Matthew Passion" which he organised and conducted for the Dorking Festival each year. V.W. was a close friend of Boult so most of his work was first recorded by Sir Adrian and I well remember recording his latest Sympony with the ink hardly dry on the parts. This was at Kingsway Hall and V.W. sat on the platform above us with a hearing aid in one ear and a small ear trumpet in the other. Any time Boult asked for his opinion his answer was the same ... "I leave it to you Adrian" or "You know best Adrian". Oddly enough, perhaps from polite British reticence, William Walton, when the Philharmonia had re-recorded his 2nd Symphony at Abbey Road, adopted a similar attitude. When asked his preference re bowing or phrasing by a string section leader, would say, "I leave it to you; you chaps know better than I do." Ben Britten was the complete opposite and precisely marked his bowings in string parts and when (for instance) a series of consecutive up-bows was questioned, would say, the hesitant effect that produced was exactly what he wanted.

CHAPTER THIRTY ONE

Mention of Britten leads me to add that I played in several productions of Britten Chamber Operas for the English Opera School which developed under Joan Cross and Anne Woods into the Phoenix Opera, the best being “Albert Herring” directed from the harpsichord as Ben did, by that marvellous musician Raymond Leppard. I shall digress from my L.P.O. notes for a moment as, as mentioned before, I was beginning to play for several Chamber Orchestras, one of which was the Leppard Orchestra. I knew Raymond quite well as he had come on the Philharmonia American Tour in 1955 as Orchestral pianist and I regarded him as one of the most talented and sympathetic musicians around. He had been at Cambridge (where he was now a Fellow) with Len Rothschild of the famous banking family and had been given a small grant of a few hundred a year, to enable him to produce a few concerts. The first series of these very successful little concerts was given in the Victoria and A1bert in the large room containing the famous Raphael artoons. Later we did (in separate concerts) “Les Illuminations” by Britten, - a truly marvellous work written for String Orchestra and “High Voice” so able to be sung by Soprano or Tenor, first with as soloist, April Cantello (then Colin Davis’s wife) and a year later with that fine Tenor Richard Lewis. Raymond added wind for subsequent concerts and we did a couple of exciting Concerts at the R.F.R. in one of which I had a nice little review praising the “Vivo” in Pulchinella by Stravinski, which made the piece “come to life” according to the Critic.... a nice little fillip which was noticed by other musicians and didn't do my career any harm. Raymond, as well as being a charming personality was the easiest conductor ever to work for. He had a touch like Cantelli and when anyone had a solo, there he was, smiling across and “lifting” the player through it.

down when Sir Adrian or Lady Boult were around until they left us to return home whilst we went on to undertake a further 3 week tour of Germany.

Depressing East Berlin was made to appear even more so by the spectacular display of Neon signs and lights in the Western sectors (as brilliant as New York or London) which we hadn’t missed until the contrast of visiting Moscow where there was virtually nothing of this. Although artificially created it drew a sharp contrast and magnified the feeling of freedom when crossing from one system to another.

nickname was “The Gargoyle” and I swear that looking across the orchestra during a West Country church tour when he was sitting close to a wall in a semi-darkened church I realised how apt it was. I have already explained how royally we were fed and much of the food was extremely rich with the inevitable consequence to our systems. Anyhow, towards the end of one concert the “Gargoyle” was “taken short”. Being a true professional, he gritted his teeth, not to mention other parts of his anatomy, and stuck it out to the end of the final piece. Unfortunately for him the applause was tumultuous and we had to give an encore, at the end of which the audience insisted on a second .... (that was when we first heard and learned that their slow hand clap, opposite to our expectation, was the ultimate in applause, now taken up elsewhere). The poor *“Gargoyle”* just couldn’t take -or should it be hold -any more, so he made a run for it …… unfortunately, just too late. The Russians, being the hospitable and understanding people they are, helped him clean up, wrapped him in a blanket and sent him hack to our Hotel in a taxi. Next morning at breakfast (to which the “Gargoyle”, feigning illness, had not appeared,) “Cloady” stood up, asked for attention and solemnly declared, “Gentlemen, henceforth the Gargoyle shall be known as The Chocolate Soldier.”

The journeys from Leningrad back to Moscow and Moscow to Berlin were more or less repeats of our outward trips and the sleeping arrangements were exactly the same and all of these trains had well appointed toilets at each end of the carriages. I got up to go to “ablutions” each morning before Jim and on our second morning en route to Berlin I turned right out of our compartment but found the toilet at that end occupied so retraced my steps and went to the other end. Unaware of this change Jim got up, went to the one he thought I was in, beat on the door and shouted, “Come out you bugger, you’ve been in there long enough!” The door opened immediately and out swept Lady Boult with her nose very much in the air. I was on my way back by this time and was able to witness the whole episode including a very haughty Lady Boult sailing past a very chagrined Jim Brown. Needless to say Jim kept his head well

Another date I did with Ray was with a twelve piece string band at the home of the Rothschilds on the Solent -(like being back in the 20’s when Anthony Bernard, the Ray Leppard of his day started the London Chamber Orchestra through the patronage of the Guiness and Astor Families - and gave great “event” concerts such as Swan Lake -on the lake in their grounds -on the Solent.) After rehearsal for the Rothschild concert I was invited to stroll in the grounds with Len Rothschild (I love meeting millionaires - they all seem to be such nice people!!) and when I asked him how far the paths went he said, “Seven miles.” He went on to say they had unfortunately just lost their head gardener and when I asked how many gardeners there were he said, “Nineteen.” Later he mentioned that they were quite upset because, due to staff problems, they had had to close the East Wing. When I said, “I wish I had your problems, Mr.Rothschild” he very pleasantly said, “Actually, I envy you; you are able to do something you enjoy -and be paid for it.” True -but I did not press the point that my magnificent payment for that date was £12, probably the equivalent of a tip he would leave after a meal. I have met with other millionaires and the strange and wonderfu1 thing about them is they seem to have no “side”, treat one a an (intellectual) equa1 and are generous in the use of their facilities, swimming pools, boats, estates, houses and grounds.

Previous mention of Pheonix Opera brings to mind the exception to this rule. During a week in the Yvonne Arnold Theatre in Guildford, Paul Getty, who chose to live out his life in rural Surrey (despite being the richest man in the world with great houses everywhere) in a rented mansion, came to a performance (on free tickets) accompanied only by his chauffeur. He sat all through, his face never moving a (reconditioned) muscle and left without applauding anything. I remarked to Anne Wood that in the 3 hours he had sat there his personal fortune had increased by approximately £36,000. Anne gulped and said, “I could run the Company for a year on that!” C'est la guerre eh?!

CHAPTER THIRTY TWO

Before I forget, another interesting recording with the Philharmonia was with Igor Oistrakh. He recorded the Khatchaturian and his playing "knocked us for six". Almost a year later his father David came over and recorded several concertos (including the Khatchaturian) also with the Philharmonia and we were even more astonished by his playing. Very few people in the West had heard these fine players and we began to realise (David was a senior professor at their Conservatoire) there must be a lot of fine players "behind the iron curtain." Russia had always been famous for its school of string playing, many of their finest ending up in the West, particularly America, and these chaps were so good only Heifitz (originally from Russia), Stern and a few others could compare with them. Interestingly, I did a concert at the R.F.H. with Oistrakh and the Philharmonia to which Heifitz came to listen (he left after the concerto), and a. few weeks later I played in a concert, also at the R.F.H. with Heifitz playing the Walton, a difficult work, (I had then moved to the L.P.O.) to which Oistrakh came to listen and stayed until the end.

On another Oistrak concert he broke a string so went off and changed his fiddle (not just a string) whereupon shortly afterwards he broke his E string again. He then changed the string and made a joke, translated as, "These damned AMERICAN strings". He had just been to America and had bought some - which were actually the best and we made a joke that they had been sabotaged especially for him. Actually, a coincidence which cou1d happen to anyone but particularly to these "big" players who certainly did not "tickle" the violin.

CHAPTER THIRTY SIX

The concerts were a huge success. The only pieces less so were the Walton Violin Concerto when poor old Campoli was somewhat "left roasting" at times due to the mix-up over conductors mentioned earlier. Boult had not had a proper rehearsal of this difficult piece with "Camp" and the performance was consequently somewhat hair -raising. The other moment was when we had just finished rehearsing Shostakovich's First Symphony with Fistoulari a. piece on which he claimed to be an expert. He had set himself up as an authority on Russian music in England and as there was little or no communication, nobody had disputed this. At the end of this rehearsal Shostakovich appeared on the stairs and called "Fisty" up to his room. Shortly afterwards a somewhat dejected Fisty came down (he usually looked a bit mournful, like a spaniel dog) and the interpreter told us later that Shostakovich had given him a dressing down beginning by saying, "You are ruining my music" and that his tempi were all wrong etc

They loved our English music -Britten, Elgar, Holst -and the greatest success was "The Planets". It is a unique and very fine piece, and the metaphysical allusions went down very well with the Russian temperament: it is a work Boult and the Orchestra were very familiar with and we had a very pretty and charming choir of Moscow ladies taking part. All this was most propitious as Sir Adrian was then able to present (on behalf of the. Orchestra.) an illuminated score of the Suite to Shostakovich who charmingly accepted it on behalf of the Conservatoire of which he was the Principal.

One of the viola section, John C1oad (Cloady) was something of a wag and had nicknamed many of the orchestra. We had "Kipper" (because of his out-turned feet), an "Alligator" and a "Monarch of the Glen"-my sparring partner Jim Carpenter, a dour old Scot. His best one was a violinist who had best remain anonymous - (a very nice chap and a good sport but in these litigious times, if he is still alive, I prefer to take no chances). His

saloon which was an exact lookalike of the then popular small German Opel. When I mentioned this to our intourist Guide, she (who had sadly been well brainwashed, which no doubt went with the job) could not accept this. "It was designed and built by Russian engineers" - as had the invention of T.V., Washing Machines (ghastly though their models were, and unobtainable by ordinary wage earners) and all other "consumer durables". She was normally quite pleasant but conversation with her often ended as if reaching a brick wall. Unfortunately propaganda and Government blunders work both ways and when we raised the question of Hungary and the Soviet tanks in the streets the immediate rejoinder was "Suez". These two "Imperial" disasters happened just before we went to Russia so any protest we may have made was effectively "hoist by the Petard" of Eden and Co's crass stupidity.

We had arrived in Moscow just before Shostakovich's 50th birthday and were invited to his birthday bash by the Ministry of Culture, where the fond and drink was on a truly extravagant scale. Due to a misunderstanding in communications when our office said no booze before concerts the Russians had taken this literally. We had no money to buy our own as due to the "phoney" rouble exchange our salaries were being paid into our home bank and we were given only a couple of roubles to buy postcards and stamps. As we rehearsed for two days after our arrival day and the first concert was not until the evening of the third day and Shostakovich's birthday party was the next day (a free day) this was inviting disaster. Consequently, with the lavishness of the supply and the enforced abstinence, most of the orchestra, including the teetotlers, went a bit mad ... the latter making themselves thoroughly sick by mixing ice-cream confections with glasses of Vodka -and Brandy -with the result that many of our "cultural ambassadors" rather let the side down. Shostakovich's 50th birthday was a truly memorable affair and to those of us who were in better training and able to remember it, a real privilege to have been invited.

CHAPTER THIRTY THREE

Coming back to the L.P.O. and Boult; there was a truly generous man. He loved his "boys", youngsters like Jim Brown and I could do no wrong whilst we played for him. For two years in succession, he learned at a general meeting that due to the ever present financial problems, the orchestra could not afford an annual holiday. On the second which I attended, he got to his feet, twirled his moustache and said half apologetically, "If it would help gentlemen, Er! Ah! the matter of my remuneration, perhaps we could overlook that this year." When it was pointed out that he had done that last year he simply said, "No matter, think of it as a loan and when you have sufficient funds you can pay me back." Needless to say the orchestra never had "sufficient" funds but Adrian never seemed to mind.

The most interesting part of my brief spell with the L.P.O. was the momentous trip to Russia in 1956. Sir Adrian, as principal conductor and a "name" to the Russians had been expected to conduct the orchestra there. But, at 69, Adrian was not too fit at the time so his doctors advised him not to take on such a strenuous trip. As it happened, he lived on for many years, fit and well, during which I often met him, still on the best of terms. The Russians, although we had two assistant conductors for the trip, Fistoulari and George Hurst, were insistant that Sir Adrian came. This caused a problem as Walter Susskind, the conductor of the Scottish National had been engaged as replacement for Sir Adrian and had come down to London on two or three occasions to rehearse his (originally Boult's) programme. When it looked like the Russians would cancel the visit if Sir Adrian didn't go, his doctor then agreed that he could go providing he didn't overwork. (In the event he was practically back to full health and vigour by this time.) It meant that at virtually the last minute we had to go without Walter Susskind who was naturally very upset, but the Russians had the excuse that there was a conductor in Russia named Susskind, who wasn't very good, and they did not want their audiences to think it was this man. We duly flew to West Berlin from where, afterwards, everything

was controlled by and at the expense of the Russians. We went through to East Berlin where we boarded a train en route for Moscow. The train was excellent with each compartment having two bunks, similar to the old British Rail 1st Class, one of which folded up in the daytime so we travelled in quite luxurious style. Jim Brown and I shared as usual but from Berlin to Brest Litovsk (the old Polish Border) we had no dining car but were give what we nick-named "nosebags", large brown paper bags filled with bread, cheese, ham, tomatoes, fruit etc. Sir Adrian was a large man and somewhat of a trencherman and he came regularly to chat to "his boys" and when he saw that Jim and I didn't want all of our "nosebag"s contents he very happily helped us out by scoffing a few items.

When we arrived at Brest Litovsk our train pulled into a. siding to have the bogeys changed to Russian gauge -and have a dining car added. This was when the Russians started to show off after we had crossed the border, as the dining car was sumptuous, real "Wagon Lit" standard and the Beluga Caviar and other delicacies were produced in abundance. This train trip took three days and we realised how it was that the Russians could boast their trains always ran on time. It was no slow at times that we could have run faster and obviously, if they were running late it was a simple matter to slightly increase their speed, probably in the order of 45 instead of 40 m.p.h. The journey was through the most desolate and dismal countryside (in both Poland and Russia) I have ever seen, with the occasional abject peasant literally scraping at the soil. At Brest Litovsk and later (when taking on water) we were approached by peasants in obvious unbelievable poverty, often without or with the tattered remains of shoes, in terrible weather.

Each carriage on the train, as in a later one from Moscow to Leningrad, (only 36 hours!) had an old lady sitting at one end operating a Samovar supplying endless glasses of Russian "Tchai" – (we now realised that Tchaikovsky most have been a tea merchant) at any hour day or night. Each floor of our Hotel had a similar concierge who likewise looked after us. Indeed, a message here for

CHAPTER THIRTY FIVE

Jim Brown had palled up with the principal horn of the Bolshoi Theatre and learned a. lot about their conditions and we quickly discovered that "some were more equal than others". Fittingly, the first trumpet, horn, tympanist etc. had a higher salary (Danger money we would call it!) but everyone had a guaranteed wage and hour structure ... 32 hours per week ... and a flat - which were in short supply in ever increasing Moscow. This last sounded good (it applied to all artists -e. g. dancers, singers and musicians -until you realjsed (with horror) that you wou1d be permanently surrounded by musicians, dancers or singers, depending upon the block allocated to each category. They had also been deprived of outside contact (thus improvements) with instrument makers (after being shown some of their poor strings and obsolete bows, with special thumb holds etc. I chickened out of further invitations) and when they heard our horn section (playing German Alexanders) the Bolshoi principal immediately applied for and received permission to send to Mainz for a set of new horns for his section -a procedure not unlike applying for a. requisition in the Army.

Another insight was into how they regulated their extra (additional) work, such as film music and so on. The five Moscow Orchestras had a committee of 2 players from each and they decided on the distribution of this extra work on a rota system. Jim's friend, being a principal horn, did well out of this system and was able to buy his car (a real luxury in mid-50's Russia) entirely from these extra earnings and as he was on a high salary grade anyhow he lived very comfortably. Musicians and Artists in general are well respected and looked after and had instruments provided, not unlike Berlin and Vienna where the leader's violin goes with the job and they have their own free Instrument repair workshops.

Having mentioned cars, there were only (to my knowledge) four models made in Russia: the executive Zeiss (in honour of Stalin), the Zimm (Molotov) -a middle sized saloon (which was the model our horn player owned) similar to our Standard 12, and a small

to a spectacular production of “Aida” at the Bolshoi, with the proverbial “cast of thousands”, but it was strange to hear their loud and uncouth woodwind and the singers singing this Italian Opera in Russian. We were also taken to a Symphony Concert with Kogan as soloist in a. modern concerto we had never heard (or heard of) and didn’t much like as Kogan (very loudly and aggressively) seemed to be fighting rather than playing it. The upper strings were excellent as you would expect but the Basses were not impressive... (He would say that, wouldn’t he!) ... and the woodwind made a quite extraordinary sound to our ears. -Old-fashioned and quite uncouth and if you can imagine it “roaring” flutes.

John Major and Co. - Full employment achieved at a stroke. We also saw equality taken to extremes as all the road workers in Moscow were women, although hardly recognisable bundled up in their shapeless padded coats -but the foreman -who did no digging -was a man.

Our arrival in Moscow was spectacular. As we pulled into our platform we found it PACKED by hundreds of people all carrying bunches of flowers. They were the musicians of Moscow who had come to greet their opposite numbers from the West. They duly presented us all with bouquets and I found myself in some demand because of my schoolboy German as this turned out to be a fairly common language. Somewhat ironic that our two countries had spent years as allies knocking Hell out of Germans and now used their language to communicate. Later, particularly in Leningrad, we found a surprising number of ordinary Russians who spoke fair and occasionally excellent English. One young man (early 20’s) told me he had learnt all his English from English and American magazines and was just dying to practise his pronunciation. We soon realised that we had entered a truly closed society. To these people who had not seen Westerners for 40 years we were like men from Mars and they just could not have enough contact and conversation with us. One evening, Jim and I were walking back to our Hotel after a concert when a young woman (probably mid-thirties) walked up beside me and said very modestly, and in perfect English, “Excuse me, Sir, do you mind if I talk to you as I want to practise my English.” It transpired that she was a schoolteacher and her husband was a minor official of some kind. She walked with us to the Hotel chatting all the time and when I said 1 would walk with her to her home she was quite surprised that it was normal and customary for a man to escort a lady home in the West. She said this was quite unnecessary in Moscow (protection wasn’t needed she implied) but she would he happy to agree as she could then converse some more. When we reached her home (a tenament-type building) which was quite near, she then insisted she walk back to the Hotel again so as to carry on the conversation. We used the method of comparison of costs and values by quoting how many weeks or months salary

would he necessary to buy certain items. -For instance, I was wearing a mid-weight coat (Aquascutum) which I explained might cost on average two weeks to a months wages in England. She said it would take 3 to 6 months in Russia if you could find a coat of such quality.

Another thing that had struck all of us quite forcibly was the absolute lack of litter in the streets. At that time England and America were particularly bad and I mentioned our appreciation of this cleanliness and asked if there were fines or other penalties which achieved it. This was beyond her comprehension as they were brought up with this as the status quo, and no-one would think otherwise. One naturally put one's litter in a bag or pocket and took it home. When I pressed the point by saying, "If I walked along throwing cigarettes and sweet packets all over the street, would I he arrested?", she said I would probably be taken to Hospital as it would be assumed I was mentally unwell.

CHAPTER THIRTY FOUR

We were treated with great respect and courtesy and overwhelming hospitality and all doors were opened for us. At that time (although removed later) Stalin lay in State beside Lenin in the mausoleum in Red Square and there were queues miles long waiting to pay their respects. It was also a great tourist attraction for all the workers who came to Moscow on day trips and we were invited to see the two great men embalmed in their resting place and were taken straight in at the head of the queue ... real V.I.P. treatment. Jim, who was a keen photographer, even to carrying his tripod with him, and I were allowed to go everywhere on our own as we liked and only once, when he set up his camera to photograph a river scene, were told "Niet" by a man in plain clothes but obviously a. policeman. His manner was quite friendly and polite but left no argument and we assumed that there may well have been some secret establishment on the other side of the "Mochha" and although he knew who we were he was taking no chances On the other hand we were invited to go round the Kremlin (the Supreme Soviet was in recess) and were allowed far more liberty than would strangers in the House of Commons - even to a small party of about six of us mounting the podium and with the full approval of our guide, taking turns in sitting in the Chief Secretary's (Stalin's) Chair. (see photograph)

We were also taken on tours of the sights of these great cities including half a. day spent in the unbelievable "Hermitage" (Winter Palace) with its remarkable jewellery, craft work and collection of paintings. The impressionist section has the greatest collection outside the Louvre thanks to the appreciation and foresight of Russian collectors.

We were shown the marvellous Moscow Underground with its great Mosaic walled stations .... Real Palaces of the People. The track and trains were (proud stuff but as usual with "Great" Britain a sorry end) originally planned and built by British engineers but unfortunately there was a falling out over cost etc. We were taken