

# Sir Arthur Sullivan Society



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Magazine No. 15

Summer 1983

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN SOCIETY

MAGAZINE No 15 SUMMER 1983.

Editorial: 55 Radwinter Rd, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3HU.

Dear Member,

Like the last, this edition of the Magazine promises to be too short to contain all the information it should carry. Terence Rees has located six of the ancestral portraits from the original production of Ruddigore. I hope that it will be possible to publish full details in a future edition of the Magazine; in the meantime it can be said that steps are in hand to secure the paintings for the future.

GILBERT'S HOUSE

Gilbert's house at 19 Harrington Gardens is currently for sale at £400,000, with a 42 year lease. The house is owned by the Central Midwives Board, and is being offered for sale by the estate agents Cluttons. Members of the Society who can afford this house are invited to contact the Hon Treasurer at once.

DONATIONS

Mr J.C.E. Hill of Winchmore Hill has kindly donated the following items to the Society's archive: The Tempest - bound piano score; In Memoriam, Di Ballo - piano duet arrangement; Mascarade, from The Merchant of Venice - piano solo; Ivanhoe, The Rose of Persia, The Emerald Isle, Haddon Hall, The Beauty Stone, 'Arthur Sullivan's Popular Songs' - piano arrangements; The Golden Legend - vocal score. Mr Hill witnessed the Barclays Bank performance of The Beauty Stone in 1927; he played the music he has donated as a duet with his brother. We are most grateful to him for this significant contribution to our archive.

At the request of Mr David Jacobs, Barclays Bank Arts Council have donated their Sullivan archive to the Society. This includes vocal scores and libretti of Haddon Hall, The Rose of Persia, and The Emerald Isle. A particularly valuable item is a stage book for The Beauty Stone copied from the Savoy Theatre original. A vocal score of The Beauty Stone, also from the Barclay's archive, has been obtained separately and generously donated by Mr Frank Bagguley. This gift is accompanied by two copies of the second edition of the libretto. The Beauty Stone vocal score has already been put to good use in the Edinburgh performance on June 18th.

The Rose of Persia

The Rose of Persia will be performed by Cheam A.O.S. from 28th November 1983. This performance will make use of the orchestral parts supplied to the Sullivan Society by Mr W.R.Abernethy and Mr Chris Riley of Australia. More details to follow.

The Prodigal Son

Sullivan's Prodigal Son was successfully performed by the Valley Light Opera at the University of Massachusetts on April 24th 1983. A recording will be available in due course from the conductor, Mr Bill Venman, but details are not at hand at the time of going to press.

# THE MARTYR OF ANTIOCH

Sacred musical drama by  
ARTHUR SULLIVAN

Penelope Beavan - Soprano; Deborah Miles-Johnson - Contralto; Stephen Chaytow - Tenor; Anthony Barratt - Baritone; Richard Stockton - Bass. The Chorus and Orchestra of Imperial Opera and Imperial College Operatic Society. Conducted by - Michael Withers. Church of St Mary-Le-Bow, Cheapside, London. Saturday March 26th 1983 at 7.30 p.m.

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From every point of view, the performance of The Martyr of Antioch represents the Society's most important achievement to date. Owing to the destruction of the orchestral parts in the Chappells fire the Martyr had become unperformable. The generosity of Prof G.W.Hilton made it possible to prepare a set of parts, and the Society itself undertook the financial responsibility of promoting the concert. The outcome may be said to justify the effort in every way.

It was immediately apparent from the afternoon rehearsal that the performance would be a fine one, in spite of certain shortcomings in the orchestra, most notably the presence of only a single cellist, and the absence of male altos from the chorus. When it came, the evening performance lived fully up to expectations. With only an occasional minor lapse in ensemble Michael Withers led the performers in an interpretation which combined enthusiasm with beauty and power. Among the soloists Penelope Beavan was outstanding as Margareta. She sang throughout with beautiful poise and attack, and rose to her death scene with something like ecstasy - an effect which certainly communicated itself to the audience. All the other soloists have less to do. Deborah Miles-Johnson sang the contralto music with its proper grace (she was not called upon to die), and Stephen Chaytow gave the appropriate tenderness to 'Come Margarita Come'. The music for the lower men's voices was sonorously sung by Anthony Barratt and Richard Stockton, but this music is not the most important part of the work.

In terms of time, the bulk of the Martyr is occupied with choruses. The chorus coped splendidly at all times, most especially in 'The evening song of the maidens'. They came through the gruelling opening chorus (20 minutes long) almost fresher than they went into it, and apart from some slight hesitancy in a couple of places gave as good an account of it as one could hope to hear. They were at their least successful in 'Now glory to the God who breaks', where some uncertain intonation coincided with poor coordination from the brass department. I thought the orchestra made up in quality for what they lacked in quantity, and, aided by the generous acoustic of St Mary-le-Bow, gave as satisfying an account of the work as one could hope to hear outside the ranks of the professional orchestras. Michael Withers deliberately stressed those aspects of the work which relate it to Gilbert and Sullivan opera. His tempi were always judicious, and he must rightly claim the ultimate credit for the success of the performance.

The work itself has two distinct aspects - Christian and Pagan. The Christian music is affected by the inhibitions imposed on Sullivan by the Victorian church; by itself it would not arouse much enthusiasm on behalf of the Martyr. However, the pagan music is a different matter. Sullivan turns with surely conscious relief from piety and indulges the graceful hedonistic side of his own nature. The result is a gorgeous and glowing celebration of civilised pagan values and what Edmund Burke used to call the unbought grace of life. The opening chorus reveals these qualities from beginning to end, but best of all is the enchanted 'Evening song of the maidens' - a long and satisfying realisation of the love music the sirens of Pre Raphaelite painting would

sing if they could. If this music is dull and vulgar, as Ernest Walker said, then I for one am very content to be a dull vulgarian. Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the work is the success of Margarita's death scene. Sullivan's other efforts in this direction hardly inspire confidence, but here he matches Margarita's vision at the stake, and even dares to vouchsafe her a glimpse of the Godhead. Elgar himself did not dare more greatly or more successfully at the same moment in The Dream of Gerontius. In the live performance the impact of this final moment was quite shattering, though the means used are completely conventional. Had Sullivan written often thus it would be vain to praise and useless to blame him. (D.E.)

The performance was recorded by David Lisle, and is available from him now at the address shown below. The recording is clear and sonorous, in stereo, with Dolby. It is packed in an attractively produced box which carries a picture of 'The Golden Stair' by Burne-Jones; also included is a full libretto. However, the recording is available only to members of the Sullivan Society and members of I.C.O.S. I hope as many members as possible will take the opportunity to acquire this recording of a work which is, in effect, an addition to the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan.

PRICE: For 2 stereo cassettes in presentation box with libretto: £6.50 inc p & p. Overseas: 18 dollars airmail. Cheques payable to Sir Arthur Sullivan Society.

FROM: Sir Arthur Sullivan Society, 28 Cator Rd, Sydenham, London SE26 5DS

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To accompany the recording of The Martyr of Antioch, the Society has produced a background booklet by Selwyn Tillet. The booklet, of 24 pages, comprises a scholarly account of Sullivan's connection with the Leeds Festival, an account of the writing of the Martyr, a synopsis of the work, a description of Gilbert's alterations to Milman's poem, a selection of press comments on the first performance, and an account of the rest of the Leeds Festival at which the Martyr first appeared. This booklet is essential background reading to the Martyr, especially as it is adorned by a hitherto neglected quotation from the celebrated poet William McGonagall. The Society will award a stuffed owl to any member who can produce a poem more banal than that of the Great McGonagall.

The booklet, which is in a format slightly smaller than this magazine, is available with the recording from David Lisle from the address above, 28 Cator Rd, Sydenham, London SE26 5DS. PRICE: £1.25 inc p&p; Overseas: \$4.50. Cheques to Sullivan Society.

The booklet is available separately, at the above prices, from the Hon Secretary or Hon Treasurer at the addresses shown on the cover. Cheques to Sullivan Society.

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#### SOUTHWARK MUSIC

The recordings of The Golden Legend and The Light of the World by Southwark Music are now available directly from the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society at 28 Cator Rd, Sydenham, London SE26 5DS.

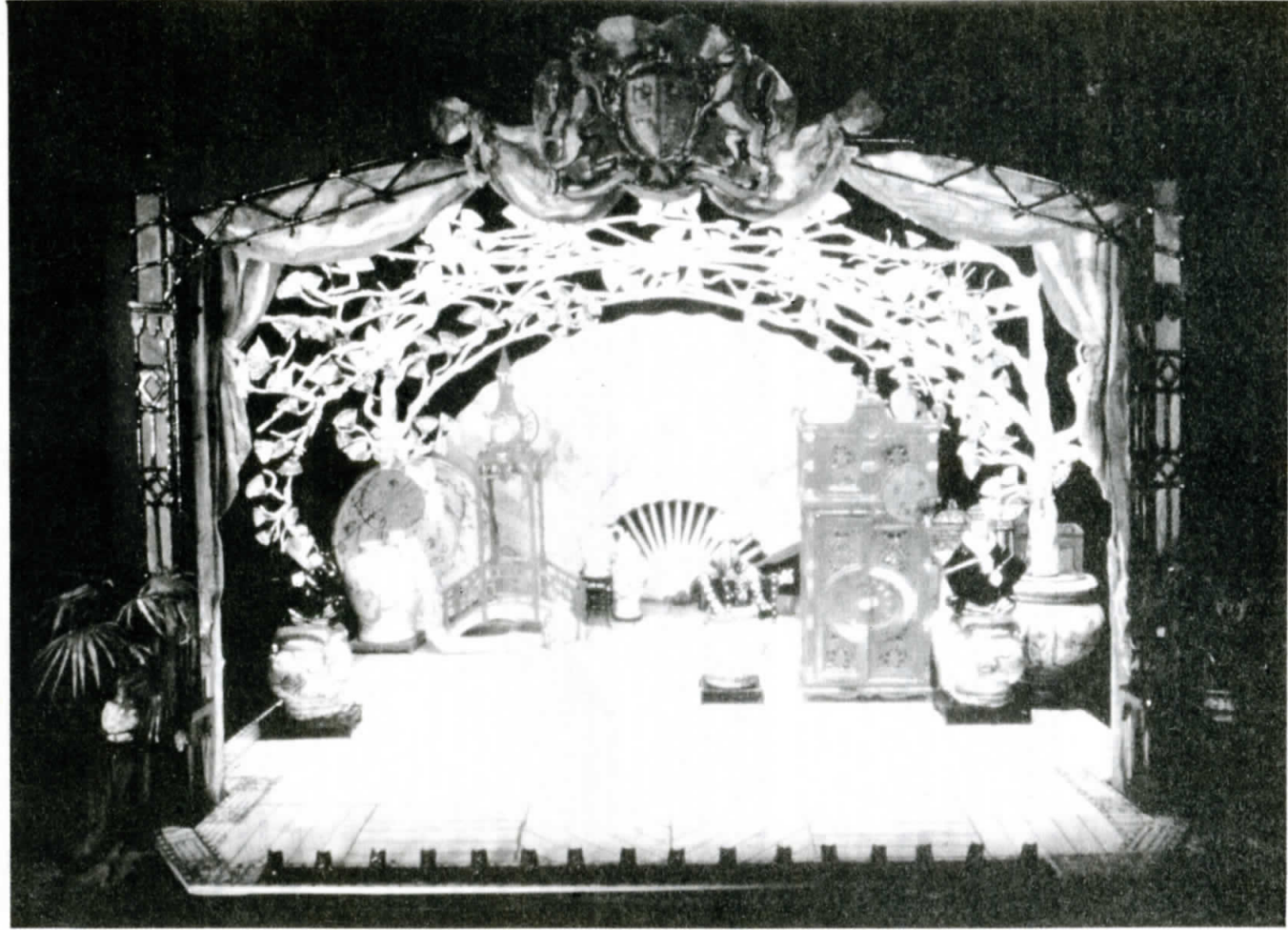
The Golden Legend - complete performance on single C96 cassette. PRICE: £5.50 inc p&p. Overseas \$13.00 airmail. Cheques to the Sullivan Society.

The Light of the World - Substantial extracts, including the previously unrecorded Lazarus section, on 2 C60 cassettes. PRICE £6.50 inc p&p; Overseas \$18.00 airmail. Cheques to the Sullivan Society.

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The picture on page 4 overleaf is of the first act set of The Mikado as recently presented at Sadlers Wells, reviewed on page 8. The illustration was kindly made available by Mr Stephen Remington, Administrator of Sadlers Wells. A photograph of the second act set appears on page 7.

THE MIKADO AT SADIERS WELLS - SETTING FOR ACT 1



## CHRISTIE'S SALE OF MANUSCRIPT FULL SCORES

By Selwyn Tillett

On Wednesday 23rd February 1983 at 2.30pm there took place at Christie's a 'Sale of Valuable Autograph Letters, Historical Documents and Music Manuscripts'. Lots 101 - 108 of this sale consisted of manuscript full scores of eight Gilbert and Sullivan operas.

This remarkable collection was described in the catalogue as "Manuscripts in pen and ink, neatly copied in uniform hand, with cues in red ink and many marks and annotations in blue pencil, all bound in early twentieth century cloth, oblong Quarto, except Trial by Jury (folio). The present manuscripts appear to have been copied about the turn of the century from authoritative scores - probably from scores kept by Chappell, the publishers, if not from Sullivan's own autograph scores themselves. Many of the scores do not appear to have been used for conducting performances (with the exception of Trial by Jury), but all bear some marks of preparation for performance, and they may have been used by one of the early touring companies. Full scores of Gilbert and Sullivan operas are extremely rare. The only full scores to have been published are H.M.S. Pinafore (1890) and The Mikado (1898), both in small editions in Germany which were later suppressed by Rupert D'Oyly Carte. Only a few copies of each edition are extant. Manuscript copies, which have been discouraged from circulation by the D'Oyly Carte Company, are also of the greatest scarcity and very rarely come on the market."

The scores, offered in alphabetical order, were The Gondoliers, H.M.S. Pinafore, Iolanthe, The Mikado, Patience, The Pirates of Penzance, Trial by Jury, and The Yeomen of the Guard. It was obvious immediately that four were more important than the rest: Iolanthe, which contained full pen and ink scores of the extra brass band parts to the March of the Peers and the Finale to Act I; Pirates, of which three 'autograph' scores exist, but all in the USA; Trial, of which the autograph long ago disappeared; and Yeomen, which contained the verses for Third and Fourth Yeomen in the Act 1 Finale, and the original words for Elsie in the Finale to Act 2.

Points of note in the others were that Pinafore included the few bars of 'Rule, Britannia' that were added to the Act 2 Finale before the First World War, and The Mikado gave the bottom line of the madrigal explicitly to Pish-Tush, while writing out in full the obligatory second encore to 'The flowers that bloom in the spring' (with the tune played as a bassoon solo). Trial was very obviously considerably earlier than the rest, but I would take issue with the catalogue's statement that it alone had been used in performance. The bottom right hand corner of many pages in the others was dog-eared or folded - conductors have this annoying habit as it makes turning easier - while all carried a liberal sprinkling of such pencil comments as "Watch stage", "wait for singer", "If no encore go straight to page X".

The inside front cover and the fly-leaf of each score carried respectively a personal bookplate and a library stamp, both of which had been carefully obliterated with a razor blade, either by the seller or by Christie's, to preserve anonymity. Luckily the library stamp in Patience had escaped this treatment and read "Carnegie Trust Dunfermline School of Music Library". The traces left in all the other scores would agree with this. The final pages of The Gondoliers was signed "D.S. 1907", and the final page of Yeomen "D. Stephen Oct 1909"; once again comparison with the bookplates would indicate that they had all originally read "David Stephen". According to Christie's, it was thought that these scores had remained in the family of the original copyist somewhere in Scotland until recently.

The D'Oyly Carte Company only once toured precisely this series of eight operas - the 'C' company headed by Fred Billington played them on tour for the complete calendar year 1894. They spent a week each at Glasgow and Edinburgh that October, but otherwise there seems to be no connection with Scotland. It may however be worth remembering that the 'C' Company (variously re-named the 'Repertoire', the 'Principal Repertory'

and the 'Repertory' Company) was the direct ancestor of the single touring company and as such might well have needed a collection of authentic performing scores.

The dates of Gondoliers and Yeomen, far from clarifying things, only add to the mystery. The 'First Repertory Season' at the Savoy, under Gilbert's personal direction, took place from December 1906 to August 1907, and presented under a staggered system Yeomen from December, Gondoliers from January, Patience from April and Iolanthe from June. Meanwhile the 'Principal Repertory' Company continued touring from December 1906 to April 1908, presenting the standard series of nine operas - the present eight plus Princess Ida. They were in Scotland in December 1906 (Edinburgh and Aberdeen) and August 1907 (Edinburgh and Glasgow). The 'Second Repertory Season' lasted from April 1908 to March 1909, presenting on a similarly staggered basis Mikado, Pinafore, Iolanthe, Pirates, Gondoliers and Yeomen, while the touring company presented all nine operas from October 1908 to June 1909. Scotland was visited in November/December (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen). From July 1909 until the formation of the 'New' Company in September 1919 only one company existed; at the time Mr Stephen was completing his work on Yeomen they were on tour in Kennington and Notting Hill.

Under these circumstances there is no logical reason for Stephen's copies to have been produced when they were; no new companies in formation, no new productions to be rehearsed, no obvious link with Scotland. The Company was in fact being honed down and any spare scores such as might have been in circulation earlier would surely have been returned to head office; the very last thing one might expect would be the commissioning of a complete new set.

With all this in mind Michael Walters - who with John Wolfson had given Christie's some preliminary help in compiling the catalogue - and I duly attended the sale. We were prepared to bid up to £350 on behalf of the Society in an attempt to secure one of the four most important scores - bearing in mind that a bid up to £350 usually means a payment of more than £450. We were not successful. The Gondoliers sold for £500; Pinafore and Iolanthe for £420 each; Mikado for £400; Pirates for £380; the rest for £350 each. By the end of the bidding it had become apparent that we were against someone very determined in the crowd behind; this proved later to be Albert Truslove and Sir Hugh Wontner.

It is probably too much to hope that we shall ever learn much more about these scores, but four questions remain which members of the Society may wish to research:

- 1) Who was David Stephen?
- 2) What is or was the Carnegie Trust?
- 3) Does the Dunfermline School of Music still exist, and can they help?
- 4) If these were intended to be a standard repertory set of scores, where is Princess Ida?

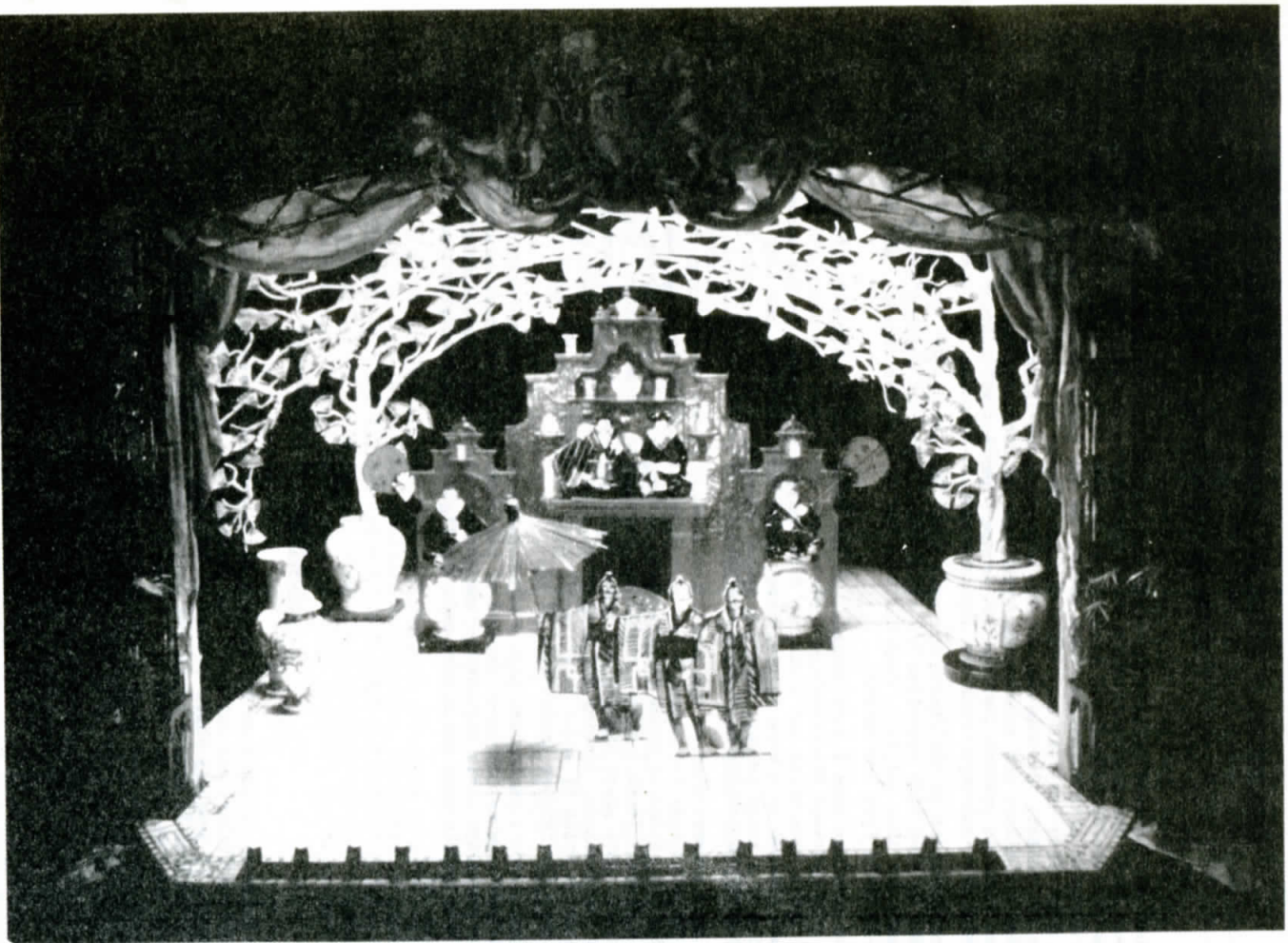
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#### GILBERT AND SULLIVAN ON VIDEO

All the Gilbert and Sullivan operas except Utopia Ltd and The Grand Duke (but including Cox & Box) have been issued on video tape as follows: From VIDEOSPACE 12 cassettes, £29.95 each, except Cox & Box and Trial by Jury £19.95 each. From PRECISION VIDEO The Yeomen of the Guard and H.M.S. Pinafore £40.00 each.

The Precision Video Yeomen is an adaptation of the Tower of London production, starring Tommy Steele. The Videospace series employs a number of famous names, including Frankie Howerd as Sir Joseph Porter and William Conran as the Mikado. Both series have been well reviewed, eg The Times 21-27 May 1983.

A report in the Daily Telegraph 7 Feb 83 says that the film version of the Broadway Pirates cost \$12 million to make, and was expected to gross \$10 million in a single night on cable T.V.





THE MIKADO, PERFORMED IN REPERTORY BY THE NEW SADLERS WELLS  
OPERA COMPANY AT SADLERS WELLS THEATRE JANUARY - MARCH 1983

Review by Michael Symes

This was the most delightful, witty and imaginative production of The Mikado that I have seen. The producer, while remaining true to the spirit of G&S (and taking no more than the occasional and permissible liberty with the text) breathed new life and surprise into a familiar work without in the least pursuing gimmicks for their own sake. From the overture, which was accompanied by slides which became more and more outlandish, the tone was set for a glowing and inventive evening. Among the slides the Mikado was seen standing outside the door of no 10 Downing St, and Queen Victoria revived the Japanese troops - perfect reflections of the satire on British life and ways which the Japanese mise en scene of the opera achieves.

The entrances of the characters were novel and unexpected; the chorus of Japanese nobles entered with umbrellas and briefcases, Pish-Tuah emerged from a beautiful ceramic jar like Ali Baba, Pooch-Bah came out of a wooden cabinet, and the three little maids from tea chests.

The settings were a pure delight. In the first act, a colour motif of blue, white and gold embraced the furniture (mainly jars and pots), the backcloth (an enormous fan) and a tree which had miniature fans instead of leaves. In the second act the Mikado entered on a huge 'mantelpiece' which moved forward, and sang his song in the middle of a large saucer. This act opened charmingly with the girls blowing bubbles at Yum-Yum performing her wedding toilette.

I have concentrated on the production because it was so striking. But one should not forget the performances, which were lively and fully equal to the demands of the production. Nicholas Grace (the decadent Anthony Blanche of Brideshead Revisited) was a perfect Ko-Ko - crisp, nimble and expressive. Thomas Lawlor, that experienced Savoyard, gave great dignity and presence to Pooch-Bah, and there were several other good performances. Singing and orchestral playing were first rate. All in all, a production which it would be extremely hard to match, but which one hopes will set the pace for further productions of G&S.

(In the Act 1 photograph page 4 Pooch-Bah's cabinet is shown centre right; Pish-Tuah's umbrella formed the lid of his ceramic jar, in which he stood up. The Act 2 photograph shows the moving 'mantelpiece' with the Mikado and Katisha seated on it. This mantelpiece was bright red. The figures in the photographs are flat stage models. Ed.)

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RECORDINGS

In a new recording from EMI Valerie Masterson and Robert Tear sing a selection of songs from Gilbert and Sullivan. The programme is as follows: If we're weak enough to tarry; If somebody there chanced to be; Take a pair of Sparkling eyes; Prithce pretty maiden; Is life a boon?; The hours creep on apace; A wandering minstrel I; Happily couples are we. Side 2: O rapture, when alone together; A magnet hung in a hardware shop; The sun whose rays; Refrain audacious tar; Sorry her lot; Were you not to Ko-Ko plighted. The Bournemouth Sinfonietta is conducted by Kenneth Alwyn. ASD 3492; cassette TCC ASD 4392. Full Price. A distinguished record, which helps to remind us that Sullivan's music sounds better when sung by people with voices and musical intelligence.

Two songs by Sullivan appear 'The Spider and the Fly' - Victorian & Edwardian Songs and duets. Performed by Carole Rosen, mezzo, and David Wilson-Johnson, baritone, with

Anthony Saunders, piano. Hyperion A66063. The songs are 'I would I were a king' and 'My Dearest Heart'. Carole Rosen used to sing with Gilbert and Sullivan For All, and was recently heard singing Sullivan's 'St Agnes Eve' on Radio 3. However, she blotted her copybook badly with a trite centenary article on Iolanthe in the Radio 3 Magazine. (Information S.H.T.)

The Fulham recording of Sullivan's Ivanhoe, still available on discs from Rare Recorded Editions, has been issued on tape by Pantheon Music International of New York. Each act of the opera is contained on one tape cassette (3 in all), and all are well packaged as a 'gold embossed round-back leatherette edition'. Pantheon Records are understandably modest in their claims for both performance and recording. In a letter to the editor they point out that the recording is an amateur performance of technically mediocre quality; they are anxious that no one purchasing the set should have false expectations. Having bought and heard the tapes, I can only say that they appear to be even less satisfactory than the original discs - perhaps the master tape has deteriorated over time. However, members who are prepared to make the necessary allowances may find it useful to have Ivanhoe on cassette. The price in the U.S.A. is \$10 to members of this Society, plus postage and packing, which Pantheon do not specify. U.K. members should send an International Money order for \$13.60 to cover airmail postage. Please mention the Sullivan Society in applying, as \$10 basic is a special concession price. PANTHEON MUSIC INTERNATIONAL INC, 211 EAST 43rd STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10017. U.S.A. (D.E.)

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#### PUBLICATIONS

The Lost Stories of W.S. Gilbert Selected and introduced by P. Haining. Robson Books, London, 1982. Hardback £7.95.

This collection is most important and valuable, Gilbert's stories having been out of print for so many years. Gilbert himself rated his short stories the highest of his literary achievements, and they certainly should not be allowed to be eclipsed by his dramatic writings. The range of the stories is quite remarkable: legal comedy (and autobiography) in 'My Maiden Brief'; whimsical fairy story in 'The Triumph of Vice' and 'The Fairy's Dilemma'; good story-telling in 'Maxwell and I'; trial run for G&S in 'An Elixir of Love'; drama and tragedy in 'Diamonds'; sheer farce in 'Foggerty's Fairy' and 'Creatures of Impulse'; sentimental and tragic love in 'Angela'; surrealism in 'The Finger of Fate', and so on. The stories are eminently readable, and by and large free from Victorian fustian. Something of Dickens comes through occasionally, a writer whom Gilbert greatly admired.

The introduction is, unfortunately, far from satisfactory. It gives no more than a superficial background, and contains some unbelievable blunders. The claim is made that Gilbert was educated at Kings College Oxford (which does not exist) and also that there were three unsuccessful G&S operas after The Gondoliers and the Carpet Quarrel. Gilbert's age at the time of death is also wrong. However, the anthology is of such importance that it is strongly recommended.

Michael Symes.

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Gilbert and Sullivan at Law by Andrew Goodman; Foreword by Lord Elwyn-Jones. Associated University Presses, 25 Sicilian Avenue, London WC1A 2QH. Price £14.95.

Daunted by the price, your editor has not yet acquired a copy of this interesting-looking book. The following official utterances are taken from the publisher's blurb.

'Without passing judgement on the events that occurred between Gilbert, Sullivan, and D'Oyly Carte, the author tackles in detail the conflicts arising out of the clashes of creative genius, including the great Carpet Quarrel, and the final split-up. However, it is the little known incidents which give the book its particular colour.'

As a private litigant, Gilbert sued actors and managers for breach of contract, newspaper critics for libel, and protected the virtue of his chorus girls. As a magistrate, he became the scourge of Harrow motorists, enforcing speed limits and imposing fines. The Foreword is by the former Lord High Chancellor of England.'

The book is available direct from the publishers on receipt of the appropriate remittance. Tel 01 405 7979.

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The Annotated Gilbert & Sullivan by Ian Bradley. Penguin Books, 10 King St, Richmond, Surrey. £3.95.

Once again I am reduced to reprinting publisher's blurb for Ian Bradley's book. A detailed review will appear in a later issue of the Magazine. 'Terrific value for money, THE ANNOTATED G&S will appeal to fans old and new. It is a fund of fascinating information about obscure words, historical allusions, and plot and character derivation. It gives full original texts (including songs since cut out - often by the Lord Chamberlain!). Above all it is a celebration of two geniuses affectionately compiled by one of their devotees who happens to be an expert on Victorian history. Enormous media interest.'

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300 Years of English Partsongs Selected and Edited by Paul Hillier. Faber Paperback £2.95.

This anthology includes Sullivan's 'The Long Day Closes' and Barnby's 'Cupid, Look About Thee'. It is described as assembling some of the finest examples of the part song, 'which is essentially convivial in background. This is a practical performing edition of the music, with an introductory essay about the English part song and full editorial notes'. The collection also includes the original glee version of 'The Star-Spangled Banner'.

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#### IRISH SYMPHONY

As part of Washington's 'Irish Week' Sullivan's Irish Symphony was performed and broadcast by the National Gallery Orchestra, at the National Gallery of Art, Washington. The orchestra was conducted by Richard Bales. Sunday, March 13th 1983. Sullivan's work formed the second part of a concert whose first half consisted of Harty's arrangement of the Water Music, Delius' 'On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring', and Britten's 'Soirées Musicales', First Suite. The Washington Post (March 14th) had this to say of the symphony: 'The outer movements contain memorable themes, which the orchestra articulated splendidly. The less weighty Andante and Allegretto - more colour than content - exude a loquaciousness and puckish wit, the sort one might associate with an Emerald Isle leprechaun'. (Information Clark Dobson).

To secure a place in the repertory for Sullivan's genuinely viable works is a basic aim of the Sullivan Society. This is exactly the kind of programme of fine but unpretentious music into which Sullivan's output best fits.

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#### ANYTHING NOSTALGIC?

This is a service run by members Mr & Mrs Bill and Pam Gulliver. Out-of-print books, ephemera, deleted records, theatrical props, programmes, scores, etc can be traced with their expertise and experience. Prices, including search fees and postage, are 'as reasonable as humanly possible'. Address: The Neraldage, 35 Nothcourt Avenue, Reading, Berks, RG2 7HE. Tel 0734-871479.

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## SULLIVAN'S GRANDFATHER

The information in this article, and the illustration on the centre pages, have kindly been supplied to the editor by Mr Bernard Sullivan of Petts Wood, who is a descendant of Sir Arthur Sullivan's grandfather. Coincidentally, an article by Leslie Weaver bringing forward some of the same information has appeared in the May edition of the G&S news. Mr Sullivan is continuing his researches into grandfather Sullivan, and intends to prepare an article of fuller length for the Society's Magazine.

The origins of Sullivan's family have always been shrouded in the decent obscurity of the Celtic twilight. Such information as the biographies give is obviously derived from Sullivan himself, who must have got it from family sources. The following letter, supplied to Mr Bernard Sullivan by the Town Clerk of Tralee U.D.C., depicts grandfather Sullivan as a landless labourer. It appeared in the Cork Examiner, 20th May 1975. It is reproduced here in full.

Sir - I have only been able to read some back papers in the last day or so and came across an article in your "Day to Day" column by your London Editor, J.A.Whelan, on the Gilbert and Sullivan Centenary which repeats an error which is included in most of the biographies of Arthur Sullivan. These state that Sullivan's grandfather was born in Kerryshane, Co. Cork. There is no such place as Kerryshane, Co. Cork.

This came to my light some 17 - 18 years ago when a close friend of mine from London, who is a Gilbert and Sullivan enthusiast and now a Director of the Gilbert and Sullivan Trust - Colin Prestige - wrote to me to say he was paying a visit to Ireland and would like to visit the birthplace of Sullivan's grandfather. I hadn't previously given it much thought, but immediately tried to find Kerryshane on the map and was unsuccessful. However, one biography mentioned Kerryshane, Tralee, Co. Cork - which wouldn't be appreciated very much by Kerry people - so we set out for Tralee and after a great deal of amusing events too long to set out here, we established the birthplace as Caherweeshan, which is a townland near Tralee, and the place where he lived and was used as a coach house later by Bianconi. (The Town Clerk of Tralee U.D.C. is of the opinion that this coach house belongs to the mid nineteenth century Ed).

Your correspondent also mentioned this Thomas Sullivan as being a Sergeant guarding Napoleon at St Helena. This also is at least doubtful. There are several other romantic details mentioned in the biographies which were not quoted by your correspondent, but these suggest that Sullivan's grandfather was a squire somewhat impoverished by his fondness for the race track. In fact he appears to have been no more than a farm hand, and was illiterate, since his army application form which we traced in London is signed only with an "X", and the derivation of the name Kerryshane probably came from this card by a phonetic interpretation by the English officer concerned. In fact, Sullivan's grandfather was recruited in Tralee, and then transferred to Bandon, where he married. It is possible, though by no means certain, that he married a woman named Healy, as we did trace an entry in the parish records of the time. He was not the romantic figure portrayed later by his grandson of a big heroic man, as he was only 5' 2", and was discharged from the army as being "Worn out and under-sized." He ended his life as a pensioner in the Chelsea Hospital.

The late Canon Reidy of Tralee, an authority on local history, described Sullivan's description of his grandfather as an "emigrant's manufactured legend", and this is probably true as, since he himself moved in the higher circles of London society - very snobbish at that time and included the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, among his friends - he

66<sup>th</sup>  
1821

HIS MAJESTY'S

Wo. 97  
796



66th Regt.

of Foot

Whereof General Chas. Nicolls is Colonel.

**These are to Certify,**

1st.  
Age and  
Enlistment.

THAT Thomas Sullivan born in the Parish of Warrigane in or near the Town of Traler in the County of North was enlisted for the aforesaid Regiment at Suttonmouth in the County of Hants on the 31<sup>st</sup> Day of July 1815 at the Age of thirty for Serjeant

2nd.  
Service.

THAT he hath served in the Army for the space of fifteen Years and 174 Days, after the Age of Eighteen, according to the subjoined

STATEMENT OF SERVICE.

IN WHAT CORPS.	PERIOD OF SERVICE.		Serjeant Major.		Gr. Master Serjeant.		Serjeant.		Corporal.		Trumpeter or Drummer.		Private.		Service prior in the Age of 18 to be deducted.		Total Service			
	From	To	Yrs.	Days	Yrs.	Days	Yrs.	Days	Yrs.	Days	Yrs.	Days	Yrs.	Days	Yrs.	Days	Yrs.	Days		
<u>57<sup>th</sup> Foot</u>	<u>25<sup>th</sup> June 1815</u>	<u>24<sup>th</sup> July 1815</u>	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	<u>9</u>	<u>311</u>	"	"	<u>9</u>	<u>311</u>
<u>58<sup>th</sup> Foot</u>	<u>25<sup>th</sup> July 1815</u>	<u>18<sup>th</sup> Decr 1814</u>	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	<u>6</u>	<u>147</u>	"	"	<u>6</u>	<u>147</u>
Total of Service ....			"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	<u>15</u>	<u>477</u>	"	"	<u>15</u>	<u>477</u>
In East or W. Indies			"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"

3rd.  
Authority  
and Cause of  
Discharge.

THAT by Authority of The 54<sup>th</sup> General Serjeant dated Home Guards 11<sup>th</sup> 1815 HE IS HEREBY DISCHARGED in consequence of being in the line of duty

(12)

4th.  
Not disqualified for Pension.

THAT he is not, to my knowledge, incapacitated by the Sentence of a General Court Martial, from receiving Pension.

5th.  
Character, &c. &c. &c.

THAT his general Conduct as a Soldier has been *very good* - was in the Peninsula from 1810 to 1811 on 57<sup>th</sup> foot and present in the Actions in which that Regt. was engaged from that Service till 1814

6th.  
Settlement of all Demands.

THAT he has received all just Demands of Pay, Clothing, &c. from his Entry into the Service to the date of this Discharge, as appears by his Receipt underneath.

7th.  
Acknowledgment of the Receipt of all Demands.

I Thomas Sullivan do hereby acknowledge that I have received all my Clothing, Pay, Arrears of Pay, and all just Demands whatsoever, from the time of my Entry into the Service to the time of this Discharge.

Certified by

W. M. Pemberton  
Commanding the Troop or Company.

Signature of the Soldier }

Thomas Sullivan

8th.  
Description, &c. &c. &c.

To prevent any improper use being made of this Discharge, by its falling into other Hands, the following is a Description of the said Thomas Sullivan He is about thirty six Years of Age, is six Feet three Inches in height, light Hair, grey Eyes, fair Complexion; and by Trade Occupation a Laborer

Given under my Hand

Regiment at Waltham this 11<sup>th</sup> Day of October 1821.

Signature of the Commanding Officer. G. Hill

Horse Guards

10<sup>th</sup> Decr 1821, confirmed

Gardiner  
Col

would naturally try to make his forebears as romantic as possible. One does not suggest that he told lies about it, but that he merely confirmed what was already a family acceptance. In fact, it is all the more to the credit of the Sullivan who wrote the comic operas with Gilbert that he, through his diligent father, who was a bandmaster in the British army, rose to such eminence and has given to many of us such pleasure through his music.

James N. Healy  
2 Lincoln Place  
Grattan Hill  
Cork.

The discharge certificate of Thomas Sullivan, reproduced in the centre pages, has been obtained by Mr Bernard Sullivan from the Public Record Office ref W0 97/796 XC/A 8156. The certificate states that Thomas Sullivan was born in the Parish of Kerryshane in or near the town of Tralee in the County of Cork. He was enlisted in the 66th Regiment of Foot at Portsmouth, Hants, on 31st July 1815 at the age of thirty for life.

His total length of service is stated at fifteen years and 177 days after the age of 18; the Statement of Service lists his service as follows. In the 57th Foot, from 25th June 1806 to 24th July 1815 - 9 years and 30 days; in the 66th Foot, from 25th July 1815 to 18th Dec 1821 - 5 years and 147 days. Total 15 years 177 days.

He is discharged in consequence of 'being worn out and undersized'. However, his conduct as a soldier has been 'very good - was in the Peninsula from 1810 to 1814 in 57th Foot and present in the Actions in which that Regt was engaged from that period till 1814.'

Thomas Sullivan's signature reveals that he had learned to write while in the army. He is described as about thirty six years of age, five feet three inches in height, with light hair, grey eyes and a fresh complexion. He is by trade and occupation a labourer. A separate entry, not reproduced here, corrects the age of 36 years to 43. The certificate is dated at the Horse Guards 18th Dec 1821.

Apart from their clear indication that grandfather Sullivan was not altogether the figure family legend would have him, these details suggest that genetically speaking he was not the dominant contributor to his grandson's inheritance. The grandfather had light hair and a fair complexion, whereas the grandson was dark haired and dark skinned; both were short, though the composer was taller than his grandfather. Nevertheless, we should count ourselves fortunate that Thomas Sullivan survived the hazards of the Peninsular War - a single stray bullet might at any moment have been sufficient to deprive the nation of one of its great men.

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#### HIS EXCELLENCY

The fine new setting of Gilbert's His Excellency by Terry Hawes is now available on tape cassette. The recording includes several numbers cut from the stage production, including the overture, 'When I unfold my bosom's store', and 'Oh I am a prince'. Mr Hawes writes as follows: 'I think prospective buyers should be told that the recording is of a public performance by an amateur cast and largely amateur orchestra - not done under ideal conditions, but nevertheless giving perhaps a fairly good idea of what the show was like.' Those who were present at the performance (reviewed in Magazine 14 page 12) will know that the performance was a good one, and the show itself extremely lively. The music of Terry Hawes constitutes a splendid realisation of Gilbert's words; it is certain to be heard with pleasure, and should not be missed.

AVAILABLE FROM: Terry Hawes, Lecturer in Music, Southgate Technical College, High St, Southgate, London N14 6BS. PRICE IN U.K.: £4.50 inc p&p. OVERSEAS: please send STERLING DRAFT for £6.50 airmail postage.

## THE BEAUTY STONE

The Beauty Stone - complete concert performance by the Prince Consort, with the Consort Orchestra and a chorus drawn from members of the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Edinburgh. Conducted by David Lyle. In the Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, Saturday 18 June 1983.

### Review by Stephen Turnbull

In terms of public acclaim, The Beauty Stone was the least successful of all Sullivan's operas, having an initial run of only 50 nights. Since this time revivals of any kind have been few and far between. The last known was in Newcastle in 1957. The reasons for the work's failure have been looked for in a number of places: was it too 'serious' for the Savoy?; was Walter Passmore miscast in the long and demanding role of the Devil?; was the spoken dialogue altogether too clumsily verbose and intolerably over-long?

In presenting a concert version of the opera the Prince Consort spared us from the creaking excesses of Pinero's dialogue, and enabled us to assess the music on its merits. The piece is recognisably in Sullivan's late style, and like The Emerald Isle (recorded by the Prince Consort last year) gives absolutely no suggestion that Sullivan's gifts deserted him towards the end of his life. This is a score to rank with Sullivan's best, but it must be remembered that it is not a comic opera. There are occasional humorous elements (and some unintentional humour - who could fail to laugh at lines like 'Then get thee hence and buy thee a new crutch' or 'Ah, Jacqueline, if thou but hadst a mother!') but no comedian, no belly laughs, no patter songs - indeed no madrigal and no double chorus. One can understand why the Savoy audience was nonplussed.

There is much fine writing in martial vein, some tender love music, and a song for the Devil which ranks with 'Ho Jolly Jenkin' as a show-stopper. Allusions to other works are less obvious, though there are several affinities with The Grand Duke in the style of the chorus writing. I swear I heard the first line of 'Take a pair of sparkling eyes' at the end of the beauty contest scene.

The two main female characters are Laine, the crippled girl who is made beautiful by the stone of the opera's title, and is loved by Philip; and Saida, whose fading charms cease to attract Philip, and who is bitterly jealous of Laine. Both these characters are sopranos, and the differences between them are skilfully delineated. Laine (Mary Timmons) had a fresh young voice, conveying naiv te and innocence with ease. Margaret Aronson (Saida), on the other hand, had a full and powerful tone, completely in line with the character's self-assertive nature. The sepulchral sonorous bass voice of Richard Bourjo was ideal for the role of the Devil; his glee when the stone inevitably returned to him in Act III was beautifully conveyed. Alan Borthwick was fully equal to the demanding role of Philip, and his fluent tenor voice (to me reminiscent of Thomas Round) soared gloriously above the chorus in the ensembles. Simon and Joan, Laine's parents, were very sympathetically sung by Ivor Klayman and Margaret Leask.

It says much for the quality of Sullivan's writing that, in a concert performance, without the benefit of scenery, the squalor and despair in which Simon and Joan lived came through clearly. All the other principals sang well; there was a delightful cameo by Jane Borthwick as Crazy Jacqueline - a sort of mini Mad Margaret. Chorus singing was first rate and well disciplined throughout, notably in the extended diminuendo which ends Act 2. The orchestra had ample opportunity to shine, as there are a number of extended orchestral passages. The band parts, incidentally, were in the hand of the original copyist of 1898.

The opera was greeted with acclaim by the almost entirely local audience of 500 plus (Londoners take note); it was recorded, and will probably be issued by Pearl Records. The evening was a memorable one; the work is of great merit, and the performance was entirely worthy of the work.



## BEAUTY STONE LIBRETTO

To mark the performance of The Beauty Stone by the Prince Consort, the Sullivan Society has republished the libretto, by Arthur Pinero and Joseph Comyns Carr. The libretto, of 50 pages, is finely printed in the same format as this magazine. It includes 4 illustrations from The Sketch of 6 July 1898, and a copy of the last night programme. These illustrations will not be reproduced elsewhere; one of them is an ingenious photograph of Henry Lytton in his two capacities as the aged and rejuvenated Simon Limal. The other three are Emmie Owen as Crazy Jacqueline, Pauline Joran as Saida, and George Devoll as Philip. The original Beauty Stone libretto is extremely rare, so much so that it has only recently been found to exist in a second edition. This Sullivan Society edition therefore makes available a work which is virtually unobtainable in any other way.

AVAILABLE FROM: Stephen Turnbull, 27 Burnholme Avenue, York, YO3 0NA or D.J.Eden, 55 Radwinter Rd, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3HU. PRICE IN U.K. £2.00 inc p&p; In U.S.A. \$7.00 airmail. Cheques to Sullivan Society.

The libretto of The Emerald Isle continues to be available from Stephen Turnbull or David Eden at £2.00 and \$7.00. 4 Illustrations of original production.

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## THE TEMPEST

The Tempest, by William Shakespeare, with incidental music by Arthur Sullivan. Richmond Shakespeare Society in association with the Richmond Orchestra, Court Opera, Dancercise, Hampton Choral Society, Richmond Opera and Richmond Adult College. Directed by Pramilla le Hunte. At the German School, Persham Rd, Petersham, 9th, 10th, 11th June 1983. At 8 pm.

### Review by David Eden

Written as an examination exercise, Sullivan's Tempest music has not often been used in conjunction with a staged performance of the play. We are therefore deeply indebted to Richmond Shakespeare Society whose enterprise made possible an examination of the music's effectiveness in the theatre. The Richmond Shakespeare Society undertook the production at the suggestion of Michael Walters, who played the part of Caliban.

An amateur operatic or dramatic production is just about the most complex example of voluntary cooperation known to civilised life. The mere mounting of this production involved collaboration between a number of groups and individuals, all absolutely essential to its success. The very existence of the production was therefore a triumph of devotion which no one should underestimate. If the end is not quite what was foreseen at the beginning, that is no cause for blame or surprise.

The German School is a modern building of open plan, with a hall designed to convert to an auditorium. The stage consists simply of a couple of brick walls, which in this production were hung with green drapes by way of scenery. The orchestra and choir were placed to the side of the audience, not concealed, but at the same floor level. Costumes for the immortals were based on green tights, while the mortals wore robes or Jacobean dress. In order to accommodate the music the play was severely cut, so much so that the entire running time was barely two hours. From time to time the natural speaking voices of the actors were replaced by tape recordings, to which they mimed. I arrived late for the opening, but I understand that the initial tempest was accompanied by some fine electronic effects.

Among the individual performers, the play was dominated by the Ariel of Chris Walters, an all-green sprite of some agility, who conveyed well the character's devotion and longing for freedom. John Crook as Prospero had a beautiful speaking voice combined with an unhappy tendency to forget his lines. When the flow of his speech was not impeded he made a dignified impression, and was particularly moving in his famous

lines beginning 'Our revels now are ended.' Michael Walters as Caliban made the most of a truncated part, cringing before his master with the appropriate hint of menace. The lovers Ferdinand and Miranda were nicely played by Paul Marshall and Tanya Crook, but are not, in the nature of the play, given much to do. It fell to the lot of the shipwreck party to conduct much of their dialogue through pre-recorded tape - an intelligent way of indicating the enchantment they are under, but not a basis on which to judge their performance.

All of which leads to a consideration of the music. The Richmond Orchestra under Stephen Rhys played beautifully, but the low roof of the building concentrated the sound so that the orchestra swamped the actor when words were spoken through the music. Much depends on Ariel, who unfortunately had no singing voice. Much more serious than this was the inescapable impression that the music was out of place. Sullivan wrote against the sumptuous background of nineteenth century theatre production. The music is intended for a large proscenium arch theatre, and to accompany spectacle. Under contemporary conditions of Shakespeare production it is frankly an irrelevance, and was palpably such at Richmond. Only in the masque-like scene in which Juno and Ceres bless the lovers did the needs of the production coincide with what the music had to offer. Here the effect was splendid, helped by two fine singers in Carol Kewley and Louise Crane. Effective use was made of mime for a couple of lengthy passages of music, but it was clearly a case of the producer accommodating the score rather than the score aiding and abetting the production.

I am sure no one in the Richmond Society could have anticipated this result - the experience of production was necessary before it could be realised. Nevertheless the conclusion must be that the Tempest music has no place in the modern theatre. Our ideas about Shakespeare have undergone a fundamental shift, leaving no scope for the Victorian brand of romanticism. We must applaud the Richmond Society for their enterprise, but in truth their production would have been better served musically by a few plinks and plonks from a local master of the avant garde.

(The programme cover of the Richmond Tempest is reproduced on the back cover).

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#### THE GEISHA

The Geisha, by Syndey Jones, produced by Kingsbury A.O.S. April 27-30 1983

The Geisha was first produced on April 25th 1896, six weeks after The Grand Duke, and with lethal effect so far as the G&S opera was concerned. It ran for 760 performances at Daly's Theatre, with worldwide popularity following. However, it has not been seen professionally since 1934. Great credit is due therefore to K.A.O.S. for enabling us to see and hear one of the musical comedies that so seriously undermined the Savoy in the 1890s. A photograph of the production, kindly supplied by Vic Golding, appears on page 18.

To avoid any suggestion of bias in favour of Sullivan Society members, I quote from the review of the production in The Amateur Stage: 'The star of the evening was Vic Golding (Wun Hi). Wendy Williams (Mimosa) and Marion Lang (Molly Seamore) used their small voices attractively as the two loves of Lieutenant Fairfax. Frankly Geoff Hewlett (Fairfax) did not have a good enough baritone to make "Star of my soul", a straight love song, more than rather an embarrassment. Jim McDonald was a Mikado-like Isari!'

What this lively and intelligent production brought out clearly is that The Geisha is far too long for its material. The well known passages of music are liberally sprinkled with those that seem to merit their obscurity, while the plot comes to pieces after a beginning strongly anticipatory of Madame Butterfly. Even so, with judicious cuts, the work seems hardly less worth attention than some Viennese operettas that receive regular performance from amateur societies. The two styles have rather more in common with each other than either has with G&S. (D.E.)

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## SULLIVAN BUYS A CARPET

Researched By John Gardner.

The following article is taken from The Musical World, 21 October 1882. A statement in the Musical World says the article is reproduced from the U.S. Boston Herald (no date). Sullivan left America with Gilbert on March 3rd 1880, and did not return till June 20th 1885. This being so, it is probably wise to treat most of the information in this anecdote as belonging to the category of corroborative detail.

### Arthur Sullivan bought a carpet

He bought a carpet in Alexandria and the purchase took him three months. One morning, so runs Dr Sullivan's narrative, he was passing by one of the bazaars where tapestries and such things are sold, when a particularly handsome and rich fabric caught his eye. He went in, and, after pretending to look over a lot of things which in reality he did not want, he said to the man who solemnly presided over the place. "And what is the price of that carpet?" "That," responded the dealer, "is not for sale. I purchased that particular carpet at a great cost to feast my eyes upon. It is magnificent - superb. I could not part with that. No, by Allah!" or words to that effect. "Will the English gentleman have a cup of coffee?" The English gentleman would. He would also have a cigarette. After that he went away. In a day or two he came round again, and once more made a pretence of looking through Macdallah's (sic) stock. He had obviously failed to fool the sly Egyptian before as to the article he really wanted, so he took more time to it upon this occasion. As he expected, the sedate owner of the bazaar finally approached him. "I have concluded, after several sleepless nights," said the merchant, "to part with that carpet. It grieves me very much to do so, for I have become very fond of it. I had hoped that it would be the light of my eyes in my old age. But the Prophet has counselled unselfishness among his people, and I will sell to the English gentleman." "How much?" "One hundred pounds." "Nonsense. I'll give you £5."

The Egyptian's dignity was obviously wounded. An expression of absolute pain crossed his face. But he forgave Dr Sullivan, and they had another cup of coffee and a cigarette together. Then Dr Sullivan went away as before. In a week or so he dropped around again. After going through the regular business of looking over the stock, he was again approached by Macdallah. "I have concluded, after much thought," said that worthy, "that I asked you too much for the carpet the other day. When Macdallah feels he is in the wrong, he is quick to acknowledge it. The English gentleman can have the beautiful carpet for £90." "Now you acknowledge your error," replied Mr Sullivan, "I will confess that I was wrong in offering you only £5 for your carpet the other day. I did that in joke, of course. I didn't mean it. Bless you no. And since you are prepared to make concessions, I will do the same. Instead of £5, I will give you £6." More coffee and another cigarette. The next time Dr Sullivan went around, the merchant took off £5 more, and the purchaser added £1. So it went on, with haggling and coffee, until Dr Sullivan finally agreed to give £12, at which price he took away the carpet. It would have cost about 250 dols in London.

He says that the kind of business mentioned is considered strictly the proper thing in Egypt and Turkey. But Americans, he adds, are spoiling the trade in this direction. While he was in Alexandria a gentleman named Morgan from New York came along and visited the bazaar of Macdallah. Three carpets struck his fancy and he priced them. "Three hundred pounds," said Macdallah. "Well," replied Mr Morgan, "that seems a fair price, and I'll take them. Here's your money." The next time Dr Sullivan saw the merchant he was almost tearing his hair with rage against the "dog of a Christian." He explained the matter in an injured tone to the sympathizing Englishman, adding that Mr Morgan's method was not "business".

(Sullivan arrived in Egypt on Dec 31st 1881; he was in Alexandria in the middle of February 1883, returning home in April. The picture on the front of the Magazine is printed with the Musical World article, p 653.)

## SULLIVAN AND THE CRYSTAL PALACE

### Part VII

By David Lisle

In the last part of this series (part VI, Magazine no 13), I quoted from an article in the Crystal Palace Magazine for January 1901, in which Henry Saxw Wyndham, referring to Sullivan's death the previous November, remarked: "His unexampled versatility brings his loss home to all classes in the land." That Sullivan indeed genuinely strove to promote the art of music to all classes in the land is demonstrated by an important service to British music that he undertook during his period on the board of the Crystal Palace Company. This was his assistance in advancing the popularity and esteem in the eyes of the general public, and the status in the musical world (ie the world of opinionated musical sophts) of that large body of dedicated amateur musicians, mainly from a working class background - the British brass band. In his Oxford Companion To Music (1938) Percy Scholes describes the brass band movement as follows:

The brass band is a type of instrumental combination particularly suitable for open-air performance and allowing of amateur cultivation. It is found all over Europe and in countries settled by Europeans, but its greatest popularity is in the north of England, where an extremely high standard of performance is common. The brass band movement began there shortly before the middle of the nineteenth century, and by the beginning of the 20th it was reported that in Lancashire and Yorkshire alone between 4000 and 5000 bands existed, with 40,000 in the whole country (the present writer, however, considers these figures much exaggerated; 5000 in the whole of England Scotland and Wales may be nearer the mark). Many of these bands were attached to particular factories or collieries, and this affiliation still continues.

The circumstances which led Sullivan to become associated with the brass band movement at this time (1899-1900) arose from the blaze of patriotic fervour that swept the country at the outbreak of the Boer War. Lord Northcliffe's newspaper the Daily Mail had launched what was called the 'Kipling Fund' to raise money to help relatives and dependents of soldiers fighting in South Africa. John Henry Iles, the dynamic central figure in the brass band movement, organised the 'British Bandsman War Fund', to be run in conjunction with the Daily Mail's campaign. Iles hit on the idea of holding a mammoth Grand Patriotic Concert of brass bands at the Albert Hall, to swell the coffers of the fund. It became known as the 'Absent Minded Beggar' concert, through Rudyard Kipling's poem of that title which, in the musical setting by Sullivan, of which Iles owned the rights, was being played throughout the country by brass bands.

Sullivan had said that he would never conduct another rendering of the famous composition, and had resisted various requests to do so; but he had not reckoned with the persuasiveness of J. Henry Iles. Lord Northcliffe had issued a challenge to Iles which had been readily accepted. Northcliffe had tried unsuccessfully, despite the offer of attractive financial rewards, to get Sullivan to conduct his composition again. He told Iles that if he succeeded in getting Sullivan to conduct the march he would sponsor Iles' plan to run a great concert of brass bands at the Albert Hall. Northcliffe never thought he would succeed. His first approach was to Sullivan's secretary, Wilfred Bendall, who told him the idea was utterly useless. But Iles persisted, and eventually Sir Arthur agreed to see him, if only to satisfy his curiosity about this persistent man. Within half an hour Iles had aroused Sullivan's

enthusiasm: not only had he agreed to conduct the massed bands, but they had managed to agree the entire programme and selected the soloists.

The evening of the concert, 20 January 1900, was foggy and unpleasant, but the Albert Hall was packed with 10,000 people: the largest audience, it was said, the place had ever held. They were standing in the aisles, the boxes bulged with double their normal capacity, and thousands were turned away at the doors. The moment Sullivan raised his baton, and Clara Butt launched into 'Onward Christian Soldiers', backed by the Albert Hall organ and the brass orchestra some 250 strong, a flood of pent-up emotion was released and the entire concert was carried along with the intoxicating tide. Sullivan, deeply moved and impressed by the achievements of the bands, which had played separately as well as in mass concert, turned to Iles and asked "What can be done for these fellows?"

Iles was not slow to find an answer, for he cherished the idea of an annual national brass band festival in London - and what better place to hold such a contest than the Crystal Palace, of which Sullivan was a director? With Sullivan's support, plans for the new contest, to be held at the Crystal Palace in July 1900, were carefully laid. From April onwards, via the columns of Iles' magazine, The British Bandsman, the details gradually emerged; there were to be three graded sections, so that the bandsmen in the lower leagues would not only be able to compete at their own standard, but would have the opportunity to hear the top bands performing on the same day. The test piece in the main section was, appropriately enough, a selection from Sullivan's operas specially arranged by J. Ord Hume. Various newspapers presented silver cups for prizes, but the premier award was to be the awesomely named Thousand Guinea Trophy. This large and ornate silver trophy (rather like a miniature Albert Memorial and valued at £8000 in 1974) had originally been provided by the Crystal Palace authorities for competition at the choral festivals at the Palace, and had been stored in the vaults since their discontinuance some years earlier. At Sullivan's insistence this prestigious trophy was dusted and cleaned and offered as the main prize for the competing bands.

Thus it was that the first National Band Festival came to be held at the Crystal Palace on 21 July 1900, at which Sullivan attended to present the prizes and conduct. Indeed, according to Henry Saxe Wydham (Crystal Palace Magazine, January 1901), this was Sullivan's last appearance in public. The Musical Times reported the Festival as follows:

The brass band contest at the Crystal Palace, on the 21st ult., brought together many of the best known bands from the Midlands and the North, as well as from the Home counties. The entries numbered forty eight, which represented about twelve hundred instrumentalists. In several instances the competition was keen, and the general efficiency of the performers testified to the benefits derived from the formation of brass band associations in certain populous districts in which the opportunities of hearing vocal and instrumental music are limited. The first prize of £75 and the right to hold for a year the National Challenge Trophy, presented by the directors of the Crystal Palace, and valued at a thousand guineas, was awarded to the Denton Original (Manchester) conductor, Mr A. Owen. . . . .

A regrettable incident of the afternoon was the action of some of the non-recipients of first prizes, who showed their disappointment by leaving the Palace, and not taking part in the evening concert. Such conduct is un-English to a degree. After the contest the combined bands assembled on the Handel orchestra for a concert conducted by Sir Arthur Sullivan and Mr August Manns. The 'Cornelius' March and the 'Tannhäuser' March were admirably played.

From Sullivan's diary entry for that day it is possible to identify the piece he conducted at the end of the concert, after he had presented the prizes - it was the 'Absent Minded Beggar' again. In the same entry, Sullivan states that he was furious at the un-English behaviour of the bands which left the Orchestra because they had not

won, and that he ran round and planted policemen at every exit, but was too late to do much good.

If some of the bands behaved in a manner reminiscent of a modern football crowd, the incident did not prevent this, the first National Band Festival, from being regarded as a success. From then on the National Festival was held annually at the Crystal Palace until its destruction by fire in 1936, when the Festival was continued elsewhere.

The lead given by Sullivan, ie in being the first composer/conductor of world stature to stand in front of mass bands at the Royal Albert Hall and the Crystal Palace, together with his efforts in setting up the prestigious annual National Brass Band Festival at the Crystal Palace, greatly enhanced the acceptance of the brass band movement in the musical world. To quote Percy Scholes again:

Sullivan . . . suggested an annual competition festival, and Iles organised this at the Crystal Palace in 1900, when about twenty bands took part - a number that by 1930 had grown to nearly 200. Special contest compositions have been written by many of the leading British musicians (Elgar, Bantock, Holst, Ireland, Howells, Bliss, etc) . . . The technique displayed is amazing, and there is no doubt that they have had a highly stimulating effect upon the arts of performance, conducting, and composition, so far as these concern wind bands. (Oxford Companion to Music)

The significance of the help given by Sullivan to the brass band movement is well appreciated by the movement's modern exponents, as may be noted from the clutch of books on the history of brass bands that have been published in the last few years. It is disappointing to note, however, that 'The New Grove' (published in 1980), in its article on brass bands, not only fails to mention of Sullivan's part in founding the National Brass Band Festival, but also incorrectly states that the Festival grew out of a contest at the Crystal Palace in 1860, then continued there yearly until 1936. It is true that the first brass band contest in the South of England, organised by Enderby Jackson, was held at the Crystal Palace in July 1860 and continued annually - but only until 1863. It was not until 1900, 37 years later, that a brass band contest was again held at the Crystal Palace, ie the first National Brass Band Festival, made possible, as described, by Sullivan's actions when a director of the Crystal Palace Company.

TO BE CONTINUED

(The 1000 Guinea Trophy is now owned by the G.L.C., and held by the National Museum of Wales. We hope to be able to print a picture of it in due course. Ed)

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#### SULLIVAN KNIGHTHOOD DINNER

The Society celebrated the centenary of Sullivan's knighthood on 21st May 1983 in suitably convivial style. About a dozen members, including Clark Dobson from the U.S.A., attended an evening performance of The Mikado at the Golden Lane Theatre, Barbican, London. This performance, given by GEOIDS A.O.S., put us in the mood for the feast to follow. We repaired to a nearby Italian restaurant, previously booked, where we waited 1½ hours (till midnight) to be served. When it came, the food was delicious, but the long wait somewhat took the top off it. In the event we failed even to drink a toast to the great man! Nevertheless, it was pleasant for members to meet each other and talk about topics of mutual interest, such as the arrival of the food. It is not every knighthood which is celebrated in this way; there was some suggestion that our Italian hosts may have been waiting for the second centenary. (DE).

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# A NATIONAL HYMN

*Allegro Marziale.* Music by ARTHUR SULLIVAN.

God bless our wide Do-mi-nion, Our fa-ther's cho-sen land. And  
bind in last-ing u-nion Each o-cean's dis-tant strand. From where At-lan-tic  
ter-rors, Our har-dy sea-men train; To where the salt sea mir-rors, The  
vast Pa-ci-fic chain. *dim p* O, bless our wide Do-mi-nion, True free-dom's fair-est  
scene. *ff* De-fend our peo-ple's u-nion, God save our Em-pire's Queen!

God bless our wide Dominion,  
Our fathers' chosen land;  
And bind in lasting union  
Each ocean's distant strand;  
From where Atlantic terrors  
Our hardy seamen train,  
To where the salt sea mirrors  
The vast Pacific chain:  
*O bless our wide Dominion,  
True Freedom's fairest scene;  
Defend our people's union;  
God save our Empire's Queen.*<sup>63</sup>



GILBERT'S OPERA RECORDS

By Michael Walters

On page 103 of 'Gilbert and Sullivan and Their World' (1973), Leslie Baily wrote:

Gilbert has often been quoted as asserting a dislike of serious music, especially grand opera, but we may now see this as a professional front presented in order to resist efforts to involve him in a world of no commercial interest to him rather than as a true expression of personal taste. For Mr Brian Rust, the gramophone historian, has discovered a hoard of records bought by W.S.G. in the early years of the twentieth century: they are all of grand opera.

As this lead had not, apparently, been followed up, I wrote to Brian Rust recently to enquire if it was possible, after ten years, to say precisely how many records there were, and what they were, as this might give a clue to Gilbert's musical tastes. Mr Rust's reply is quoted below, with his full permission:

The leather carrying-case with gold initials W.S.G., containing twelve red G&T records, was offered to me by a Dr Lankester of Oxshott, whose elderly patient (name not given) had died, leaving them to him. She had apparently been some sort of servant to Gilbert, who had apparently bequeathed them to her (she had acquired them anyway). I was offered these records on November 14th 1972, and my cash offer for them was accepted after some delay, the records being delivered on December 7th, in superb condition. I traded them to an opera collector for some jazz rarities later, and the case went with them.

The exact details of what the records were are not shown in my files, unfortunately, but I do recall Caruso's 1902 recording of VESTI LA GIUBBA, the earlier (and rarer) of the two versions of CELESTE AIDA made that year, a Plancon of the MEPHISTOPHELE Serenade, one by Olimpia Boronat (DESIDERIO, I think), but memory fails at that point. I rather think the others were also Carusos, or possibly a Renaud. The man who did the deal with me has since died, so I'm sorry to say there is no way the identities of the collection can be established now. The fact that the records were all in such splendid condition, many looking as if they had been played perhaps once or twice at most, suggests to me that they may have been a sort of public-relations exercise on the part of the G&T Company, a free gift to W.S.G. (presumably with a gramophone, of which nothing survives) to persuade him to uphold the product publicly. He may have played them a few times each - the VESTI LA GIUBBA showed signs of wear - but the impression they gave was of an unwanted gift in which the recipient was just not interested. He would hardly have bought a machine and 12 expensive records (by 1902 standards - 10s each!) just to look at, I'd have thought. They do not suggest that W.S.G. was very interested in them - either that, or he was meticulous (perhaps in view of the outlay involved in buying them, if that is what he did) in his handling of them.

So it does seem that Baily was wrong in believing that records (hardly a 'hoard' in any case) did anything to lend weight to the theory that Gilbert knew and liked music more than he let it be known.

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The music of Sullivan's National Hymn for the people of Canada was supplied by Mr W.R. Taggart of Victoria, British Columbia. This music was written in February/March 1880, when Sullivan was visiting his friends the Marquis and Marchioness of Lorne (Princess Louise) in Canada. The words are by the Marquis of Lorne, who was then Governor-General of Canada.

The Golden Legend programme on the back cover was kindly supplied by Mr David Jacobs.

Musical Times Dec 1st 1903: Sullivan's delightful Tempest music has been an attractive feature at the Royal Court Theatre. (Information John Gardner.)

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by  
**William Shakespeare**  
with incidental music  
by **Arthur Sullivan**

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**Programme 20p**

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Saturday Evening, February 28, 1891.

THE GOLDEN LEGEND . . . . . ARTHUR SULLIVAN.

### PART THE FIRST.

- Prologue . . . Mr. WATKIN MILLS and Chorus . . . Hasten! Hasten!
- Scene 1 . . . { Solo—Mr. LLOYD . . . . . I cannot sleep.  
Duet—Mr. LLOYD & Mr. WATKIN MILLS . . . All hail, Prince Henry.  
Solo and Chorus . . . . . Through every vein.
- Scene 2 . . . { Introduction and Solo—  
Miss MEREDYTH ELLIOTT } Slowly, slowly.  
Chorus—Evening Hymn . . . . . O gladsome Light.  
Duet—Madame NORDICA and  
Miss MEREDYTH ELLIOTT } Who was it said Amen?  
Solo—Madame NORDICA . . . . . My Redeemer and my Lord.

### PART THE SECOND.

- Scene 3 . . . { Duet—Madame NORDICA and Mr. LLOYD . . . Onward and onward.  
Chorus and Solo—Mr. WATKIN MILLS . . . Me receptet Sion illa. Here am I too.  
Solo—Mr. LLOYD . . . . . It is the sea.  
Solo and Chorus—  
Madame NORDICA and Chorus } The night is calm and cloudless.
- Scene 4 . . . { Ensemble—Madame NORDICA, Mr. LLOYD,  
Mr. WATKIN MILLS, and Chorus . . . } My guests approach.
- Scene 5 . . . { Recitative—Miss MEREDYTH ELLIOTT  
and Mr. CHAS. E. TINNEY . . . } Who is it coming.  
Solo—Miss MEREDYTH ELLIOTT . . . } Virgin, who lovest the poor and lowly.
- Scene 6 . . . Duet—Madame NORDICA and Mr. LLOYD. . . We are alone.
- Epilogue . . . . . God sent His messenger, the rain.

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Organist, MR. AUGUSTUS TOOP.

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