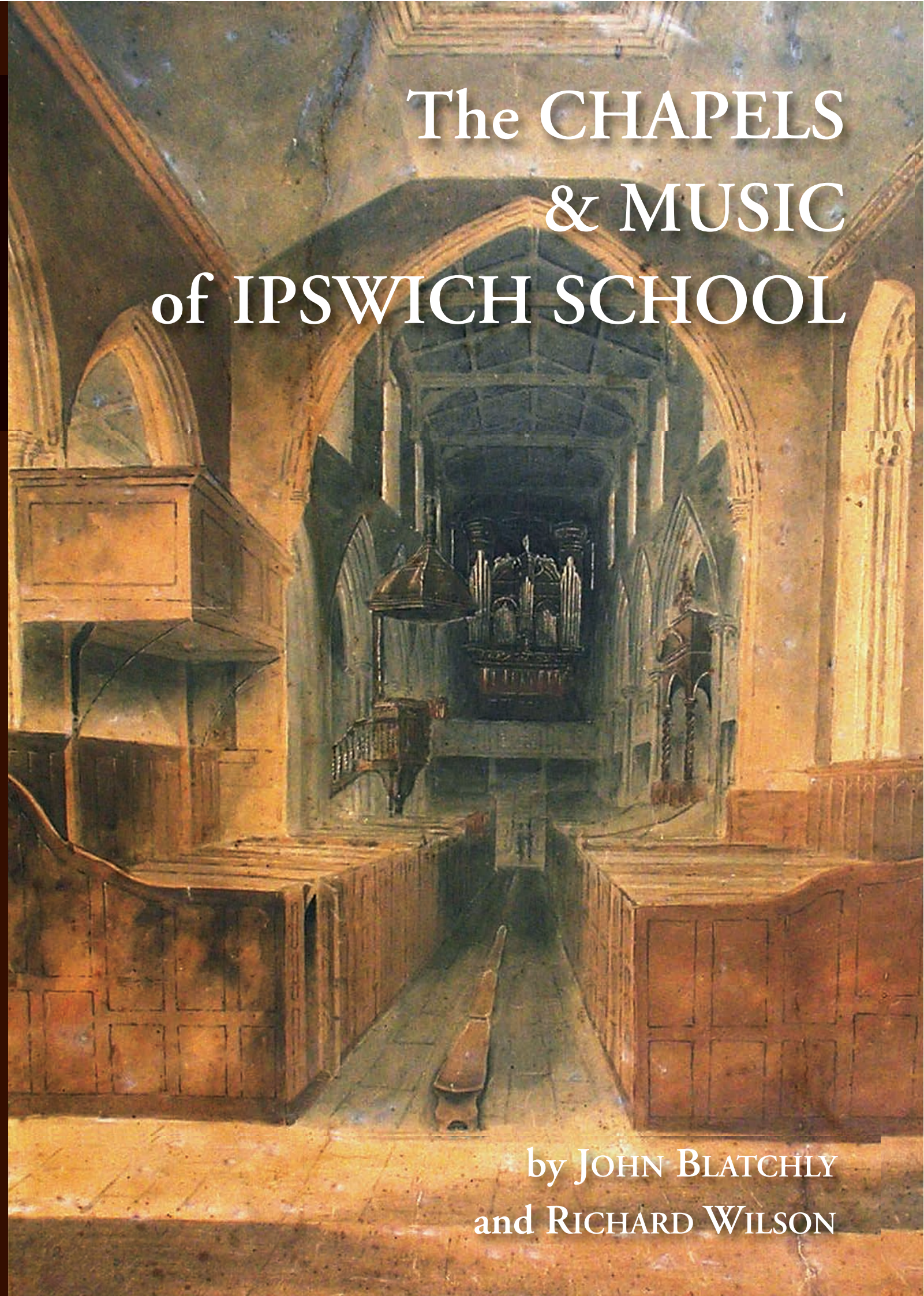
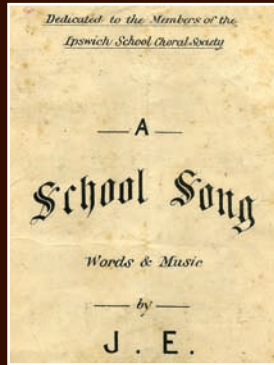




The CHAPELS & MUSIC of IPSWICH SCHOOL



by JOHN BLATCHLY
and RICHARD WILSON



THE CHAPELS AND MUSIC OF IPSWICH SCHOOL

President's introduction

When I was invited to suggest an event for my Presidential year, I felt we should mark the school's long history and involvement in the life of Ipswich and the wider Suffolk community. St Peter's Church, the School's Chapel in the days of Cardinal Wolsey, seemed a fitting venue for a 'Celebration of Music at Ipswich School', bringing together works by renowned school composers with performances by proclaimed Old Ipswichians and talented pupils.

In researching for the concert on 16th October 2008, former headmaster John Blatchly and OI Richard Wilson uncovered a wealth of information that called for a publication more detailed than was possible in a concert programme. The result is this booklet that, whilst detailing the history of the School, also shows the commitment of the School and the Old Ipswichians to their shared cultural heritage. With plans for a new music school, the future of this important part of life at Ipswich School seems assured.

GEOFFREY COOK
President
Old Ipswichian Club

IPSWICH SCHOOL is, like many an ancient foundation, of somewhat indeterminate age. It was certainly established before 1400, likely to have been the school of the Corpus Christi Guild which was founded in 1325, and may even have been the school run for sons of the secular Guild established at the time of King John's Charter of 1200.

The school's name and situation have also changed over the long period of its continuous history. It has been known as King Henry VIII's School and Queen Elizabeth's School after the two monarchs who gave it Royal Charters, Ipswich Grammar School and plain Ipswich School.

Until well into the nineteenth century all the pupils were taught together in one Great Schoolroom, sitting on forms by seniority. It is possible to identify six of these since 1483:

Felaw's House, the Blackfriars Refectory, then Dormitory, the Brook Street Schoolroom, the original Big School in Henley Road and the present Great School of 1958.

St Peter's church became for a brief and glorious period Wolsey's choice of chapel for his Cardinal College of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It had been since about 1130 the church of the Augustinian Canons of the Priory of St Peter and St Paul, and there at Christmas 1296, Elizabeth the youngest daughter of Edward I married John, Count of Holland. After Wolsey's fall, his Ipswich college with him, St Peter's served for 450 years as a parish church, then after 25 years in the care of the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust it was converted for use as a concert hall for the Ipswich Hospital Band and other musical groups in 2007. In future Ipswich School can revisit its former chapel for special musical events.

A Carousel of Chapels

Places of worship used by the school over the centuries

1. St Mary le Tower church

It was on 29 June 1200 that the burgesses of Ipswich gathered in the churchyard of *Sancta Maria ad Turrim* to receive the town's first Charter which King John had despatched from Normandy. Clearly the most important church in the town then, the Tower is still the civic church, and the building in which the whole school has gathered since the early 1950s for its services of Commemoration of Benefactors and Carols.

Meetings were held there throughout the remainder of the year 1200 to establish ordinances for the government of the town and to elect officers, bailiffs, justices and portmen.

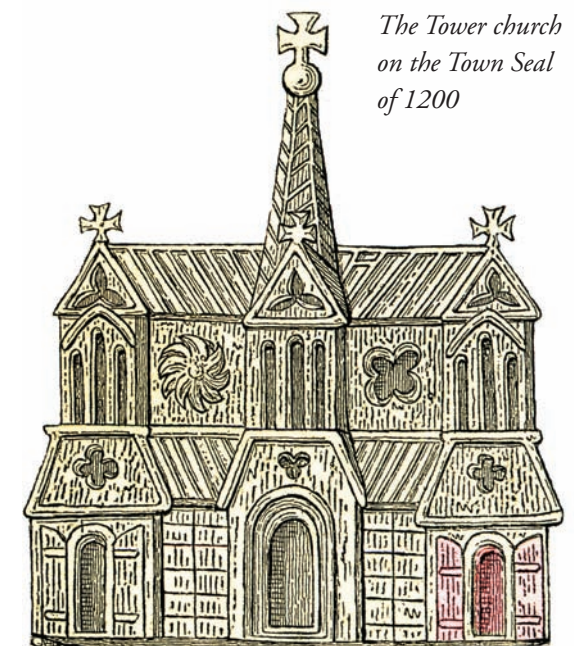
The new borough needed an official seal for its acts and deeds. On one side is shown a sailing ship, as at Dunwich, and on the other a church. The legend on the first side read: '*S[igillum] Comunitatis Ville Gypewici*'. Which of the town churches would appear on the seal? Obviously St Mary le Tower.

It is worth studying the portrayal of this Romanesque church carefully. Looking from the west there are three porch entrances, the central one largest. Perhaps there were three towers, with a spire crowning the central one. St Mary the Towers? Where else is or was there a similar church?

The leaders of the town will always have wished their sons to be educated to become their worthy successors, and suitable clergy, better educated than most people, would be the best teachers. Before the building of schools, a church would be the best place for education long before the

Victorian doctrine of subdued reverence in consecrated buildings.

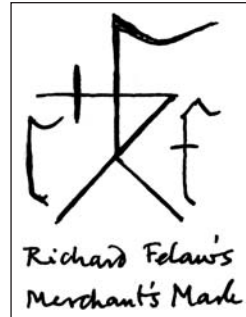
When the Guild of Corpus Christi was established in 1325, its chaplain would be the obvious choice for a schoolmaster, and the Tower church south aisle (which had another secular use as the Archdeacon's Court) could serve as schoolroom and chapel. It is known that John Squire was the Guild Chaplain when the school was bequeathed its own premises in 1483, and that he and Felaw were close confederates.



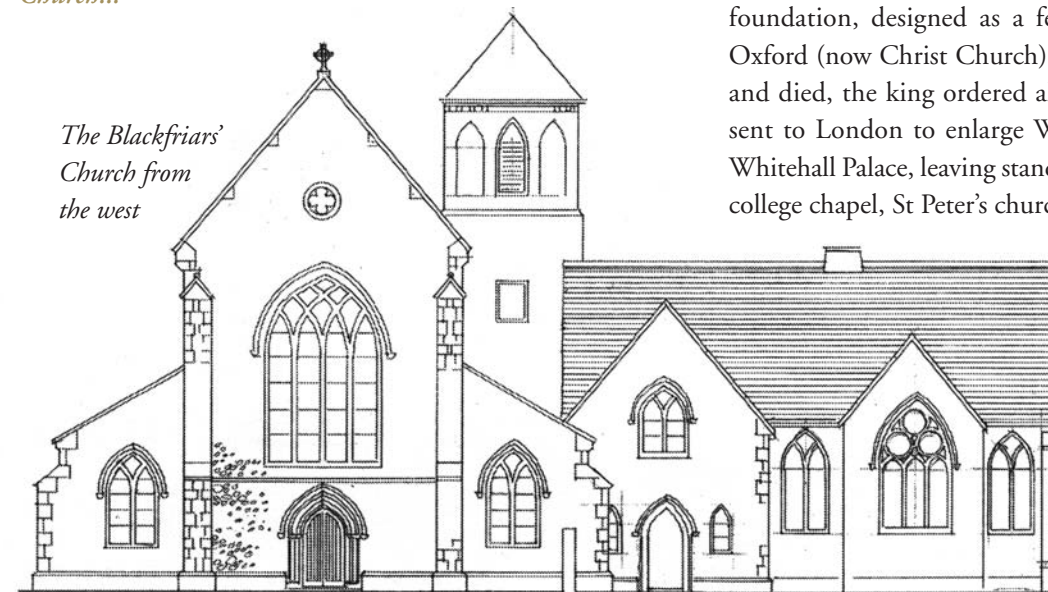
*The Tower church
on the Town Seal
of 1200*

2. The church of the Dominican Friars Preachers

In 1483, Richard Felaw, merchant, many times bailiff and twice member of parliament for the borough left his house in what is now Foundation Street for use as the school:



I will that my house opposite the Friars Preachers in Ipswich be used for ever as a common School-house and dwelling with a yard to the North for a convenient School Master, to be appointed by the Bishop of Norwich, on the nomination of the current Bailiffs of Ipswich. They (the Masters) will pay no rent, but receive the rents from [my] other property in Whitton and Brokes Hall. They will charge no fees for children born and living in Ipswich unless the parents have incomes of twenty shillings per annum or over or goods worth £20, and will keep the properties in good repair. And every morning at 6.00 a.m. the Master will take the pupils to sing the Mass of Our Lady at the north altar of the Blackfriars Church...



The site of the north altar

3. St Peter and St Paul Priory church, briefly the Cardinal College chapel



The Priory Church from the south

From September 1528 until sometime in 1530 the school enjoyed the excitement and luxury of Wolsey's grand foundation, designed as a feeder for his other college at Oxford (now Christ Church). When Wolsey fell from grace and died, the king ordered all the building materials to be sent to London to enlarge Wolsey's York Place to become Whitehall Palace, leaving standing only the watergate and the college chapel, St Peter's church.

George Cavendish, Wolsey's biographer, wrote that his master had provided the richest suits of copes for his two colleges that were ever seen in England. Here are listed the vestments to be worn at different church seasons by the choristers of the chapel, boys at the school, from the inventory made before the college was closed.

Copes for children

Two copes for children of old stuff

Tunics for children

Of white bawdekyn 3 tunycles for children with langetts of red course bawdekyn with sylver

Of red bawdekyn 3 tunicles for children with langetts of blewe bawdekyn

Of plunket tinsel of 3 threads 3 tunycles for children with langetts of redde bawdekyn course

Old Stuff

Of old stuff five tunicles for children

Parers [slippers] for children odd [old]

Of white bawdekyn four pair of odd parers for children

Of red bawdekyn four pair of odd parers for children

Of plunket tinsel, four pair of odd parers for children

Old Stuff

Of old stuff four pair of odd parers for children

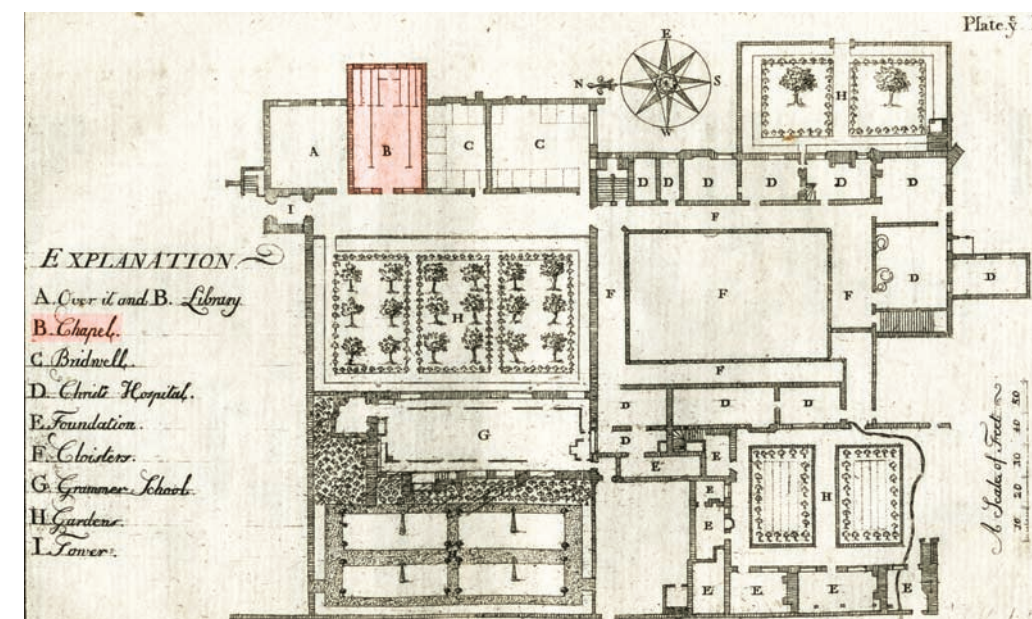
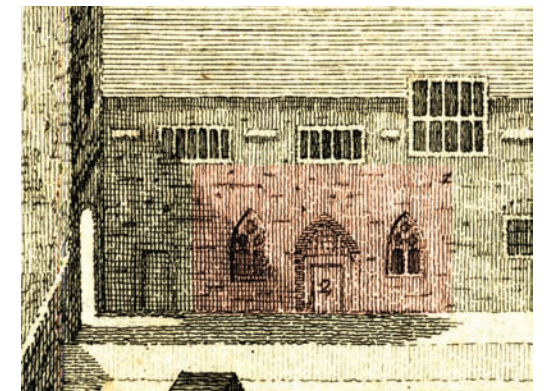
4. The Blackfriars' church again

There were only six years between the closure of the Cardinal College and the dissolution of the Blackfriars priory in 1536. The church of the Friars Preachers, half as long again as the Tower church or St Margaret's, was used by the school once again. It was the first part of the priory to be demolished for its valuable stone.

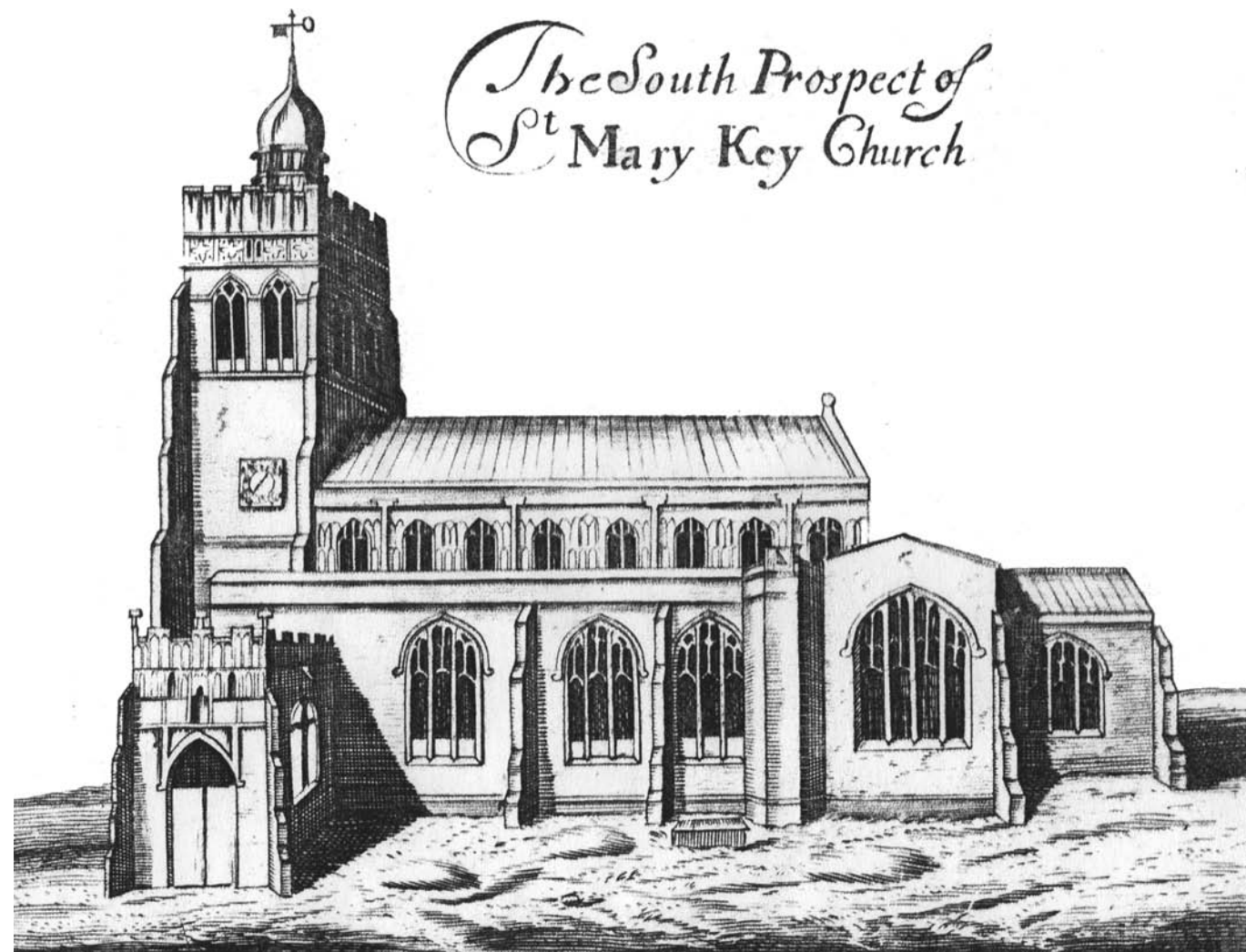
5. The Blackfriars' chapter house and the parish church of St Mary Quay

During three centuries between 1536 and Rigaud's arrival in 1850, we can only speculate about school chapels. The former refectory (from 1614) and the former dormitory (from 1763) were used as Great Schoolrooms, both east of Foundation Street (*alias* Edmund Pountney Lane). A temporary Great School was built behind the Master's House in Lower Brook Street in 1842.

The friars' former chapter house is marked 'chapel' by Joshua Kirby on his plan and engraved west view of what in 1748 he calls Christ's Hospital. The Blackfriars site is now an open monument and the walls of the chapter house stand to the south of the sacristy (*A. on the plan*).



Plan and elevation of the Chapter House Chapel in 1748



St Mary Quay church in 1674

Sometime before 1850 the remaining and delapidated Blackfriars buildings were demolished, the furniture of the Chapter House Chapel was taken to St Mary Quay, the school's parish church. The present outer south door came from the same place. Here in an account of the church's 1882 restoration it was stated that 'at the east end of the south aisle are several benches formerly belonging to the old Grammar School'. Certainly headmaster Ebden (1832-43) worked closely with the incumbent there, the Revd William Harbur, and boarders attended morning service there in Ebden's time.

6. St Mary le Tower church

When Rigaud arrived in September 1850 and immediately planned the move out of town, his preference for a town church to take the boarders to was the civic church and the wheel had turned full circle. James Spilling gave an account of the various schools which crowded the galleries, and stools are shown filling the length of the central aisle to accommodate even more children in Samuel Read's painting of the interior (*see front cover*).

7. The chapel of 1852

The School Chapel of 1852 was built by subscription at the request of headmaster and future bishop, Stephen Jordan Rigaud, who wished to preach to his boarders in the afternoon as well as taking them down to the Tower church morning and evening every Sunday. The rectangular chapel was detached from the new school building, and a small south transept was added at the expense of headmaster and Mrs Browne in 1887; there the memorials of those who gave their lives in two world wars are housed. During the 1960s the chapel was lengthened to join the main building and an antechapel furnished. Stained and engraved glass and other works of arts are special features of the interior and the antechapel.

Since 1950, special services of Commemoration of Benefactors and Senior School Carols are held at St Mary le Tower, although the school is situated in the parish of St Margaret's and Lower School Carol Services are held there.

John Blatchly

The present School Chapel



The Chapter House chapel door at St Mary Quay today



The Tower Church interior by Samuel Read in 1832



A Musical History

Beginnings

In his magisterial history of Ipswich School *A Famous Antient Seed-Plot of Learning* (to which I am greatly indebted for this piece), John Blatchly describes Ipswich as ‘a musical school from the first’. The exact beginnings of the school may be lost in the mists of time, but there is no doubt that from its earliest days, pupils would have been involved in the pageants and parades that were an important part of life in medieval Ipswich. For example, the traditional celebrations in honour of Saint Nicholas involved choosing a boy to play the part of the young saint with other boys attending him. Although the first record of this occurring in Ipswich is not until the headmastership of Richard Argentine in the 1550s, there is no doubt that the master of the school was selecting boys for this civic event generations earlier. The tradition can be said to have been resurrected some four hundred years later when in April 1955 a choir of boys from the Prep was asked to join Benjamin Britten for the composer’s own recording of his cantata *Saint Nicolas*. Prepared by music teacher Kay Foster (who combined teaching with presenting the weekly ‘Time and Tune’ for the BBC), the boys sang alongside Peter Pears and (as the boy bishop) the young David Hemmings, who went on to act in *Gladiator* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. This historic recording from Decca is still available.

Music features in one of the earliest extant documents relating to the school from 1476-7 which lists the fees payable by the five different classes of children undergoing instruction. The youngest were the Abecedarians or apsydes (pronounced absies – a corruption of ABC’s), who were learning the alphabet. Songsters learnt song and possibly also reading. These two classes, who attended the song school as they were not yet old enough for the grammar school, were collectively known as the pettits or petties, literally ‘little ones’. The master of the grammar school took his salary from the grammarians along with the primerians and psalterians who respectively learnt the primer and the psalms. (It is worth remembering that only Latin was permitted to be spoken in the school, and although religious and secular activities were essentially indivisible in pre-Reformation times, schools were regulated by the ecclesiastical and not the civil authorities. The involvement of the Bishop of Norwich in setting school fees and licensing the master continued, in theory at least, until 1881.) When Richard Felaw bequeathed his house to the school in 1482 he required that the ‘said master shall keep with the said children the Mass of Our Lady by note [*i.e.* sung] at the North altar within the said [Black]friars at six o’clock on the morrow daily’, a duty that most of today’s

pupils – not to mention their parents and the staff – might find a little onerous.

‘In our quere standeth the honnor of your grace’s college’

Thomas Wolsey’s rise and subsequent fall from power are widely documented elsewhere, but as we know, this Ipswich boy and product of the school was, in the late 1520s, determined to found a school to rival those of Winchester or Eton as a feeder for his Cardinal College (now Christchurch) at Oxford. The foundation stone was laid on 15 June 1528, the buildings paid for by the suppressing of local monasteries – the first but by no means last time that this revenue raising tool was to be used. The staffing of this magnificent school would be a dean, sub-dean, precentor, twelve chaplains, eight lay-clerks (or singing men) and eight boy choristers along with thirteen poor almsmen (to pray for the King, Wolsey and the souls of Wolsey’s parents) and fifty or so resident boy scholars. The first (and only) master of Wolsey’s College would be William Golding or Goldwyn, and there would also be a ‘hypodidasculus’, or undermaster in grammar.

In what is now St Peter’s Church, the former chapel of ‘The Cardinal’s College of St Mary in Ipswich’, ten services would have been held each day starting at five o’clock in the morning: the High Mass of the day and a daily Lady Mass, Matins, Lauds, the four lesser hours of Prime, Terce, Sext and None, followed by Vespers, and finally Compline and the evening votive antiphon. As in other choral foundations, much would have been sung, mostly to plainchant but with some polyphony (the combining of two or more melodies). The choir would thus have been central to the College, and indeed it was the opinion of William Capon, Dean of the College, that ‘in our quere standeth the honnor of your grace’s college’. As Helen Jeffries says, ‘If the choir could thus be the honour of a college, it must have been strongly identified with the college as a whole and a visible sign of that college’s status.’

The first choirmaster at Wolsey’s college was Nicholas Lentall who had previously served in Wolsey’s own grand (and grandly-funded) household chapel and at Cardinal College, Oxford where the ‘informator choristarum’ was the leading composer of church music under Henry VIII, John Taverner. According to Dean Capon, ‘but for Mr Lentall we cwde in a manner do nothing in our quere. He taketh very great paynes and is always present at Mattens and all Masses with evyn song, and settith the quere in good ordre fro tyme to tyme, and fayleth not at eny time. He is very sober and discrete, and bringeth up your Choresters very wele.’ Capon continues that

‘there shall be no better childern in no place of England then we shall have here, and that in short tyme’. Nonetheless, Wolsey soon recalled Lentall to sing in his household chapel. Despite this setback, a sign of the considerable esteem with which Wolsey held the choir can be seen in a letter from Nicholas Townley, master of the works and controller of his Oxford college to Thomas Alford, one of Wolsey’s servants, about recruitment to the choir at Ipswich in July 1528. It reports that Taverner was soon to visit Hampton Court Palace, bringing with him four of the best choristers for Wolsey to choose ‘such two as shall stand with His Grace’s pleasure’ for Ipswich. Taverner was also to bring with him Lentall’s song books that he had left behind at Oxford.

Here we may indulge in a certain amount of speculation – albeit based on logic. Sometime soon after his appointment to Oxford in 1526, Taverner had composed the votive antiphon *O Christe Jesu pastor bone*, the second verse of which (in the form known to us today) praises ‘our very own founder, now King Henry’. In the 1960s it was Frank Harrison who first suggested that Taverner’s music was almost certainly set to a text beginning *O Wilhelme, pastor bone*, an antiphon prescribed by the statutes of Cardinal College, Oxford to be

sung in honour of Wolsey’s patron and a predecessor as Archbishop of York, the 12th century St William. In its reconstructed, but now considered original form, the antiphon’s second verse would have started ‘Save our very own founder, Cardinal Thomas’. It seems very likely that this piece would have been amongst Lentall’s song sheets shipped via Hampton Court from Oxford to Ipswich, Wolsey’s two great seats of learning. Sometime after Wolsey’s fall in the autumn of 1529 the text was changed to fit the new political climate and the antiphon in honour of Wolsey suppressed. The performance at the Old Ipswichians President’s Event in October 2008 was probably the first time for nearly five hundred years that this beautiful piece had been heard in Wolsey’s home town.

Robert Testwood: choirmaster, spy and martyr

Earlier in 1528, the year that Wolsey’s college opened in Ipswich, Taverner had been accused of hiding Lutheran literature then circulating at Cardinal College. According to John Foxe, although Wolsey excused Taverner saying that he was ‘but a musician’, he was nevertheless forced to walk in a procession carrying a faggot as a reminder that heretics could



The Windsor Martyrs from John Foxe Actes and Monuments

be burned, and made to throw a book onto a fire as a sign of repentance. Robert Testwood (c.1490-1543), Nicholas Lentall's successor as choirmaster at Ipswich would not be so lucky.

For seven years early in the 16th century Testwood had been a chorister at Henry VII's Chapel Royal. He was next appointed to the church of St Mary, Warwick before in 1524 taking up the post of master of the choristers at St Botolph, Boston from whence he was recruited to Ipswich. The first mention of him here comes in a letter of 12 April 1529 when Dean Capon wrote to Thomas Cromwell (Wolsey's agent, the future Lord Chancellor and saviour of the school after Wolsey's demise) complaining that the singing men were very disgruntled with their pay, 'alleging for theyr selffes how they had moche better wages there from whence they came fro'. (It is worth noting that as with the Navy the choir men were 'impressed', that is to say most of them had little choice in where they were to work.) Numbers were also depleted since 'a very good descanter' had died 'of an Inposteme' and one Mr Mowlder (probably William Moulder, previously a gentleman of the Chapel Royal) had been dismissed 'For he wolde not come to the quere but at his owen pleasure'. Nonetheless, the master of the choristers, Robert Testwood, was 'a very synguler cunnyng man' who was training the boys so well that 'I thynke verely there be no better children within the rea[l]me of England'. (In 1597, long after Testwood's death, the madrigalist Thomas Morley lists him as one of the composers whose works he studied, although sadly no music by him is extant.)

Testwood was not to be here very long. Following Wolsey's disgrace, he was paid off, probably on 8 September 1530. If he hoped to return to Boston he was to be disappointed, as earlier that year the post had been filled by his opposite number at Oxford, John Taverner. Testwood seemingly then spent a difficult time in London before finally getting the job of a singing man, and probably also that of choirmaster, at St George's Chapel, Windsor. He had previously written to Cromwell asking for help, and various documents from later in the decade reveal that the price of his appointment may well have been an agreement to spy for Cromwell at Windsor. Testwood by now had embraced certain tenets of Lutheranism and in May 1534 he denounced two conservative canons at Windsor. Rather a 'merry-conceited man' (Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*), Testwood allegedly damaged an image of the Virgin, mocked the ceremonies of 'Relic Sunday' and rather obviously changed the words of a duet he was singing, denying the role of the Virgin as intercessor between God and man. As Cromwell's 'special friend' (Foxe), he was spared any punishment for his beliefs – for now. But after Cromwell's execution in July 1540 he was vulnerable, and in March 1543 his house was searched and supposed heretical documents

found. Testwood was arrested and with three other lay-clerks (including John Marbeck, whose Communion Service is still sung widely today) imprisoned. Testwood was charged with averting his eyes during the elevation of the sacrament, thus denying the doctrine of transubstantiation. Appearing before a rigged jury and a set of judges led by the Bishop of Salisbury (the brother of Testwood's former Ipswich boss, Dean Capon), and despite his relatively slight misdemeanour, Testwood was found guilty. Marbeck secured a royal pardon, it is said, for his musical ability, but at Windsor on 28 July 1543 along with his two colleagues, Testwood was burned at the stake. Those who furnished evidence against him were later convicted of perjury, and it was apparently only a matter of days before Henry came to regret the execution of the 'Windsor Martyrs', allegedly sighing 'Alas, poor innocents'.

'Music for a while'

The school survived Wolsey's fall from grace, but in reduced circumstances. Sadly, our understanding of the role music subsequently played in the school can only be gleaned from inference and occasional passing references. We know that in Elizabethan times, masters of the school were expected to organise their pupils to entertain the corporation and important visitors to the town on various occasions throughout the year. For example in 1582, on the anniversary of Elizabeth's Accession to the throne, the master John Smyth (or Smith) was paid forty shillings 'for his paines and charges in presenting certain publique pageants in joy of the Queenes Coronation'. In 1595 it was the usher, James Leman, who received the payment for the entertainment provided by the boys.

The political and religious tensions of the 17th century must have suppressed much of the music-making at the school. We can only speculate what sort of role music played under successive headmasters, but with the arrival of Robert Hingeston (pronounced 'Hinkston') as master in 1743, there is no doubt that the school had a leader with music in his blood. Robert's father Peter, who was borough organist for fifty-five years, had been apprenticed to his uncle John Hingeston (a prolific composer and state musician to both Oliver Cromwell and Charles II) with none other than Henry Purcell. Robert was a boy at the school, and after continuing his education at Pembroke College, Cambridge, he returned as usher in 1721. In the 1750s, Hingeston went every week to the Ancient House for an evening of musical entertainment with his friends. This group included his next-door-neighbour, the artist and amateur violinist Thomas Gainsborough, and the borough organist Joseph Gibbs (1698–1788), both of whom almost certainly contributed to the education of boys at the school.



Joseph Gibbs by Thomas Gainsborough, c.1755, courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery, London

Joseph Gibbs was born into a musical family in Colchester on 12 December 1698. We know little about his life prior to his appointment at St Mary le Tower in 1748, except that he gave a number of benefit concerts in Colchester in the 1730s, opened the organ at Harwich in 1734, and at some point was appointed organist of Dedham Church. Gibbs spent forty years at the Tower, and in his obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* is described as 'eminently distinguished both as composer and performer'. It was not until 1928 however that Gibbs's importance was realised, when simultaneously the National Portrait Gallery purchased a hitherto unknown portrait of Gibbs by Gainsborough and Novello published his *Violin Sonata No. 1*. Gibbs's *Eight Solos for a Violin with a Thorough Bass* had first been published two years before he moved to Ipswich and its list of subscribers contains some notable names including the tenor John Beard (for whom Handel wrote the title roles in *Jeptha*, *Samson* and *Judas Maccabeus*) and the composers William Boyce and Maurice Green. In the Gainsborough portrait it is noticeable that on the shelves behind Gibbs are volumes of music by Corelli and Gem[iniani]. These would almost certainly have been chosen by Gibbs to represent his particular tastes and musical background. *The Oxford History of English Music* describes Gibbs as 'an East Anglian organist with a penchant for striking harmony', and Stanley Sadie, reviewing the first modern

performance of the Sonatas in 1978, said that Gibbs, 'although isolated from any musical centre, managed to pluck out of the air a style of a uniquely emotional kind'. His only other published works were six string quartets some thirty years later, although five unpublished organ voluntaries were discovered in the 1980s.

Either Hingeston and Gibbs were members of two music societies or perhaps they adjourned from the Ancient House to the Waggon and Horses tavern next door for rather more raucous music making. For on the door of a long case clock, which came from the tavern and which now stands in Christchurch Mansion, are depicted the members of the Punch Bowl Club who met regularly to sing catches, rounds and glees to the accompaniment of copious pints of ale. Gibbs is shown conducting, with Gainsborough standing nearby. Another painting of the Ipswich Musical Club, by Thomas Gainsborough, in which Gibbs is shown soundly asleep, is now sadly lost.

Broke of the Shannon

Sir Philip Bowes Vere Broke was born at Broke Hall, on the banks of the River Orwell, on 9 September 1776. We know that he was at Ipswich School in 1784, but as a young child his only desire was to go to sea, and at the age of twelve he entered the Royal Naval College, Portsmouth. Rising up the ranks, he saw action in various parts of the world until 1806 when he was appointed captain of a 38-gun frigate, the

Broke by Samuel Lane RA, 1814



Shannon. When war broke out between Britain and the United States in June 1812 it was stationed off the American coast and on 1 June 1813 the *Shannon* met the US frigate *Chesapeake*, led by Captain Lawrence, in a spectacular battle off Boston. Following an exchange of broadsides, Broke sprang on board the *Chesapeake* calling out 'Follow me who can!' After a short struggle, and despite Broke being seriously wounded by a cutlass blow to the head, within fifteen minutes of the first gun being fired the Americans were defeated.

This apparently easy victory created a sensation on both sides of the Atlantic (and incidentally features prominently in Patrick O'Brien's more recent seafaring novels *The Fortune of War* and *The Surgeon's Mate*). Honours were showered upon Broke, and many popular songs composed in his praise. At least five different folk songs celebrated Broke's success, one of which (according to the song collector Cecil Sharpe) was sung to the tune of 'Pretty Peggy of Derby'. It is interesting that most of these folk songs erroneously describe Broke's death in the battle, perhaps a sign of how poorly news was disseminated around the country in those times. Somewhat different is the ballad *The Chesapeake and the Shannon*, 'Sung with unbounded applause by Mr Sinclair of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden'. John Sinclair was a Scottish singer who studied with Rossini, had a long career on the stage in London, America and on the Continent, and was in his retirement the proprietor of the Tivoli Gardens in Margate. Composed by one J. Whitaker, this song was no doubt produced in late 1813 or 1814, just after the news of Broke's victory reached England.

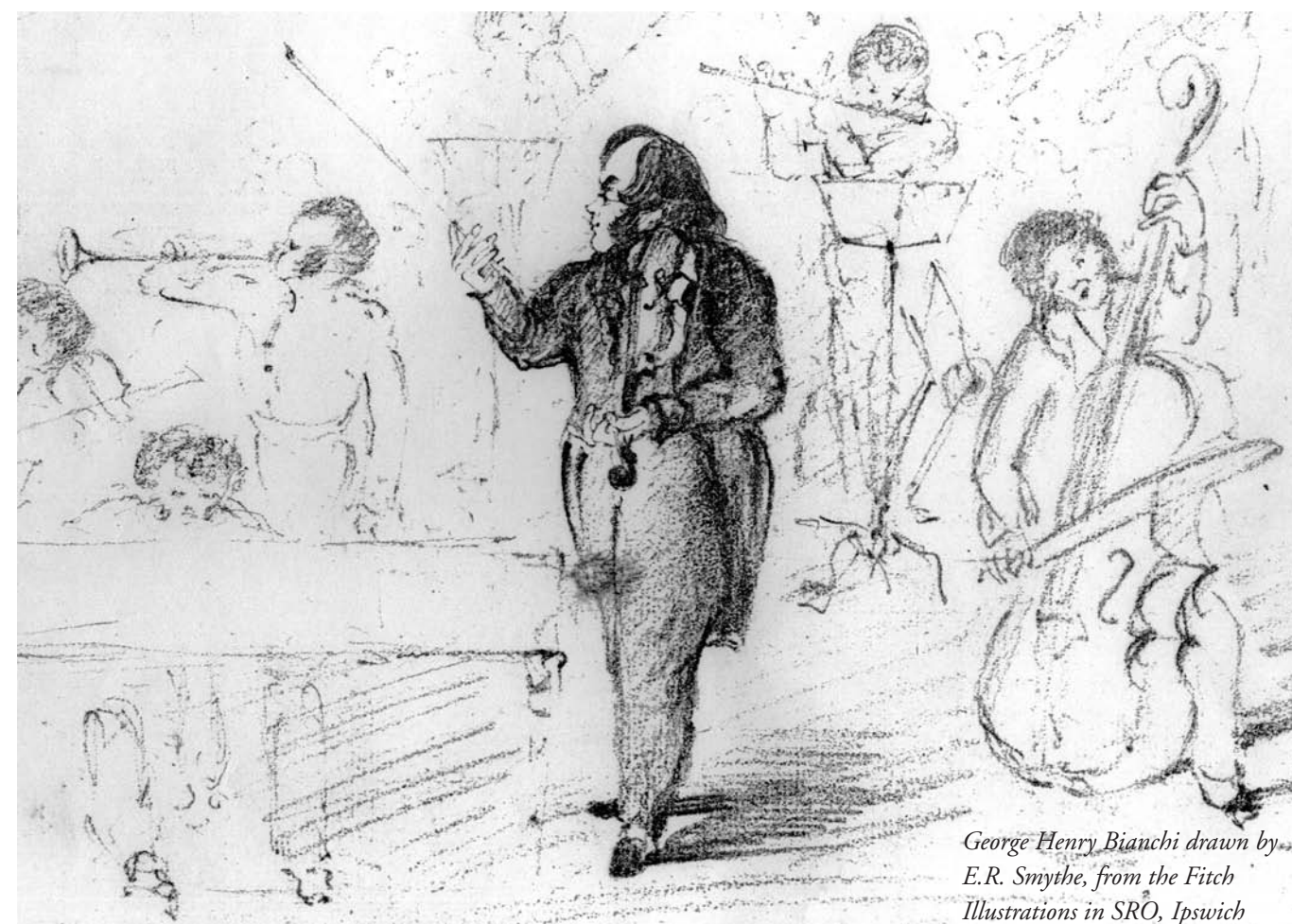


This brilliant exploit marked the end of Broke's active service. Never fully recovering from the injury he sustained, he died on 2 January 1841 and his remains interred at Nacton church. J.K. Laughton in the *Dictionary of National Biography* writes that Broke 'was the worthy victor of the finest single ship action in the history of naval warfare under sail. His training methods, professionalism, and commitment reversed the trend of American victories, restored national pride, and laid the foundation for the post-war navy. That his success rested on a solid educational base has too often been ignored.' Ipswich School should, one feels, claim some credit for this.

'The Land without Music'

Despite the glimpses of musical life in Ipswich seen above, England in the 18th and 19th centuries was nonetheless perceived as 'Das Land ohne Musik'. As the poet Heinrich Heine (whose works have been set to music arguably more times than anyone else save Shakespeare) famously said, 'These people have no ear, either for rhythm or music, and their unnatural passion for piano playing and singing is thus all the more repulsive. Nothing on earth is more terrible than English music, save English painting.' Although the British musical scene can be said to have nurtured its fair share of masterpieces, namely Handel's *Messiah*, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Haydn's *London* Symphonies, no native British composer between Purcell and Elgar matched the greatest Continental composers, and as the last named work suggests, the musical hotbeds in this country were the cities, notably London. The situation in the provinces was rather different, and here Ipswich was no exception. Many of our churches lacked organs or choirs and the music that was available to the parishioners was limited to a few metrical psalms ('psalmody'), recited line-by-line by the parish clerk and sung slowly and un-rhythmically – if at all – by an apathetic congregation. One only has to look to the novels of George Eliot, Thomas Hardy or Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown* stories to see how the grandeur and intensity of church music in Wolsey's time had become merely a subject for amusement.

What were the reasons for this decline, and how did it manifest itself at Ipswich School? As early as 1728, Daniel Defoe said that London was oversupplied with 'heaps of Foreign Musicians', and there is no doubt that the numbers of overseas musicians in the profession – much as with footballers today – was perceived as contributing to the lack of home-grown talent. The leader of musical life in Ipswich in the 1830s and 1840s certainly sounded like a 'Foreign Musician', but in fact George Henry Bianchi (1812-1852), though the son of immigrant Italians, was born in Ipswich and educated at Ipswich School. The magnificent pencil



George Henry Bianchi drawn by E.R. Smythe, from the Fitch Illustrations in SRO, Ipswich

drawing of him directing a local orchestra from the violin reveals the charisma with which he must have entertained Ipswich worthies at the countless 'Grand Concerts' arranged by him with father and son namesakes Robert Foster (successively Tower organists, and both also boys at the school). All three men almost certainly also contributed to the musical education of boys here. Bianchi's was a musical family: his father was a 'Music and Musical Instrument' seller, and his sisters taught the piano, harp, singing and dancing from their base in Berners Street. Is it too fanciful to suggest that father Gaetano may have been related to Verdi's musical cousin Gaetano Bianchi, who was tragically killed by lightning in 1828?

Even more important than the influx of foreign musicians in the relatively poor state of music in 19th century England was the decline in the importance of a musical education and of the social status of the professional musician. The prestige and financial position of the church musician and of university degrees in music had collapsed, and there was no attempt to redress this until the latter half of the 19th century. Music degrees had been granted in England as early as 1463, but traditionally these were solely for the needs of the clergy. From 1750 onwards they remained prestigious for some

cathedral organists and church music composers, but were decidedly not a source of a practical musical education. The four music professorships of Cambridge, Oxford, London and Edinburgh played little role in training musicians as the incumbents gave only a very few lectures a year and they were not even salaried posts until after 1868. Degrees became increasingly irrelevant to musical careers (only 64 BMus and 48 DMus degrees were awarded in the entire period 1750-1850) and as they guaranteed neither status nor success, schools stopped preparing for them.

As the theoretical and intellectual components of the profession declined so did music's identity as one of the liberal arts. With a few exceptions (for example Alfred Matt, a boy at the school from 1853-55, who became known as one of the most celebrated trombone players in London), musicians' claims for professional status were undermined by the growth of the artisan musician. By the start of the nineteenth century, music was seen as an artisanal, even 'amateur' art linked to theatres and pleasure gardens, with financial insecurity, and poor long-term economic and social prospects. It is no surprise that at scholastically minded schools such as Ipswich, the teaching and practice of music was in the doldrums.

Moreover, as opera became more popular, the imported

Italian castrati presented complex gender ambiguities that seemed to threaten the masculine basis of British culture. This possibly ‘feminizing effect’ on listeners was seen as a continued threat and was much discussed: it was feared it would lead to the dismantling of society, defeat by foreign invaders and even a decline such as that of the Roman Empire. As Lord Chesterfield stated, ‘performance upon an instrument is derogatory to character, both as becomes a man and a gentleman’. The French Revolution of the 1790s and subsequent wars fueled this combination of xenophobia and misogyny. As the historian (and wife of a former school governor) Linda Colley says: ‘There was a sense... in which the British conceived of themselves as an essentially “masculine” culture – bluff, forthright, rational, down-to-earth to the extent of being philistine – caught up in an eternal rivalry with an essentially feminine France – subtle, intellectually devious, preoccupied with high fashion, fine cuisine and etiquette...’ The perception of music as a feminine art was reinforced by the cultivation of music as an amateur accomplishment for women. As Thomas Danvers Worgan said in 1829, ‘Musical education is wholly effeminate, and the teacher of music sinks into the manufacturer of a female ornament.’ Musicians (and their teachers) at the then ‘Boys’ School would have faced an uphill battle conforming to such a wide range of cultural beliefs about Englishness, gender and morality in this activity tainted with femininity and foreignness.

All of this is evident from Rigaud’s comments when he arrived as Headmaster in 1850. Straightaway he lamented that ‘there does not exist in Ipswich a single choir from which we might derive any instruction or assistance’, and so at his own expense he engaged Lindley Nunn, who was to remain as choir master until the end of Holden’s tenure in 1883. When the new School Chapel was consecrated in 1852 a choir was founded, but the following somewhat desperate plea for new surplices that year in *The Elizabethan* (which, as the precursor of the *Old Ipswichian Magazine*, is incidentally considered to be the earliest school magazine in the country) proved fruitless:

**Now to the goodly choral fund
Subscribe, subscribe, for I
Expect that with the surplus they
Surplices will buy.**

Nunn is curiously silent in his autobiographical *Musical Recollections* on his nearly thirty years at the school, and the reasons for this may be apparent in an article entitled ‘The Choir’ submitted to *The Elizabethan* in 1868. Written by one ‘S.S.E.’ – who almost certainly was Evelyn Shirley Shuckburgh, who had left the school some six years earlier

and who was later to become a noted author and classical scholar – it praises the considerable advances made by the school in general before lamenting the pitiable state of the choir. ‘I have often heard persons living in the town say that not only was it superior to any of the Ipswich Choirs, but it was one which any Church or School Chapel might be proud of.... In *those* days there was an anthem every Sunday during Evensong, whereas *now*, alas! Dread and dire is the peril with which such an undertaking is fraught.’ In asking why the choir had sunk into this ‘slough of discords and other musical atrocities’, S.S.E. blames the trebles who ‘are without exception utterly indifferent to and careless of that which one would deem ought to be to them a pleasure’. He continues: ‘the amount of misery entailed on the Choristers – to judge by the expression on their faces – must be intense’, noting that practice time never ran to more than fifteen minutes. This, apparently was still too much for the boys, for ‘so sulky and ill-used do they feel, that not only do they refuse to open their mouths, but they are forced to find some such innocent recreation as capturing moths, making faces at the organ, and such like childish amusements “ad libitum”’. He concludes that ‘the choir is too lazy or careless to have any regard as to how it may perform God’s service with common decency. It would surely be better to have no choir at all, than to have one which regards its duty as a trouble and a task.’

As Shuckburgh predicted, the choir disintegrated and although Holden encouraged Nunn and housemaster Heycock to reform the choir as a choral society, affiliating it to Trinity College of Music and bringing in Old Ipswichians to bolster the lower voices, it took the arrival of Frederick Browne as headmaster and perhaps just as importantly that of his wife and her brother Moore Neligan (who was later appointed Bishop of Auckland) to breathe new life into this important element of school life. Writing in *The Elizabethan* in 1885, Neligan says that when, two years previously, Browne decided to hold both morning and evening services every Sunday in the School Chapel he re-constituted the choir ‘with a view to an efficient choral rendering of the services’. Some thirty boys offered their services, and one of the senior students was appointed organist. Mrs Browne bought new surplices, and others provided hymn books, service books and even seating. On Trinity Sunday 1883 the new choir sang for the first time. In his article, Mr Neligan singles out one boy for setting a particularly ‘fine example of hearty co-operation by walking some four miles twice every Sunday in order to take his place’ in the choir.

No sooner was the choir re-formed, but the Choral Society began their annual Christmas concerts that were to continue until 1920. The choir also founded fortnightly ‘Penny Readings’, and it shows the broad mindedness of the pupils

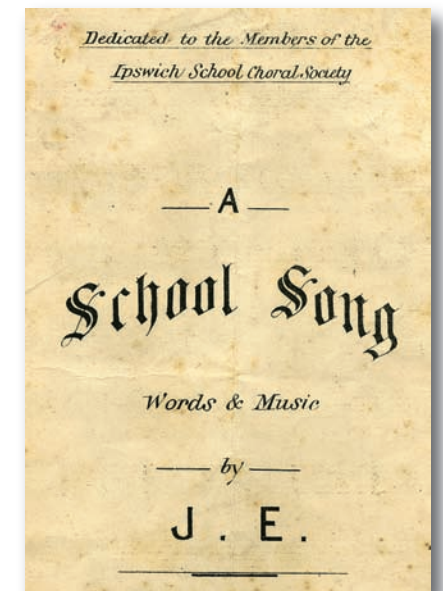
that money raised from these evenings made a ‘valuable addition... to the income of the Games Committee’. On a national level, the influence of Mendelssohn, who was idolized as much for his personality as for his music, and of Albert, the Prince Consort, transformed the image and standards of music making. The Royal College of Organists was founded in 1864, Trinity College of Music in 1872 (initially to train choirmasters), the Guildhall in 1880 and the Royal College of Music in 1882.

Henry Bird Collins (1870-1941) was a Queen’s Scholar from 1884 to 1888, and one of the first boys to benefit from this musical renaissance. On leaving Ipswich, Collins went to the Royal College of Music, winning one of only five scholarships for talented musicians from Suffolk that were funded by Sir William Gilstrap of Fornham. Collins gained his FRCO in 1892 and his ARCM the following year, before heading to New College, Oxford where he received his BMus in 1895. That year he converted to Catholicism and in 1898 became the organist of the Italian Church in Hatton Garden. In 1915 Collins was appointed organist of Cardinal Newman’s Oratory in Birmingham where he stayed until his death in 1941. Collins devoted his whole life to studying and copying old church music, and became known as *the* expert in early English musical notation. In 1935 he completed the publication of the *Old Hall Manuscript*, the most important manuscript collection of English sacred music of the late 14th and early 15th centuries, which is now in the British Library. His collection of about 2,000 transcriptions of 15th and 16th century polyphonic music (by over 170 composers including Taverner, Byrd, Lassus and Palestrina) was left to the Oratory where it remains today, much of it still unpublished.

One of the ‘Penny Readings’ mentioned earlier is described in detail in *The Elizabethan* for 1909. Although the correspondent begins by saying that ‘the School would seem to be rampant with budding musicians at present’, this particular evening was a varied feast that featured a ‘gesturous recitation’ of Mark Twain, a cello solo from a young boy named Fryer who, ‘if not an infant prodigy, appears to contain gems which will no doubt startle the world, when they, and he, have matured’, and a display of entertaining ventriloquism from Mr Louis King. One boy who was to have sung was ‘laid up by an unfortunate tobogganing accident in the Park’, while the interval was filled by ‘bangs, explosions and bright lights’, all executed by Mr James who also brought the house down with his ‘realistic imitation of a dog barking in the distance’. The evening concluded with the ‘famous Football Song... struck up by the School Choir and re-echoed till the roof rang again by the School in general’.

This ‘famous Football Song’ was none other than the (by then) infamous *School Song*, whose history is perhaps almost

as chequered as its rhyming scheme. The song was composed in 1899 by Mr John Evans (nicknamed ‘The Bear’) who taught classics for seven years, was housemaster of the short-lived Holden boarding house in Anglesea Road, and who took on the role of choirmaster. Printed in the School Magazine in March of that year, it was premiered at the following Christmas concert. These concerts, also known as the ‘breaking up’ concerts, traditionally took place on the day of the School v Old Boys football match (hence the song’s *nom de plume*), and were an opportunity for the school and an audience of parents, masters and OI’s (especially recent leavers to the Universities) to cram into the old Great School for an evening of musical entertainment in the first half followed by refreshments in the Dining Hall and a second half that usually featured a short play, almost always farcical. As the Song gained in popularity, it found a traditional home just before the interval, though it quite often appeared at many other musical – and non-musical – events. Clearly sung with relish by all concerned, its future seemed assured.



All this was to change when A.K. Watson succeeded as Headmaster in 1906. Although the precise reason is unknown, the Song was banned from performance of any kind. However, although the Head could suppress its programming, he could not prevent it from being sung, and for the next half a dozen years or so there was trouble at almost every school concert. It seems that the OI’s (who were perhaps not quite as disciplined as their younger colleagues) took every opportunity to promote what by now was thought of as a ‘tradition’. An editorial in the School Magazine for 1909 sought to challenge this, stating that the Song ‘has little or no *Tradition* behind it; it was composed about ten years ago by a member of the then Staff, who, we believe, regrets

that it was ever published. It has never been officially recognised by the only body whose recognition would seem to be essential – the OI Society.’ This proposal to refer the matter to the OI Committee (perhaps unsurprisingly) never bore fruit. Watson couldn’t take action against the Old Boys but he beat any boy in the school who tried to sing the forbidden ditty. However, the onset of the First World War finally stemmed the tide of musical rebellion. The song died with the boys who had first sung it.

Oh, there are a many many lands,
Many a hill or valley;
Some of them are very very fair
Just for a pis aller.
But if you would know a land
Everybody pleases,
Make your way to Angle-land
And the German Ocean breezes. Hurrah!

Chorus:

Three times three for the merry merry days,
Never was a sad one,
Three times three for the jolly jolly boys,
Never was a bad one.

Oh there are a many many towns,
Many a situation:
Some of them are very very fair
Just for the vacation:
But if you would know a town
Absolutely ripping,
Make your way to the good old town
On the Orwell and the Gipping. Hurrah!

Oh, there are a many many schools,
Old or new foundation:
Some of them are very very fair
Shops of education:
But if you would be a man,
If you would grow wiser,
Make your way to the good old school
Of glorious Queen Eliza. Hurrah!

Musical times

Until more recent days, undoubtedly the most noted composer to be associated with the school was Stanley Wilson. Wilson was born in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire in 1899 and educated at Berkhamsted School. When he was just 15 he gained an open scholarship to the Royal College of Music where he studied composition with Sir Charles Villiers Stanford and conducting with Adrian Boult. His musical education was interrupted by war service from 1917 to 1918,

but he returned to the College in 1918 and stayed there until 1921 when he was appointed Music Master at Ipswich School. Whilst at the school he also conducted the Ipswich Philharmonic Society (formed from local players, musical pupils and school staff), until disbanding it in 1938 when he needed more time for composing.

For many years, Wilson and his wife lived just outside the school gates at 22 Ivry Street, and in 1996 Ipswich composer Jack Hawes remembered visits there: ‘I was invited to the Wilsons’ home with one or two other “budding” composers and found that two rooms had been made into one, and one half housed a large Bechstein Grand piano and a lovely Rogers Grand, side by side. From around 1935 until the outbreak of World War II, I was a frequent visitor, with a few others, and we discussed musical matters and examined our own compositions. We also gave many musical evenings at the house for friends.... [or] met at another house to listen to the old style 78 rpm records (long before LPs even) and also concerts on the “wireless” (no transistors in those days) in order to hear orchestral and choral music.... We sometimes were able to persuade him to play his “party pieces” and he would improvise the National Anthem in the style of different composers! These were very good but were never written down.... I heard Stanley play piano music by many composers – Debussy, Brahms, Chopin, etc. One superb rendering was of Chopin’s Etude Opus 25 No. 9.... I was often present when Stanley was writing a new composition and heard sketches being played over. He was a fine composer, craftsman and pianist and I received many tips on composition, orchestration, etc from him – also much encouragement....’

In 1928, his *Skye Symphony* received a Carnegie United Kingdom Trust Award, an important landmark that was to trigger a decade of public success. The Symphony was performed throughout the country, and led to Wilson becoming guest conductor from 1929-34 of (what was to become) the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. One boy who benefitted from Wilson’s teaching at the time was (Rev.) H. W. Last (28-35), who went on to become Lecturer in Music and Tutor in New Testament Exegesis at King’s College, London before being appointed Director of Music at St Bees School, Cumberland.

Composer of two symphonies, five concertos, a string quartet and numerous instrumental and vocal works, Wilson was greeted as ‘the notable composer’ when he left Ipswich for Dulwich College in 1945. According to Gwyn Arch who was taught by Wilson at Ipswich, the War had decimated music at the school: the choir was suspended and opportunities for music making curtailed. Perhaps Wilson also needed a new challenge after nearly a quarter of a century

at the school. At Dulwich, as well as being considered the best dressed member of staff, Wilson started a music club with Sunday afternoon concerts and generally brought a more professional approach to school music, so much so that in May 1951 one third of the entire school (400 boys) took part in the opening celebrations of London’s Festival Hall. That same month, Wilson brought sixty Dulwich trebles to collaborate with Benjamin Britten in an early performance of the *Spring Symphony* (a work that the composer described as being inspired by ‘a particularly lovely Spring day in East Suffolk, the Suffolk of Constable and Gainsborough’). In 1952, every boy in the school took part in Handel’s *Messiah* for the first annual Dulwich College concert at the Festival Hall, Wilson being ‘less concerned with perfection than involvement’. In 1953 Wilson prepared his choir for a performance of Berlioz’s *Te Deum* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Choir under Sir Thomas Beecham, which has subsequently become a much cherished recording (and which is still available from Sony Classics). Stanley Wilson died very suddenly of a coronary thrombosis the evening before the concert, aged just 54.

A cutting from the Ipswich *Evening Star* of 28 February 1929 unites Stanley Wilson with our next musical Old Ipswichian, James Ching:

An important Wireless Programme

Two new British works that should hold a peculiar interest for wireless listeners in these parts in general and in Ipswich in particular, will be included in the programme to be broadcast from Birmingham on Saturday, March 9th. Both of them are written by musicians who have intimate associations with the town of Ipswich. The first is a ‘Skye Symphony’ by Mr Stanley Wilson, the music master at Ipswich School.... One day in the early months of last year I happened to call on Mr Wilson, and had the good fortune to be allowed to follow the manuscript score of the slow movement and the Scherzo of the ‘Skye Symphony’ while the composer and Mr James Ching played these two movements in a pianoforte arrangement for four hands.... The second work of local interest to be broadcast in the same programme is the ‘Ode to Death’ written for tenor solo, chorus, and orchestra by Mr James Ching. The fact that he is a life-long friend of Mr Wilson lends a rather unique personal interest to the occasion.

Samuel James Ching was born at Thornton Heath, Surrey in 1900, and by the age of three was already showing considerable musical talent. Aged seven, and after being taken to play to Sir Henry Wood, he became the youngest student ever admitted to the Royal Academy of Music, that same year making his public debut as a pianist at London’s Wigmore Hall. In 1914 his father was appointed Postmaster of Ipswich which brought Ching to the school. We don’t know who taught him the piano, but he studied organ with Mr Jonathan Job from the Tower and he was a prefect and school organist. When for many months there were no Sunday services in the Chapel due to the fatal illness of the chaplain ‘Canoodles’ de Candole, Ching (then aged sixteen) acted as organist at Sproughton, with the trebles of the school choir singing for him there instead. The following year he won an open organ scholarship to the Royal College of Music, where he studied choir training with Walford Davies and (together with Stanley Wilson) composition with Stanford and conducting with Boult. In 1918 he was badly affected by the flu epidemic that killed 100 million people worldwide and he returned to Ipswich to convalesce. It was soon after this that he wrote the ‘Ode to Death’ which (according to the *Radio Times* of the day) thus had a particularly special meaning for him.

In 1920 he was admitted to Queen’s College, Oxford where he completed his BA and BMus. Oxford correspondents (or ‘O.O.I.’s) writing in the School Magazine in the early 1920’s regularly mentioned Ching, although as this extract from 1921 reveals, it was as often to allude to his ‘Falstaffian girth’ as it was to praise his music: ‘S.J. Ching, with his rotund form, has been seen several times on the river in the bottom of a punt which was observed to be very low in the water. He has also been drawing great applause by his rendering of some Russian music as difficult to play as the name of its author is to pronounce.’ Or in 1923: ‘S.J. Ching is a big man in the musical world and in any other world too. He has attained the ample and substantial dignity of a Bachelor of Music and has lately been elected to a place on the Committee of the University Music Society. A short time ago we had the pleasure of listening to a string quartet of his composition at that fountain of sweet melody.’ In a photograph of Ching playing croquet with (amongst others) T.S. Eliot, taken by Lady Ottoline Morrell at her Garsington home, we can see that perhaps this particular correspondent was prone to exaggerate Ching’s size, though not his musical ability.

Ching returned to the school many times in the 1920s often appearing in school concerts. In 1929 he premiered Wilson’s First Piano Concerto at the Queen’s Hall Proms (the year before the BBC took over their control) with Wilson conducting. As a pianist, Ching gave many recitals and



James Ching at Garsington, with David Lindsay (28th earl of Crawford), Leonard Strong and Thomas Stearns ('T.S.') Eliot, taken by Lady Ottoline Morrell 1923-1924, courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery, London

broadcasts, often devoted to his first love Bach, including the first complete performance in Britain of *The Art of Fugue* on the piano. He held teaching posts at the Royal College and Royal Academy of Music, but from 1930 was one of the very first people to become interested in the physiology and psychology of piano technique. He began to publish books and lecture widely on the subject, and later he founded a pianoforte school of his own that continues to this day. His book published in 1934 with the title *Piano Technique: Foundation Principles* was the result of extensive research into 'the physiological-mechanics of piano technique' in collaboration with a Professor of Physiology and a Lecturer in Mechanics and Applied Mathematics. In *The Amateur Pianist's Companion* of 1956, Ching outlined his teaching philosophy: 'many of the amateur's most pressing problems can at least be partially solved even in the total absence of any personal tuition of any kind'. Accordingly, 'the amateur should focus on self-confidence, short-term and long-term objectives, a carefully planned practice schedule and knowledge of piano technique'. James Ching died in July 1962 whilst preparing for a recital that was to mark his return to the concert platform.

The organ

Old Ipswichians can claim that one of their own is responsible for the very use of the organ in English churches. One of Cardinal Wolsey's lesser-known accomplishments was that he formalised the use of the organ to relieve the strain on the choir of singing the chant in the daily service. This led to organs being installed in different parts of a church, for example an organ in the 'Choir' for routine services, one in the Lady Chapel for Lady Mass and a great organ in the north or west gallery for feasts and special occasions.

The Chapel at Ipswich School built in 1852 and twice extended thereafter, cannot claim quite such an array of instruments. Nonetheless, a number of very different organs have been used to accompany services there over the past 150 years. The first was presented to Headmaster Rigaud in 1853 by 'the masters and boys past and present', and installed in the Chapel in 1857. Built by the firm of Russell at a cost of £140, it had one manual and seven stops. By 1898 it was deemed unfit for purpose, and although some of the pipes were reused, it was largely replaced by a new Bishop organ at a cost of £150. Bunnell H. Burton, who was described as 'a gentleman amateur' when organist at St Peter's and who was later to be Mayor of Ipswich and organist at St Mary le Tower, gave the opening recital.

In 1939 it was Burton who as Chairman of the Governors rather disastrously insisted on installing a Hammond organ (described below by Gwyn Arch as 'a somewhat feeble affair') in the Chapel to replace the one he had largely funded some forty years earlier. Soon after, the Chapel Choir was suspended for the duration of the war, and in about 1958 the organ was scrapped and replaced by a temporary hand-pumped organ. It was only in 1960 when the Chapel was extended to the west that a Walker organ was salvaged from a chapel near Sudbury and rebuilt in the new gallery. Assisted by the carpenter Cecil Borrett and pupil Robert Gower (60-70) (Precentor of Radley School from 1982 -1996, and now Director of Music at Glenalmond College and Chairman of the Whitlock Trust), the move was overseen by John Ince who had arrived from Felsted when Headmaster Mermagen wanted a full-time director of music. Stuart Grimwade (50-62) remembers that 'music in the school at that time was dominated by John's enthusiasm for organs, anthems by Stanford, and the *Molesworth* books, not necessarily in that order! Indeed, most twice-weekly music periods in the late 1950s largely consisted of his reading favourite chapters from *Down with Skool* upstairs in the Pavilion in between uncontrolled bursts of laughter from all.... His infectious enthusiasm seemed to win over all concerned, and indeed gave me my life-long love of organ music.' Ince's son Robert (60-68) is himself an organ builder who today has

responsibility for looking after the extraordinary collection of instruments at the Thursford Steam Museum in Norfolk. Another boy inspired by Ince was Roger Pulham who was at the school from 1951 to 1962. An architect by profession who lives in Woodbridge, Pulham has designed and built organs in, amongst many other places, Leeds, Portsmouth, Derby, Beaconsfield and Lancaster Pennsylvania.

Contemporary music

It was only quite by chance, in conversation with fellow composer Ben Parry, that Gwyn Arch (42-49) discovered that they were both OI's. Gwyn takes up the story:

When I heard about the 'Celebration of Ipswich School Music' concert (quite accidentally, never having heard the school mentioned in my presence in the last 50 years), I quickly realized that there were many compelling reasons for coming to the concert. First, I was a pupil at the school between 1942 and 1949; second I was taught piano by Stanley Wilson; third, my father was a curate at St Peter's Church at that time (I sang in the choir); finally, I knew Ben Parry fairly well – we had collaborated in compiling and arranging between us most of the 40 songs and carols in *The Faber Carol Book*. But I never knew until the end of August this year that he, too, had attended the school.

My recollections of my career at the school are pretty hazy. It was during the war, of course, and (as I learned later) most of the best teachers were in the armed forces. However, the teacher who made the greatest impression on me was Stanley Wilson. Lessons were in the front room of his big, cold, Victorian semi round the corner from the school. He was my first piano teacher and he often used his own work for teaching purposes. I remember learning his *Androcles and the Lion* and thinking of how lucky I was to be taught by a famous composer. Indeed, I had hitherto thought that all composers were dead! My most enduring memory was his insistence that every week I played to him a 'composition'. He would tell me to invent something descriptive of a fairground, or a foggy day, or an air raid (there were plenty of those in 1942, and very scary, too). He took all my elementary, feeble efforts very seriously, and always showed me how to make my ideas more interesting and more musical. Without his encouragement at a critical stage of adolescence, I do not think I would ever have thought of writing music, and I continue to be more than grateful to Stanley Wilson for his enlightened teaching. He also taught me the organ which was an early electronic model in the school chapel, and a somewhat feeble affair. Otherwise, I can't remember much music in the school at all. There was no orchestra or choir, and 'classroom' music was conducted in the hall by a large lady we used to call

'Miss Twinset'. She sat behind the piano, played very loudly, and every now and then would stand up as she played and say equally loudly 'I can't hear you, sing up'.

Clearly taking this advice to heart, Gwyn has gone on to have a considerable career writing and arranging music with over one hundred publications to his name, much of it for school use. Appointed as Director of Music at Bulmershe College of Higher Education, Reading in 1964, he took the Girls Choir to glory in the international rounds of the BBC's *Let the Peoples Sing* competition, and subsequently had more success with another choir in the 1995 BBC *Choir of the Year* competition. He was made an OBE in 2006 for services to music.

Amongst Arch's contemporaries was Patrick Enfield (b. 1929), who was at the school from 1936 to 1947. In an article written in 1967 for the school magazine, Enfield regrets that he was never taught composition by Wilson, as the local musician with whom he instead studied harmony and counterpoint, strongly advised him 'to give up all attempts to become a composer, a notion which by then had fixed itself in my head'. Nonetheless, Enfield won the Lomax Cup at the 1957 Brighton Music Festival whereupon he 'launched an assault upon British Competitive Music Festivals on a broad front and concluded the year having won twenty-one first places in the composition classes of twenty-two Festivals, which I later discovered was a national record'. Enfield was asked by the school to write a fanfare for the Charter Day celebrations in 1966, was for a time the *Evening Star's* music critic and had a number of works published right into the 1980s. He died in January 1988, aged 58.

Stuart Grimwade was one of the trebles who went to Aldeburgh to record *St Nicolas* with Benjamin Britten. He remembers the composer coming to the school to rehearse with the boys, encouraging them to sing with mouths as wide as though sucking gobstoppers. At the end of the rehearsal he (of course) produced a great big bag of gobstoppers for the boys to share. Another composer who visited the school was Britten's friend and colleague Imogen Holst who heard the world premiere of her *Trianon Suite* in the Great School in September 1965. This building has acted as concert hall and rehearsal venue for countless groups from the town over its fifty or so years including Trianon, the Ipswich Orchestral Society, the Wolsey Orchestra, and the Ipswich Chamber Music Society (which has brought many of the greatest chamber musicians of the age to Ipswich). For nearly half that time, 'Music for Youth' concerts were held there. Their very first concert featured perhaps the most famous percussionist of all, James Blades, and other highlights included the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, oboist Nicholas Daniel, and the band of the Royal Air Force.

Born in 1950, composer and broadcaster Peter Paul Nash (58-67) studied with Alexander Goehr and Robin Holloway at Cambridge University after leaving the school. His *In a Walled Garden* has been recorded by soprano Jane Manning, his First Symphony by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Martyn Brabbins, and *Apollinaire Choruses* (which had its premiere at the 1996 Aldeburgh Festival) by the BBC Singers under Simon Jolly.

For forty years, Peter Cropper (53-59) was the leader of the internationally renowned Lindsay String Quartet. He formed the Quartet (initially called the Cropper Quartet) whilst still a student at the Royal Academy of Music, and they went on to perform in all the world's leading chamber music venues and festivals, earning praise especially for their interpretation of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. The Lindsays disbanded in 2005, but Peter continues to perform as a soloist and chamber musician. He is recording the complete Beethoven Violin Sonatas with pianist Martin Roscoe, with whom he has also formed a piano trio with cellist Moray Welsh. He was a member of the music panel of the Arts Council of Great Britain and he regularly gives talks for the BBC. He established the International Chamber Music Festival in Sheffield (for which he was awarded the 1994 Royal Philharmonic Society's Festival Prize) and then 'Music in the Round', which led to him receiving a prestigious 'Creative Briton' award in 2000. More recently he was awarded the 2005 Cobbett Medal from the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

In the 1970s, music can be said to have brought together the first Old Ipswichians to marry one another, Andrew Bird (69-76) (who was subsequently a long-serving Director of Music at Bromsgrove School and who is now entering a second career as a computer programmer) and his wife Tamsin Andrews (77-79) who still has a busy schedule teaching the saxophone and clarinet. Their contemporary Timothy Roe (63-76) has for many years been the organist of Holy Trinity, South Kensington (adjacent to the Royal Albert Hall), and also gives monthly recitals at St George's German Lutheran Church.

David Sawer (68-79) continues to make a dramatic impact on the contemporary music scene internationally. Whilst at the school he was noted for coordinating 'Happenings' (under the watchful eye of then Assistant Director of Music Nigel Grant, who followed Ipswich with fourteen years as Assistant Director of the Royal Ballet School), but he also made an impression as a singer in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and then as a violinist, leading the Suffolk Youth Orchestra. Following study at York University, with Mauricio Kagel in Cologne, and as the Fulbright-Chester-Schirmer Fellow in Composition in the USA, David's works came to prominence with

cat's-eye recorded by the BBC (and later choreographed by Richard Alston for Ballet Rambert), and *Swansong*, which won a Sony award and was selected by Radio 3 as their Prix Italia entry. A succession of important commissions followed in the 1990s including *Byrnan Wood*, recorded by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Andrew Davis, the *Trumpet Concerto* which received its first performance from the same orchestra in 1995, and *the greatest happiness principle*, performed by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales at the 1997 Proms. *Tiroirs*, commissioned for the London Sinfonietta, has been performed throughout Europe, in the USA and at the 1998 ISCM World Music Days. In the theatre he has worked with playwrights Edward Bond, Nick Dear and Paul Godfrey and written two operas including *From Morning to Midnight* that was premiered by English National Opera in 2001 and which received a Laurence Olivier Award nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Opera. More recent works include a *Piano Concerto*, winner of the British Academy British Composer Award in 2003, and *Rebus* which was given its UK premiere by the London Sinfonietta in 2005. A CD of orchestral pieces recorded by the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group was released in 2007. Future works include *Skin Deep*, an operetta with a libretto by Armando Iannucci (co-commissioned by Opera North, Bregenz Festival, Royal Danish Opera Copenhagen, and Komische Oper Berlin) to be premiered in January 2009, and *Rumpelstiltskin*, a ballet for the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group.

Since leaving school, Ben Parry (77-83) has had a musical career as distinguished as it is eclectic. Following a degree at Cambridge University where he sang in King's College Choir, he was musical director of The Swingle Singers in the late 1980s, before embarking on a wide-ranging career that has spanned singing, acting, conducting, arranging and composing in both the classical and light music fields. He has sung in the West End as well as with the Taverner and Gabrieli Consorts, and has conducted and sung on many TV commercial and film soundtracks including *The Golden Compass*, *Shrek* and *Harry Potter*. For eight years he lived in Scotland, where he co-founded the Dunedin Consort, directing performances throughout the United Kingdom, Europe and Canada. He was chorus master of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra Chorus, Music Director of Haddo House Opera and Director of Choral Music at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music. More recently, Ben has worked with Sir Paul McCartney on his 'classical' composition, *Ecce Cor Meum*, acting as chorus master for the Abbey Road recording, and coordinating the choirs for the premieres in the Royal Albert Hall and Carnegie Hall, New York. For the last



Ben Parry with
Sir Paul McCartney

five years he has been Director of Music at St Paul's School in London but in January 2009 he becomes Director of the Junior Royal Academy of Music. He co-directs London Voices and the Eton Choral Courses and his compositions and arrangements are published by Faber Music and Peters Edition.

Of course it is not just in the classical music world that Old Ipswichians have excelled. Colin Nears (43-51) was on the staff at the BBC from 1958-87, where, as Producer and Director of Television Arts, Music and Dance programmes, he won a BAFTA award and the Prix Italia music prize. He was a member of the Arts Council and Chairman of their dance panel from 1982-90. Previously a member of the Board of the Royal Opera House, Chairman of Birmingham Royal Ballet, a governor of the Royal Ballet and the Royal Ballet School, and a member of the board for Rambert Dance Company, he is currently Vice-Chairman of the Royal Ballet Benevolent Fund. Colin was made a CBE in 1998.

Dr. Neal Swettenham was a boarder at Westwood between 1970 and 1976, and following his first professional commission to compose the music for *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* at the Wolsey Theatre, he has been a musical director for amongst others the Riding Lights Theatre Company. As

an actor he has appeared on television in *David Copperfield*, *Miss Marple* and *Eastenders* and he is now a Lecturer in Drama at Loughborough University and an authority on the theatre of Richard Foreman. In 1992, Jon Beales (76-85) embarked on a freelance musical career in Edinburgh. Working primarily in the theatre (his first production being as on-stage violinist in *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* for Perth Rep, and his first commission a new score for 7:84's touring production of *The Grapes of Wrath*), Jon has since worked on over one hundred productions in a variety of roles including composer, arranger, musical director and performer, and is a visiting lecturer at both Scottish conservatoires. Projects in the last year include an international tour of David Greig's *Damascus*, *Vanity Fair* at the Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh, *Sundowne* (winning musical in the Highland Quest) and a commission for a full-scale musical adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*. Francis Goodhand (85-92) follows a varied career as a musical director, songwriter and composer for the theatre. He has written the music and songs for dozens of productions at the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds, the Tiebreak Theatre Company, SNAP Theatre, the Birmingham Stage Company and the National Youth Music Theatre amongst others, and written the story, book, lyrics and music

for six children's musicals. Francis was a finalist in Greenwich Theatre's Ten Minute Musical Challenge 2006, and chosen as composer for that theatre's Thirty Minute Musical.

Along with Jon Beales, Ned Bennett (78-85) was the other member of the renowned Milton's Premier Jazz Band (the first such band in the school) to take up a career in music. Ned has played alto and tenor saxophones for the Sugar Ray Ford Orchestra, Big Buzzard Boogie Band, Rob and Pete's Swing Thing as well as working with many jazz and swing bands including the Pasadena Roof Orchestra and Jools Holland. As a composer, Ned is a past winner of the Royal Overseas League composition prize, and his music has been performed by the Calgary Philharmonic and Randy Brecker as well as by many leading British jazz musicians. In 2004 his *Magnificat* was broadcast live on BBC Radio 3. With many publications to his name including *Getting Started with Jazz* for Faber and numerous volumes in the *A New Tune a Day* Series, Ned is also a skilled arranger in a wide variety of styles.

Trak 7 took over the jazz mantle from Milton's Premier Jazz Band. Regional winners of the 1989 *Daily Telegraph* Jazz in Education Competition, they were also voted the best Trad combination out of the two thousand entries nationwide. Of their number, two have continued with careers in music: George Double (80-91) is a leading session drummer and Stephen Trowell (84-91) found fame with the 6 piece *a capella* group The Magnets. Signed up by EMI in 2001, they were soon touring with the likes of Lisa Stansfield, Tom Jones, Michael Ball and Geri Halliwell, and appearing on shows such as *Blue Peter* and *Parkinson*. Steve's brother Jamie Trowell (89-96) is a freelance drummer and percussionist on the staff at Colchester Institute.

Nick Wilkinson (81-86) now lives in New Zealand, although he spends much of the year touring the world as the bass guitarist with Chrissie Hynde's band The Pretenders. Last year they played at Portman Road with Rod Stewart. Nick's contemporary Edward Dewson (76-87) has entertained audiences with his Serious Hat Band for many years, and now has a number of other bands to his name including The Top Hat Band, The Fez Collective, The Orphans and Funk Connection. *The Stupids* were one of the leading skate-punk thrash bands of the 1980s, releasing six albums and recording a number of sessions for the late John Peel. They were led by Tom Withers (77-85), aka Tommy Stupid, who is now best known as drum 'n' bass DJ Klute. Since the 1990s, Tom has worked as a drum and bass producer as well as continuing to release albums which *Knowledge* magazine describes as 'some of the most heart-wrenching, rib-shaking music in d&b's history'. Of Withers they say that 'He is, without doubt, one of the most intriguing characters in drum & bass'. The Stupids re-formed earlier this year and their new single was

produced by Andrew Fryer (68-79). Andrew is a record producer, recording engineer, songwriter and recording artist. A member of the Celtic band Ceredwen, whose album *Legends of the Celts* featured on the *Billboard* charts for 3 months, he later became studio manager for Warner Chappell Music where he co-wrote songs for artists such as Billie Ray Martin and Shara Nelson, as well as writing theme music for BBC radio. He formed the dance label Futurasound, co-producing and co-writing the top ten dance singles 'Call My Name' and 'Reminiscence'. Artists he has collaborated with include Chaka Khan, Billy Bragg, David Grey, KT Tunstall, John Hegley, Dido, Martine McCutcheon, Tanita Tikaram, New Model Army, Kevin Sharkey, Tommy Steele, Ned Sherrin and The Darkness. He is signed to Warner Chappell Music as a songwriter and to Real Music as a recording artist and is currently lecturing in Music Technology and Composition at Leeds Metropolitan University.

Music today

Music has flourished at Ipswich School under the headmasterships of John Blatchly (1972-1993) and Ian Galbraith (1993 to the present). They are both tremendously active and interested musicians, and they have encouraged a variety of musical activities without precedent. John instituted the Chamber Music Group that met at his house on Sunday evenings and gave well over sixty concerts, most of them in churches around East Anglia. The group has developed into the Chamber Orchestra, now often led by Mr Galbraith (who also sings in the Chapel Choir and can regularly be heard playing the organ for services). In 1987, John Blatchly developed the Musicians in Residence scheme which, running uninterrupted until 2004, saw young aspiring professionals assist in the music making of the school. Amongst those invited here were Stephen Knight, now a well-known harpsichord player, conductor and professor at the Guildhall School of Music, and Michelle Wright, a violinist who combines playing (she appeared in the recent *Maestro* series for the BBC) with her role of Head of Development at the London Symphony Orchestra. This July Michelle was awarded 'Best Up and Coming Fundraiser' at the Institute of Fundraising National Awards.

Opportunities for music making at Ipswich School have never been greater than they are today. Numerous groups flourish in the senior school including two symphony orchestras, Chamber Orchestra, Big Band, Chapel Choir, School Choir, brass, flute and chamber music ensembles, and a Choral Society that includes OI's, parents and staff. Every week, school musicians visit hospitals, primary schools and old people's homes, and for the last twelve years the school has run a week-long summer music course open to all. The

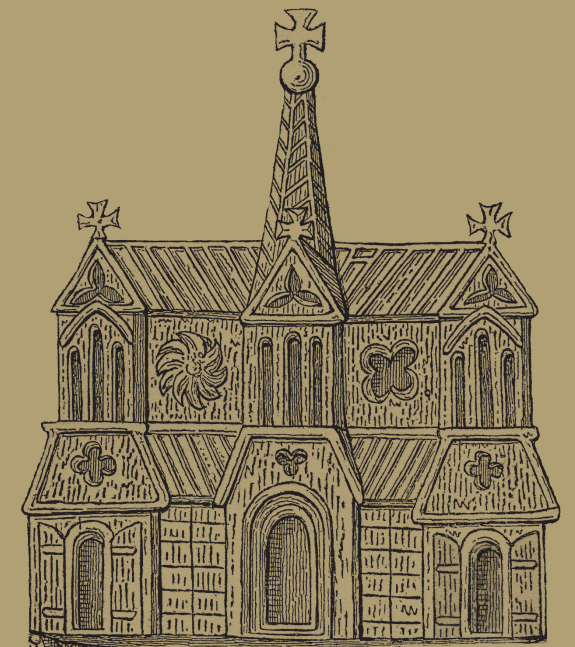
inspirational Director of Music, Andrew Leach, shapes all these activities with extraordinary skill and enthusiasm. A music scholar at King's College, Cambridge (where he played harpsichord on a famous recording of Monteverdi's *Vespers* under Philip Ledger), a recitalist, composer and conductor of the Woodbridge Choral Society, Andrew also marshals a legion of visiting music teachers (nearly thirty at last count), weaving their tuition into the ever busier school timetable. The talent in the Prep choir and orchestra is evident at the school concerts held regularly at Snape or at the Corn Exchange. The traditionally strong links between St Mary le Tower and the school continue with our chaplain, the Reverend David Warnes, being Hon. Assistant Curate at the Tower and our Assistant Director of Music William Saunders having the post of assistant organist there. (William's first CD of organ music, *Dignity and Impudence*, was described by *Organists' Review* as 'quite outstanding', and his next CD *Tower Power* is due for release in November 2008.). The choirs of church and school join together every term for evensong.

With its strong heritage and vibrant cultural life there is no doubt that Ipswich is indeed 'a musical school'.

Richard Wilson



The Chapel Choir at Beverley Minster



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Front cover: *the interior of the Tower Church in 1832 by Samuel Read*

Back cover: *the Priory Church of St Peter and St Paul and present school organ being removed from Sudbury in 1960*