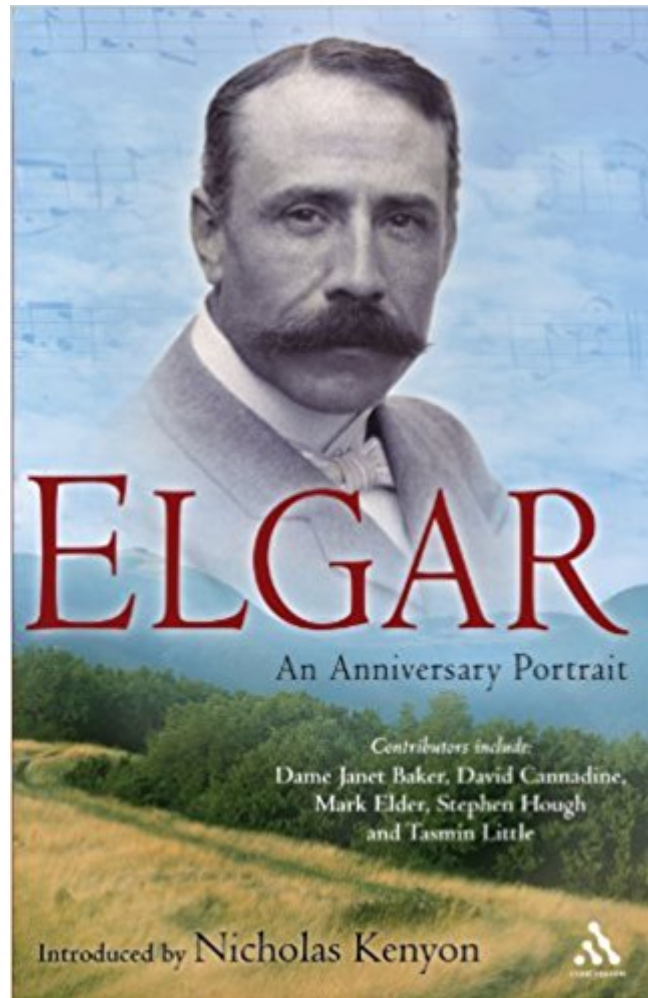




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Elgar: An Anniversary Portrait



Synopsis

"Too frequently a multi-author work on a composer obscures rather than illuminates its subject. This volume casts a genuinely prismatic light upon it."R.J. Stove, *The New Criterion* "An Anniversary Portrait succeeds in offering a sufficient yet panoramic view of Elgar's life and music. The impressive list of authors and concise nature of their contributions make this book an easily digestible and enjoyable read."Musos Edward Elgar was a man of many contradictions. He was born an outsider, into a family of lower-middle class, Catholic, origins. Yet his fame, and ability to write music that struck a chord in the national consciousness, led him to adopt a sycophantic attitude towards the Royal Family and high society, even though he always felt ill at ease with them. Elgar was a depressive with a problematic marriage, who craved recognition, but in many ways he regretted the piece of music which made him famous. 'Pomp and Circumstance' made him the leading English composer of his age, but also contributed to the jingoism which he so disliked during the First World War. Yet, unquestionably, he was the greatest musical genius that England had produced in centuries. This Portrait, by some of the scholars and musicians that understand him best, offers new light on a wide range of aspects of Edward Elgar's life and work.

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and his music by some of those most affected by his legacy." "An Anniversary Portrait succeeds in offering a sufficient yet panoramic view of Elgar's life and music. The impressive list of authors and concise nature of their contributions make this book an easily digestible and enjoyable read." Muso, 01/08/07 (Muso)"thoughtful take on Elgar's dual nature." "a welcome handful of insights." David Nice, BBC Music Magazine, 01/08/07 (David Nice)"With a starry line-up of contributors and an introduction by outgoing Proms director Nicholas Kenyon, Elgar: An Anniversary Portrait touches accessibly on similar themes." David Gutman, BBC Proms magazine, Prom 31, 5 August 2007 (David Gutman)"It is a good, warts-and-all study of one of our greatest composers" (Good Book Guide)"Too frequently a multi-author work on a composer obscures rather than illuminates its subject. This volume casts a genuinely prismatic light upon it."R.J. Stove, The New Criterion (R.J. Stove, The New Criterion)Title Mention in the International Record Review, October 2007 (Piers Burton - Page)"The great strength of the book lies in its Elgarian blending of views by musicologists and historians as well as performing musicians...this pleasant and interesting book is an enjoyable read and will make you listen to the work once again." Reviewed by Robert Giddings, Tribune, 2008"A friendly and familiar portrait of the composer for the general reader... in addition to affectionate tributes, several of the essays tucked inside take less well-trodden paths through Elgar's life and his music, notably Adrian Partington's fine chapter on 'Elgar's Church Music which gives the reader a vivid sense of the 'variety, colour and intelligence' of what John Butt has described in another recent collection of essays on Elgar as a 'small but striking oeuvre2. Affectionate yet critical, personal yet informative"The Elgar Society Journal, July 2008"One of the most enjoyable aspects of Elgar: An Anniversary Portrait is its eclectic compilation of perspectives on Elgar, a composer whose complexity grows with each successive publication... the interaction of histories, musicologists, biographers, and artists ensures that the book will be greatly appreciated by Elgarians, and different constituencies of readers will undoubtedly find much of value in different essays. The personal essays and reminiscences – while delightful and engaging – are limited as a scholarly resource; however, several of the contributions will appeal to Elgar scholars. The relative brevity of most of the essays marks them as suggestive inducements to further inquiry, but ultimately Elgar: An Anniversary Portrait successfully meets the goals implied by its title." – Dan Kline, Victorian Studies, Summer 2008 (Vol. 50 No. 4)Mention in The Bookseller (Sanford Lakoff)"McVeagh first chronicled Elgar's career in 1955, so has a lifetime of knowledge." (Sanford Lakoff)Title mentioned in The Lady (Sanford Lakoff)"an intimate tribute to Edward Elgar and his music by some of those most affected by his legacy." "An Anniversary Portrait succeeds in offering a sufficient yet panoramic view of Elgar's life and music. The impressive list of authors and

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Nicholas Kenyon was Director of the Proms from 1996-2007. He was formerly head of Radio 3 and music critic for the Observer and the New Yorker. He is currently Managing Director of The Barbican in London.

This book contains several rewarding essays on Sir Edward Elgar that help provide a fuller picture of the composer of several well-known pieces (the Pomp & Circumstance March #1 being in the super-well-known category). Each reader is likely to find a different set of essays to be most interesting; mine are those by Diana McVeagh, Stephen Hough and Mark Elder. One problem is that the authors are not identified. Some, such as Hough, Janet Baker and Yehudi Menuhin are well-known, but the others are known mostly to persons already well familiar with the composer, and some will be new to most readers. Many chapters have notes, but the one by Hans Keller does not despite his quoting three sources.

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