

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

SEASON 1964-65

First Concert

REID ORCHESTRA

Leader: Dr. JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Conductor: SIDNEY NEWMAN

Solo Pianoforte:
LAWRENCE GLOVER

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC
THURSDAY, 22nd OCTOBER, 1964

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS

In Memoriam

Dr. MARY GARDNER GRIERSON, O.B.E.

(died 14th March, 1964)

On Donald Tovey's appointment to the Reid Chair in 1914 Mary Grierson left school to become one of his students. She graduated B.Mus. in 1918, and Mus. Doc. in the department of Executants as a pianist in 1928. In the intervening years she had been a pupil of Fanny Davies (herself one of the most distinguished pupils of Clara Schumann) and had also studied in Prague, before returning to Edinburgh. Appointed a part-time Lecturer in Music in 1928, she served as Tovey's 'right hand man' in the University until his death in 1940. In 1935 she was officially appointed Assistant Conductor of the Reid Symphony Orchestra under Sir Donald, having previously served that Society over a period of many years as its Secretary. Her first appearances as a pianist at Reid Orchestral Concerts were as accompanist (whilst still a student) to the singer Maurice d'Oisly in December 1917 (Music Hall, George Street), as soloist in Tovey's Concerto in A major on 10th May, 1919 (Usher Hall)—the work that she was to play many years later under the conductorship of Sir Adrian Boult at the Usher Hall Reid Memorial Concert of 15th February, 1941 which marked the centenary of the first Reid Concert and the twenty-fifth season of Tovey's Reid Symphony Orchestra—and again in the Beethoven Triple Concerto with Camillo Ritter and Ruth Waddell in March, 1922. In 1937 she performed the Brahms Second Concerto under Tovey at a Reid Concert in the Usher Hall. During the two seasons 1939-41 she directed the Reid Orchestra and conducted the majority of the concerts.

In the University Dr. Grierson was appointed a whole time lecturer in 1947 and promoted Senior Lecturer in 1955. After Tovey's death she discharged an onerous and responsible task as his Literary Executor, and in 1952 was published her splendid biography of her great master. In 1961 she retired from the conductorship of the Edinburgh Bach Society after thirty-three years of distinguished service. Pianist, conductor, teacher, lecturer, she also served for many years as a member of the Scottish Advisory Panel of the British Council, as a Scottish representative on the Sadler's Wells Consultative Committee, and latterly as a member of the Advisory Committee of Scottish Opera Society Ltd.

The following programme is performed as a memorial. The Eroica Symphony is chosen not because it includes an heroic funeral march but because it is a symphony of great stature for which she had unbounded admiration, and the Brahms Concerto likewise, being a work in which she herself had been identified with the Reid Orchestra under her beloved master. It is in all respects a concert—an occasion for the measure of rejoicing that belongs to music-making, and she herself would not have wished that there should be any solemnity on such an occasion beyond such as the music itself bestows.

S.T.M.N.

PROGRAMME

SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN E FLAT (Eroica)

Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Allegro con brio

Marcia funebre - adagio assai

Scherzo - allegro vivace

Finale - allegro molto

INTERVAL

PIANOFORTE CONCERTO NO. 2 IN B FLAT (Op. 83)

Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro non troppo

Allegro appassionato

Andante - Piu Adagio - Tempo I

Allegretto grazioso

That this great concerto holds our undivided attention throughout four full-sized movements depends in part on the wonderful way in which these movements are organised to provide exactly the right reaction and contrast one to the other. An unforgettable horn theme opens the first movement in quiet dialogue with the pianoforte; presently this develops into a cadenza-like introduction to the movement proper. The noble and triumphant character of the first group of themes is contrasted with a passionate and energetic second group, and the huge design is expressed in a wealth of pianoforte and orchestral colour. There follows a Scherzo in the unexpected key of D minor beginning with a theme of great tragic power. The middle section is, however, jubilant in D major, and here occurs the famous passage in which, after a dramatic gesture and the orchestral equivalent of "Over to you", the pianoforte takes up the confident theme in a mysterious whisper of octaves.

After the stormy second movement, the slow movement returns with a sense of blessed peace to the original key of B flat major, and

the heavenly combination of a solo 'cello with a gracious and rhapsodical pianoforte part is of the most ethereal and moving beauty. The perfect reaction from this transcendent mood is provided by a delicious and leisurely rondo, with a main theme of childlike gaiety and contrasting melodies which might almost be folk-songs. The passion and the turmoil which required the full vigour of trumpets and drums in the first two movements is over, and the end is beauty and happiness. The scale of the work, the richness of texture, and the consistently superb certainty of inspiration makes this one of the world's greatest concertos.

(This note was supplied by M.G. for a Reid Symphony Orchestra concert on 23rd January, 1943 in the Usher Hall when Dame Myra Hess was the soloist).