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## Reviews and Reports

**AN IVES CELEBRATION** edited by H. Wiley Hitchcock and Vivian Perlis  
University of Illinois Press, 1977 (£8.40)

**IVES** by H. Wiley Hitchcock  
Oxford University Press, 1977 (£3.25)

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Many neglected creative artists get their last chance during the centenary year of their birth. Since we celebrated the centenary of Charles Ives in 1974, he has begun to become established over here as a major figure. It has been possible to obtain records of most of his compositions and to buy many of the scores, and the BBC has continued to programme his songs and chamber music fairly regularly. However, the orchestral works are still far too little played; enthusiastic Ivesians like myself will be happy when they are played as often as those of Stravinsky and Bartók. The number of books published about Ives is rapidly growing (with some unusual contributions printed in *Soundings*' special issue 'Ives, Ruggles, Varèse').<sup>1</sup>

Ives' fellow-countrymen have recognised his importance for rather longer. A five-day Charles Ives Centennial Festival-Conference was held in New York and New Haven in October 1974, and the papers and panel discussions from it have now appeared in book form. *An Ives Celebration* is a rich feast of new ideas about and approaches to Ives; of its contributors only the work of Frank Rossiter and Peter Dickinson has previously been available over here. It is hard to think of any other composer who would come off so well and in so great a depth from such a heterogeneous set of contributions. As a book this *Celebration* is far more than the sum of its parts and forms a valuable addition to the existing literature on Ives, yet at the same time delineating substantial areas for fruitful future studies. The multiple dimensions of Ives' music, life and personality enable everyone to draw conclusions that relate to their individual interests, and make him into a personal 'symbol'. Lou Harrison's 'refrain', discussing his work of editing various Ives scores, could well be applied to Ives research as a whole: 'This marvelous playground in which we will all be making beautiful things for the rest of time.' This phrase also embodies the warmth of appreciation and affection for all aspects of Ives' life and work that comes through strongly in this symposium.

*An Ives Celebration* is a handsome volume, well produced and edited (I spotted only two tiny printing errors, both in the very technical paper by Allen Forte). I was surprised and pleased to find that it has an index. It also includes as appendices the programmes of the seven concerts which were given during the Festival-Conference (one of which, 'Ives and Friends', included not only the three Bs and Carl Ruggles but also Stravinsky's 'take-off' *Greeting Prelude*) and 14 'Essays by Foreign Participants', reprinted from the Festival-Conference programme book. The main body of the *Celebration* is divided into five sections: 'Ives and American Culture', 'Ives Viewed from Abroad', 'On Editing Ives', 'On Conducting and Performing Ives', and 'Ives and Present-Day Musical Thought'.

In 'Charles Ives: Good American and Isolated Artist' Frank R. Rossiter expands on certain aspects of Ives' personality and inner motivations which he has already discussed in his illuminating book,<sup>2</sup> including the function of his wife and his business partner in encouraging and protecting him in two roles which allowed him to escape adult responsibility, those of prankish boy and aloof visionary. Robert M. Crunden relates Ives to his contemporaries, the radicals of what is known as the 'Progressive Era' (exactly coinciding with Ives' creative years) in the fields of politics, society, religion, economics, business and education.

The final contribution to the first section is Neely Bruce's 'Ives and Nineteenth-Century American Music'. He divides this into two kinds: music of the people, and other 19th century American composers (plus the musical 'classics'). While Ives rejected these American composers because of their sentimentality and effeminacy, some of his songs are nonetheless directly related to such music. Bruce draws parallels with one of these composers whom Ives admired, Stephen Foster. Some of these are rather far-fetched. For example, Foster apparently wrote *one* song which uses quotation, which I would take to mean the reverse of Bruce's conclusion: namely that he was one of the few composers of that time who was basically uninterested in quotations. He later mentions other Americans of the time who did use quotations, and in quite an 'Ivesian' way; over on our side of the Atlantic one could make a similar list, involving folk tunes, student songs, B-A-C-H motives and the Dies Irae plainsong just as a start. I would similarly dispute Bruce's claims for Foster's rare use of self-quotation, which is commoner in popular than in classical music (taking this to include refurbishing a song with a new text). Bruce points out many characteristics of 19th century American composers which we now think of as being typically Ivesian. It is interesting to realise how little, at least until very recently, American musicians have known the full perspective of the history of their country's music, even from only a century ago (and who were the pre-Ivesian 'Second New England School', mentioned by a questioner in the subsequent discussion?).

Two sessions consisted of discussions between participants: one ('Ives Viewed from Abroad') between the foreign participants (mainly composers), the other (included in 'Ives and Present-Day Musical Thought') featuring five American composers (Roger Reynolds, Charles Dodge, Lou Harrison, Salvatore Martirano and Gordon Mumma) who each presented a work of their own which they felt was relevant. These presentations included four-channel tape and slide projections. Since none of them knew in advance what the others were going to do, there is a freshness in their discussions which is very evident. Reynolds points out that Ives' method was more one of 'incorporation' than of just quotation. Collectively they conclude that Ives embodies a very American approach, 'Use what you've got' (Reynolds), which William Brooks, in a separate paper, compares to Lévi-Strauss's metaphor of 'bricolage', doing-it-yourself with the materials and tools that are at hand. From the previously submitted essays by the foreign participants, here are three snippets: Peter Dickinson compares Ives with James Joyce (covering the same ground as in his *MT* article<sup>3</sup>); Hans G. Helms refers to American college students around 1970 reacting to some of Ives' songs in the same way as to protest songs; and Louis Andriessen ends with the description of Ives as 'one of the few composers who thought music more interesting than himself'.

There were two sessions under the heading 'On Editing Ives'. One of these featured three of the principal editors of Ives' scores, the other spotlighted three realisations of the four pages of material which is all that Ives wrote down for *Chromatimelodytune*, with illustrations of all the material and samples of these versions made by Gunther Schuller, Gerard Schwarz with Keith Brion, and Kenneth Singleton. In the first session John Kirkpatrick describes the history of each movement of the *Concord Sonata* and the revisions made by Ives after the first printing of the score in 1921. As always, Kirkpatrick is very illuminating about Ives' working methods. (I hope that his meticulous devotion to Ives' manuscripts has not prevented him from documenting many more of his personal reminiscences of Ives for posterity, such as those illustrated in Vivian Perlis's *Charles Ives Remembered*.<sup>4</sup> Such self-effacement can occasionally be somewhat self-defeating. In addition, one of the

appendices in Kirkpatrick's edition of the *Memos* consists of an annotated list of compositions made by Ives around 1949;<sup>5</sup> unfortunately he has not added to it any other complete surviving works which Ives omitted. Some are cited in his footnotes or in annotations elsewhere in the *Memos*, others (including several that have subsequently been published) do not appear at all. Doubtless this information, as well as details of lost, destroyed or incomplete works and an analysis of all the different versions of works which were adapted at later dates, can be found in Kirkpatrick's unpublished *Temporary Mimeographed Catalog*,<sup>6</sup> but few of us have even seen a copy of this, whereas *Memos* is now also available in a paperback edition.) The other two editors were Lou Harrison, who had written to Ives out the blue as a teenager and received a *crate* of photocopied scores, and was later particularly involved in editing the First Piano Sonata, and in preparing the Third Symphony for its first performance) which he conducted; and James Sinclair, who discusses his reconstruction of the original version for full orchestra of *Three Places in New England*, mentioning how Ives added dissonances in the revisions that he made during the 1920s and 30s.

There were also two sessions 'On Conducting and Performing Ives', with seven conductors from different generations and three violin and piano duos. I'll quote one gem from each. A questioner from the floor asked Sinclair, who had recently edited the *Second Orchestral Set*, if he had considered a choral passage used by Stokowski in the *second* as well as in the last movement; following the reply that Ives had not indicated it, the questioner revealed that he himself had written it for Stokowski! The violinist Daniel Stepner made several very thoughtful comments, including one on bowing the violin sonatas: 'Often, at ends of movements, there's that open-ended feeling which I think can be enhanced visually and in sound with an upbow. It's hard, in a sense, but it has a kind of tension which I think a downbow doesn't have.'

The final section, 'Ives and Present-Day Musical Thought', includes the discussion of the five composers already mentioned and papers by Robert P. Morgan, Allen Forte and William Brooks. Morgan's 'Spatial Form in Ives' considers the ways in which Ives negated the traditional elements that give rise to a temporal flow in music: harmonic stasis, quasi-circular forms, disruption of expectation (especially with quotations), fragmentation, multilayering, etc., obtaining a more spatial dimension in the music — and not merely in those works which require the musicians to sit in different groups that are spatially separated. He also puts Ives' use of serial procedures into a proper perspective (Schuller mentions 'twelve-tone' on three separate occasions during the *Chromatimelodtune* discussion), showing that the durational series are if anything more important than the pitch ones. I would have thought that their *isorhythmic* aspect was more significant; more of this later.

Allen Forte applies set theory in 'Ives and Atonality'. I am not competent to judge such an analytical method; while it shows *some* of Ives' pitch procedures more clearly, I feel that they are probably not those that are most important to us or were to Ives himself. This method seems to be more appropriate to the music of the Second Viennese and Princeton schools; with Ives the layout of pitches in a chord is often a much more important element than with serial music, and it is precisely this element that set theory totally ignores. Morgan contradicts Forte's rigid distinctions between tonal and atonal: 'In Ives' music tonality loses its historical context; it is neutralized and can be treated much like nontonal music — with the same kinds of compositional techniques and with similar sonic results.'

Finally William Brooks, in an intriguing survey of 'Ives Today' in which he makes some telling comparisons with Buckminster Fuller (born only 21 years after Ives), deals with the question 'What is there about the way we structure our world today that draws Ives' work to our attention?'. There is much to mull over here, making one look forward to his book on Billings, Ives and Cage, and I quote his final statement: 'We are engaged in a pressing search for tools to aid us in a self-transformation which will align that which is recursive in our thinking with cyclic rather than linear processes. In Ives' music we hope to have found such a tool.'

One of the editors of *An Ives Celebration*, and the president of the Charles Ives Society which is supervising

carefully edited editions of Ives' scores, is H. Wiley Hitchcock, who is also the author of an analytical study of Ives' music in the Oxford Studies of Composers series. This is lavishly illustrated with specially engraved music examples, but at £3.25 for less than 100 pages is rather pricey. The works are treated under the following headings: 'Songs', 'Choral Music', 'Keyboard Music', 'Chamber Music' and 'Orchestral Music'. Hitchcock has produced a useful introduction to Ives' work with sufficient information about its background and context to satisfy both newcomers and those already familiar with it.

Space was probably too restricted for a more general discussion of Ives' use of existing tunes, showing the different ways in which Ives applied quotations. It would have been valuable to have given a couple of more detailed examples of how Ives integrated elements of apparently randomly chosen melodies, following the work of Sydney Robinson Charles<sup>7</sup> and Dennis Marshall,<sup>8</sup> neither of whom is mentioned in the brief bibliography. Similarly, some of Hitchcock's statistics, which are frequent and informative, could have been slightly expanded: the version for strings of the quarter-tone *Chorale* has been recently reconstructed; of the approximately 15 incomplete or lost chamber works, about half survive in Ives' rearrangements or are incorporated into surviving works; and the same applies to the approximately 30 incomplete or lost orchestral works.

I am stimulated to two 'asides'. Hitchcock mentions d'Indy's *'Istar' Variations*, the reversed variation technique of which is similar to one that Ives often used. Investigating the first occurrence of this in the present book, with the 1919 song *Down East*, I see that in the *Memos* Kirkpatrick thinks that this song may have been derived from a lost *Down East Overture* (1897?). The (23 years older) French composer wrote his own work in 1896, so it is quite possible that Ives arrived at this idea at the same time quite independently. And only two pages further on I am intrigued by the violin part in Example 45, from the end of the last movement of the Second Violin Sonata (1907-10), and the fact that one phrase is to be repeated '2 or 3 times'. It is very similar to Irving Berlin's *Easter Parade* (1933), which is itself based on *Smile and Show Your Dimple* (1917). More research would be needed to see if these dates could be reconciled.

As I have already said, a few people seem to go out of their way to point out any 'twelve-note' pitch sequences which they find in Ives (or for that matter Mozart, etc.). Hitchcock also does this. But, in his favour, he is the only person to talk about isorhythm in the same context. There are many unaccountable 'respellings' of accidentals (perhaps by the publisher?) in Example 33, from the Three-Page Sonata. Some are clearer than in the original, others more confusing. One can be sure that Ives had a definite reason for the spellings that he wrote down. In the *Celebration* Kirkpatrick quotes Ives in a similar context: 'I'd rather die than change a note of that!'

I find Hitchcock's description of parts of the Second String Quartet somewhat misguided. He refers to a descending whole-tone scale in the first violin in bars 9-10 of the first movement, which is much more like part of a normal *major* scale. Hitchcock describes this as insignificant but the basis for later thematic development. However, it stands out in context because of its sudden slow, even notes. Further on there is a string of quotations. Hitchcock lists only three, one of which, from Brahms' Double Concerto, I cannot trace; perhaps the passage he has in mind is one which actually uses *Dixie*, making much more sense in the context of four other national and patriotic melodies. In the second movement he mentions *The Star-Spangled Banner* (the phrase in question is *not* a distortion of the last line of this song, but the beginning of *Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean*) and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, ignoring the passages on each side of it which contrast three of the earlier patriotic tunes plus a new one with fragments from Tchaikovsky's Sixth and Brahms' Second Symphonies in addition to the Beethoven. Some of these additional quotations contain scalar passages which are thus not Hitchcock's thematic links between quotations derived from the 'whole-tone' scale; in fact the quotations dovetail very neatly into each other without the need for transitional material.

A few errors: the song *Nov. 2, 1920* is also called *An Election*, not *The Election*; *On the Antipodes* involves piano duet and not two pianos (which Ives lists in error in his c. 1949 list of works); the statement that 'only a few' of the piano studies remain in complete form presumably covers

the three which he discusses and which have been published, but no mention is made of a further nine studies which are recorded on the set of Desto discs and must have been included in Hitchcock's earlier estimate of 'some forty keyboard works . . . that survive intact': the hymn tune quoted in the duple time second movement of the Third Symphony (Example 57b) is the duple time *Naomi*, not the triple time *Woodworth* (their melodic outlines are identical here but not subsequently, even though Ives *does* occasionally change a tune from duple to triple time or vice versa). I also find the reference to *God Save the King* (the tune that Ives knew as *America*) a bit quaint!

To continue with the Third Symphony (the Second is surprisingly dismissed in two sentences, though there is much of interest to be said about this stimulating work, as in the analysis by Charles mentioned above): the confusion of *Naomi* with *Woodworth* means that the latter, with *Azmon*, actually only occurs in the first and third movements and not in all three (as stated on p. 81). This is much more Ivesian, with a symmetrical balance between the outer movements and a thematically linked hymn tune in the second. In fact *Woodworth* only appears once in the first movement, and the quoted hymn tunes there which are 'developed integrally' are *Azmon* (as Hitchcock indicates) and later *Erie* (which also makes appearances in the other two movements). In the second movement, prominently superimposed at a faster tempo above *Naomi* in Example 57b, is *Cleansing Fountain* (are readers expected to recognise it from its presentation on p. 267), and this is the major quoted tune. The third movement is, as stated, based on *Woodworth* and *Azmon*. It seems as if Hitchcock doesn't know his hymn tunes very well (or perhaps even the actual symphony?). The song derived from its last movement, *The Camp Meeting*, features *Woodworth* more substantially than the hymn he mentions, *Azmon*. It would be very interesting to see a detailed analysis of this symphony. Another typically Ivesian feature is the similarity of one line of *Erie* to one of *Azmon*. The latter is little known over here and should have been included among the hymns that are given in the music examples, where there would have been plenty of room for it on p. 82, especially as it is one of the hardest tunes to trace in the old hymn books that one can find in this country. It is immediately recognisable, however, due to the three successive descending thirds, with each note repeated, in the third line, the very line that relates to *Erie*.

None of my criticisms are of great importance for most readers, as they deal with aspects of Ives research that have little direct bearing on listening to the music. I am sure that many people will find Hitchcock's book a helpful aid in coming to grips with this wonderful body of music. Meanwhile a much larger analytical book on Ives is still needed.

#### NOTES:

<sup>1</sup> *Soundings* (1974).

<sup>2</sup> *Charles Ives and His America* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1976).

<sup>3</sup> 'A new perspective for Ives', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 115, No. 1580 (October 1974), pp. 836-838.

<sup>4</sup> New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

<sup>5</sup> New York: W. W. Norton, 1972.

<sup>6</sup> *A Temporary Mimeographed Catalogue of the Music Manuscripts and Related Materials of Charles Edward Ives, 1874-1954*, Given by Mrs. Ives to the Library of the Yale School of Music, September 1955 (New Haven: Library of the Yale School of Music, 1960).

<sup>7</sup> 'The Use of Borrowed Material in Ives' Second Symphony', *The Music Review*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (May 1967), pp. 102-111.

<sup>8</sup> 'Charles Ives's Quotations: Manner or Substance?', *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Spring-Summer 1968), pp. 45-56.