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The purpose of this dissertation is to determine the role that Walter Willson Cobbett (1847-1937) played in the British Musical Renaissance by his initiation of a series of chamber music competitions, beginning in 1905, each of which required the composition of a phantasy. The phantasy was Cobbett's reinvention of an older genre, the fancy, or fantasia, which had been popular in sixteenth- and seventeenth- century England. A vast number of new British chamber compositions was generated from these competitions.

After examining the events of Cobbett's life that contributed to his involvement and passion for music, the paper discusses some of the events and issues that caused England to experience a musical renaissance. This leads to a discussion of the history of the fancy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Cobbett's reinvention of the genre and some of the reactions to it are subsequently examined.

The competitions themselves are presented in great detail with the results and descriptions and/or reviews of some of the winning compositions. Other important contributions of Cobbett are shown, such as his eleven commissions for phantasies, his sponsorship of prizes at the Royal College of Music, and the endowed medal for services to chamber music issued each year by the Worshipful Company of Musicians. Concluding statements portray the lasting legacy Cobbett has had on British chamber music.

W.W. COBBETT'S PHANTASY: A LEGACY OF CHAMBER MUSIC
IN THE BRITISH MUSICAL RENAISSANCE

by
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“To my husband Brian Hodges, who has given me much encouragement, support, and love throughout this process and to my parents, Byrl and Bonni Engel, who prepared me for success in life.”

APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The position of native-born Chamber Music in this country [England] is a sad, if not humiliating one. Few writers, even when possessed by the divine spark, are brave enough to write works whose destiny is the shelf . . . There exists a band of earnest writers who only wait the call to arms to at once consecrate their genius to the cause.¹

These comments made by Ernest Fowles were part of the opening essay in the program notes for the first season of the British Chamber Music Concerts in 1894. Many factors contributed to a general lack of enthusiasm for British chamber music. The public did not view music as a practical pursuit, according to the aesthetic and philosophies of the Victorian era, and continental European performers and genres overshadowed any hopeful British composers. Concert series were just now starting to flourish, but foreign performers and compositions, mostly from Germany, dominated the programs. Several British composers during this turn of the century period even adopted foreign pseudonyms in order to have their works published and performed. Musical education in England was still in its infancy with the recent founding of several colleges of music.

Who or what would provide the “call to arms” for these earnest composers? An amateur musician and wealthy businessman named Walter Willson Cobbett (1847-1937) provided an important impetus for chamber music composition that led to the publication

¹ Ernest Fowles, introductory essay to *Programmes of British Chamber Music Concerts, First Season, 1894*, 2-3.

and performance of many new works in the first decades of the twentieth century. This impetus was the creation of the “Phantasy” chamber music competitions and commissions that were initiated in 1905.

The phantasy was Cobbett’s reinvention of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century fancy, used by such composers as William Byrd, Orlando Gibbons, and Henry Purcell. A British musical renaissance had been brewing in the latter half of the nineteenth century because of many factors, such as the need to compete with the musical culture of a now unified Germany and unified Italy, the establishment of major music schools and music education programs, and the greater involvement of the public in music-making and concert attendance. Cobbett’s revival of the fancy was in the spirit of this renaissance, in which there was a search for inspiration in the country’s history. For Cobbett, the fancies represented a “golden age” of chamber music in English history.

Although he appreciated the traditional sonata form in chamber music, Cobbett remarked, “I would rather say a new convention is wanted to stand side by side with the old one.”² Cobbett’s definition of the new convention instructed:

The Phantasy was to be performed without a break, and to consist of sections varying in tempo and rhythm; in short, to be in one-movement form and not to last more than twelve minutes. The parts were to be of equal importance.³

The phantasy became popular among composers, performers, critics, and audiences. The short length and unified structure clearly contributed to its appeal. Cobbett observed that

² “British Chamber Music,” *Musical Times* 52 (April 1911): 242.

³ “British Chamber Music,” 242.

the original fancies had been played at concerts and civic feasts along side of glees and madrigals. The shorter length of fancies catered to the “untrained listener who does not enjoy elaborate works lasting forty minutes in performance.”⁴

The competitions involving the phantasy spanned the years 1905-1919. These competitions involved combinations such as the string quartet, piano trio, violin and piano, and the piano quartet. There was also a competition for a dance phantasy for piano and strings, as well as a folksong phantasy. During the span of these competitions, Cobbett also decided to commission eleven phantasy compositions from individual composers. Many of these competition pieces and commissioned works were published and performed during Cobbett’s lifetime.

Cobbett’s contributions to chamber music included other important achievements. He established similar chamber music prizes at the Royal College of Music, established a Cobbett Medal for services to chamber music that is still awarded annually, and sponsored a competition for a British-made violin. He edited an important chamber music guide, the *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, and was also the editor for the chamber music supplement to the *Music Teacher*, a newsletter produced by the Royal College of Music. Finally, he established a free library of British chamber music, which was maintained by the Society of Women Musicians.⁵

This paper will observe Cobbett’s competitions and commissions in the context of the British Musical Renaissance, with detailed information about each event. Cobbett’s

⁴ Walter Willson Cobbett, “The Violin Family and its Music,” in *English Music: Being the Lectures given at the Music Loan Exhibition of the Worshipful Company of Musicians* (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co. Ltd., 1906), 433.

⁵ Leslie Sheppard, “Cobbett and British Chamber Music,” *The Strad* 92 (July 1981): 201.

legacy to British music will become clear by examining the scope of these competitions. His “call to arms,” in the guise of an inspiring phantasy, was heard loud and clear by the British composers of his time.

It took someone with a true passion for chamber music to work tirelessly on behalf of its creation and promotion. Cobbett’s enthusiasm for the genre began at an early age after he heard the violinist Joseph Joachim lead a Beethoven quartet at St. James Hall in London. Joachim (1831-1907) was a child prodigy from Bratislava. He became famous in England through his performances with the Joachim String Quartet at the Monday Popular concerts in St. James’ Hall, which began in 1859. Although Cobbett had previously heard string quartet concerts led by his violin teacher, Joseph Dando, the experience of hearing Joachim changed him. He felt that, after hearing Joachim perform for the first time, “an enchanted world into which I longed to gain entrance,”⁶ was opened up before him. Previously he had regarded chamber music as a hobby, but this performance caused him to become a “humble devotee to this infinitely beautiful art.”⁷ From that point on, Cobbett attended the Monday Popular concerts regularly.

Cobbett spent some of his earlier years in France and Germany, where he gained an intimate knowledge of the music and literature of both countries. In Normandy, France, he became acquainted with French literature through his friendships with students at the University of Caen. Cobbett later stayed with a German pastor in Frankfurt, who had a love of the great composers, and taught him to respect the art of music. Upon

⁶ Walter Willson Cobbett, “The Chamber Music Life,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 254.

⁷ Cobbett, “The Chamber Music Life,” 254.

receiving a Guadagnini violin from his father, Cobbett began studying the violin at age fourteen with Joseph Dando.⁸ Dando was famous for organizing and performing in the first public chamber music concert in England at the Horn Tavern, Doctor's Commons in 1835. In 1842, Dando succeeded Henry Blagrove in leading a chamber music series called the "Quartet Concerts" in the Throne Room of Crosby Hall, Bishopsgate. As a teacher, he was fondly known as the "father of amateurs."⁹ Although it took Joachim's quartet performance to inspire Cobbett, he remembered his interest in chamber music being peaked by Dando's quartet performances, which he described as "full of charm."¹⁰

His participation in the performance of chamber music involved fellow amateur musicians, as well as noted performers of the time. In an entry entitled, "The Chamber Music Life" in his influential *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, Cobbett reminisces about the many weeks spent at country houses or suburban villas playing chamber music with amateurs. He recollects moments "when the glory of our music was dimly apparent even in our poor interpretations, and at any rate it was for me an initiation into the joys destined to last a lifetime."¹¹ Cobbett was also very proud to have played with groups

⁸ Frank Howes and Christina Bashford, "Cobbett, Walter Willson," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed January 16, 2005).

⁹ Christina Bashford, "Dando, Joseph," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed January 16, 2005).

¹⁰ Cobbett, "The Chamber Music Life," 254.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 259.

such as the Flonzaley¹² and London String Quartets¹³, as well as the violinists/composers Albert Sammons and Emile Sauret.

Cobbett's business success was what ultimately allowed him to contribute in a significant way to British chamber music. He worked as an underwriter for Lloyds in London in his twenties and later became the founder and chairman of the Scandinavia Belting Company. Cobbett was known for "devoting to commerce what little time he could spare from music."¹⁴ However, Cobbett became very wealthy, and was able to retire at age sixty. This allowed him to pursue his real goal in life, "the encouragement of chamber music in Britain."¹⁵

¹² The Flonzaley Quartet was organized in the United States in 1903 and were known for performing works by living composers. They gave concerts regularly in London. Cobbett, "Flonzaley Quartet," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 399.

¹³ The London Quartet, originally known as the New String Quartet was founded in 1903. Its original members were Albert Sammons, Thomas Petre, Harry Waldo Warner, and C. Warwick Evans. They made a habit of performing at least one British work on their concert programs. William S. Meadmore, "London String Quartet," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 2, I-Z, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 102.

¹⁴ Howes and Bashford, 1.

¹⁵ Leslie Sheppard, 201.

CHAPTER II

THE ENGLISH MUSICAL RENAISSANCE

Cobbett's achievements in the promotion of chamber music during the early twentieth century can be understood more fully when placed in the overall musical climate of his time. During the mid to late nineteenth century, several events took place that contributed to a musical renaissance in Britain. Musical education was improved with the establishment of new schools and colleges of music, which produced more skilled performers as well as capable composers. Many new professional ensembles were formed, and a vast number of new concert series appeared in the second half of the century, some of them focusing on chamber music. These series introduced the public to contemporary music and talented performers. Gradually, British composers were introduced and showcased in addition to the continental European musicians. There was also an increase in the number of musical competitions for both amateurs and professionals. Looking for inspiration from their native land and people, British composers researched their musical and literary past, and explored their own folk music for ideas. Research in early English music provided the public with edited and printed versions of Tudor virginal and madrigal scores. England was beginning to rediscover, explore, and develop its musical identity.

Queen Victoria reigned in England from 1837-1901. During the first three decades of this period, there was a significant growth in both industry and population. It

was a politically stable time in which England prospered. Success in business, utilitarian thinking, and social conformity were valued by this generation. Art, including music, was seen as decadent and relegated to a more decorative or functional role. There was a culture of music-making in Victorian England, but it belonged mostly to the domestic realm of parlor music or the less-sophisticated music-hall concerts. Music publishers produced large amounts of music for the “piano in the parlor,” popular among the middle classes.¹⁶ The crowds attending the music hall concerts were often associated with immoral behavior and drunkenness. In education and school systems, music was almost non-existent. *Laissez-faire* values towards government involvement prevented the situation of poor musical education from improving, whereas other areas of the arts received government funding.¹⁷ The prevailing attitude of the Victorian age was that music did not fit with the more practical and empirical mood of the times. Music was seen as a foreign business in which the continental Europeans held the monopoly.¹⁸ The composer Ralph Vaughan Williams called this the “cigar theory” in which music was considered a luxury that must be imported, like cigars.¹⁹

The training of British musicians relied heavily on the German tradition. The influence was even felt strongly in Queen Victoria’s court, her husband Prince Albert, being German. Georg Friederich Handel’s choral music held a long-standing tradition in

¹⁶ Robert Stradling and Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance 1860-1940: Construction and Deconstruction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 13.

¹⁷ Stradling and Hughes, 13.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁹ Michael Trend, *The Music Makers* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1985), 5.

England. The Handel Society was formed in 1843, and many amateur choral societies developed in the nineteenth century to continue in this tradition and perform the beloved oratorio, *Messiah*. The publishing company Vincent Novello assisted in promoting Handel's popularity by making inexpensive scores available to amateurs. An enormous celebration of the centenary of Handel's death was held at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham in June of 1859. The performance was massive, including 2765 singers and 460 instrumentalists, and set a precedent for these concerts, which lasted at the venue until 1926.²⁰ Although Handel was German, George Grove said of him:

There is something expressly English in Handel's characteristics. His size, his large appetite, his great writing, his domineering temper, his humor, his power of business, all are our own . . . In fact he pre-eminently belongs to England.²¹

Of the contemporary composers in vogue in England during the Victorian era, Felix Mendelssohn was the most popular. He was a friend of Queen Victoria, as well as her German husband, Albert. Mendelssohn visited the British Isles ten times and his love of the land is reflected in his two works, the *Scottish Symphony* and *Hebrides Overture*. The Birmingham Festival commissioned his oratorio *Elijah* in 1846, which rivaled Handel's *Messiah* in popularity. Mendelssohn brought with him to Britain the influence of musical Romanticism. Like Handel, Mendelssohn exhibited "English" qualities, or rather, traits that were socially acceptable to the Victorian age. He came from a wealthy banking family, was well mannered, and led a harmonious domestic life compared to that

²⁰ George Grove, ed., "Handel," in *Chambers Encyclopedia: A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge*, new ed., vol. 5 (London and Edinburgh: William and Robert Chambers, 1890), 542.

²¹ Stradling and Hughes, 13.

of other eccentric Romantic virtuosos.²² His scholarly contributions to the study of J.S. Bach's music were also respected. The critic Henry Chorley said of Mendelssohn's death, "The fountain is dry- the familiar book is closed . . . no more great works shall be produced."²³

Despite these strong Germanic musical influences, The Great Exhibition of 1851 set in motion a move towards an English musical renaissance with its display of national pride. Prince Albert and Henry Cole of the Royal Society of Arts were behind the plan of the exhibition, which was held in Hyde Park, South Kensington. Prince Albert's goals for the exhibition were lofty. In a speech designed to initiate the project he said,

Nobody . . . who has paid any attention to the peculiar features of our present era, will doubt for a moment that we are living at a period of most wonderful transition, which tends rapidly to accomplish the great era to which, indeed, all history points—the realization of the unity of mankind.²⁴

The exhibition was meant to display the best in raw materials, industrial design, and new inventions. It was hoped that the exhibition would especially show the excellence of the British exhibits. There were five classes of exhibits: raw materials, machinery, manufacturers, fine arts, and miscellaneous. There were more than 100,000 exhibits presented by 17,000 exhibitors.²⁵ Because of the enormous success of the exhibition, the

²² Stradling and Hughes, 14.

²³ Henry Chorley, *Modern German Music: Recollections and Criticisms*, vol. 1 (London: Smith and Elder, 1854), 404.

²⁴ Liza Picard, *Victorian London: The Life of a City 1840-1870* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2005), 215.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

South Kensington area was designated as a place to develop permanent institutions that would continue to “extend the influence of Science and Art upon productive industry.”²⁶ One of the buildings erected in response was the Royal Albert Hall (it opened in 1871), which has an inscription around the outside of the building that immediately reflects the goals of the exhibition of 1851. It reads, “This hall was erected for the advancement of the Arts and Sciences and works of Industry of all nations in fulfillment and the intention of Albert, Prince Consort.”²⁷

The plan for the South Kensington area was for it to become a center of knowledge. Lands were acquired in close proximity to the original Exhibition area, in order to erect new buildings. Eventually, the area would include the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Natural History Museum, and the Science Museum, as well as the Royal Albert Hall and the Royal College of Music. From the beginning stages, there were plans to create a national music school. Henry Cole played an integral role in both the design and execution of the original Exhibition, as well as the development of the South Kensington plans. After Prince Albert’s death in 1861, Cole decided to move forward with the creation of a music academy. He formed a committee within the Royal Society of Arts (of which he was vice-president) to determine the “state of music education at

²⁶ F.W.H. Sheppard, “The Museums Area of South Kensington and Westminster,” in *Survey of London*, vol. 38 (London: Athlone Press, 1975), 49.

²⁷ Lewis Foreman and Susan Foreman, *London: A Musical Gazetteer* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 65.

home and abroad.”²⁸ Prince Albert’s son, Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, became the committee’s chairman.

The vision for the music school was of a conservatory that would rival the best in Europe. The school would be a training ground for performers as well as teachers. Cole couched the school’s aim in terms of Victorian language, stressing its cultural and social purpose. He told the Committee, “I think music is to be encouraged in order not that any special class, but that the country at large may derive benefit and pleasure from it . . .”²⁹ Cole was also a lobbyist for the Education Act of 1870, which for the first time made specific provisions for music education in elementary schools.³⁰ Cole had originally wanted to use the Royal Academy of Music (which was founded in 1822) as the core for expanding a larger musical institution, however, he met with much resistance from its principal, William Sterndale Bennett, who wanted the school to remain independent. Cole instead proceeded with a “National Training School of Music” in 1873. The location for the school was next to the Royal Albert Hall, the land being donated by the Exhibition Commissioners. A London builder, Charles Freake, paid for the building himself, and it was designed by Cole’s son, Lieutenant H.H. Cole of the Royal Engineers. Funding for scholarships was obtained through subscriptions from private individuals, businesses, counties, and towns. Arthur Sullivan was the school’s first principal when it first opened in 1876. Cole had hoped the school would eventually receive government funding, but by 1878, it was clear that he was mistaken. However, Cole was able to make more royal

²⁸ Stradling and Hughes, 16.

²⁹ Henry Cole, *Fifty Years of Public Work* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1884), 24.

³⁰ Stradling and Hughes, 17.

connections that would prove useful. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Albany (brothers of the Duke of Edinburgh) joined in the cause. The National Training School would be transformed into the Royal College of Music. Cole was too old to fundraise at this point, and George Grove was brought onto the College Council to assist in the campaign.

The speeches made by those supporting the establishment of the Royal College of Music provide valuable insight into the shift in attitude towards music near the close of the century. The first fundraiser was held at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, England. Three princes attended, the Dukes of Edinburgh and Albany, and Prince Christian. Most of the speeches given by the Princes were written by Grove himself, and strongly reflect his ideologies. The Duke of Edinburgh first outlined the plan for the college and its goal to be on a competitive level with other European conservatories. The Duke of Albany's speech stressed the importance of funding the future of English music. He discussed topics such as the social and moral value of music, the history of music in England, and the best way to build upon this history.³¹ In Victorian fashion, the Duke emphasized the "civilizing element" of music and its "refining and elevating influence in common life."³² The College of Music would offer university-level degrees, which showed its commitment to education of high quality.

The Duke of Albany's speech also addressed why England was often considered "unmusical." He blamed the stigma on the domination of foreign music and musicians,

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

and noted the lack of a musical presence in the provinces. He urged the audience to give the people the opportunity to “take a deep and intelligent interest in this greatest of all civilizers.”³³ The Duke speculated about the history of English music and thought that English musical leadership lasted until the middle of the seventeenth century. The Puritans had a severe damaging effect on music and the eighteenth century was occupied with commerce rather than with art. The domination of foreign music began with Handel and the influence of Italian Opera around 1850. The present state of music was improving, according to the Duke, with the increasing numbers of concerts in London, advances in music publishing, and the growth of provincial music festivals. This was still not enough for the Duke, when compared to the Germans. He thought the Germans’ success in music was due to their musical education in elementary schools, followed by their great conservatories, which trained talented musicians. The effect these institutions achieved was a “thoroughly musical people” for whom music was a “daily, necessary and regular element of life.”³⁴

Another fundraiser for the Royal College of Music was held shortly after the first, in February of 1882 at St. James Hall. A *Musical Times* article, only days before, discussed what the meeting would entail, saying, “We are given to understand that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales intends . . . to hold a meeting of representative persons from the counties and important towns of the kingdom, at which he will expound

³³ Ibid., 22.

³⁴ Ibid., 23.

his scheme for a Royal College of Music.”³⁵ The author of the article exudes confidence in the Prince’s ability and assumes that the public will accept the need for the college of music. He goes on to say, “We want a place which shall put a thorough and systematic education in music within the reach of all who can show themselves worthy of it.”³⁶ At a later gathering at the Marlborough House in London, the Prince of Wales proposed that the Royal College of Music would benefit national unity:

By inspiring among our fellow-subjects in every part of the Empire these emotions of patriotism which national music is calculated to evoke . . . Music can benefit and provide for the leisure hours . . . elevating enjoyment [and would] strengthen a common love of country.³⁷

The fundraising efforts were ultimately successful and the Royal College of Music opened in May 1883. Queen Victoria was the college’s first patron, and the Prince of Wales became the first president of the school. George Grove became the Royal College of Music’s director and was knighted on the day of its opening. Grove hired three prominent teachers for the college who were seen as committed to his goals, “more and better music in England, more and better English music.”³⁸ These three professors were Hubert Parry, Charles Stanford, and Walter Parratt. Parry taught composition and history, Parrat taught Organ, and Stanford was Professor of Composition and Orchestra. Stanford alone taught almost all of the composers associated with the English Musical

³⁵ “The Royal College of Music,” *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 23 (February 1882), 76.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Stradling and Hughes, 24.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

Renaissance. Grove also managed to hire Jenny Lind-Goldschmidt as Professor of Singing and Arabella Goddard as Professor of Piano.

Beyond his efforts in promoting and directing the Royal College of Music, George Grove is best known today for his *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, the purpose of which was to promote musical culture in England, and to highlight the contributions of British musicians throughout history. The 1874 Prospectus justified the need for the *Dictionary* because of the “immense progress made by music in England since 1850.”³⁹ In the first edition (1879-1889), Grove wrote many of the articles himself, including those about several musicians of his own time, such as Parry, Stanford, and Sullivan. The *Dictionary* also contained a large amount of information about English music before 1850. The purpose was to “show that England had been a musical nation and that contemporaries could with confidence set about building a Musical England in modern times.”⁴⁰ Grove used talented writers from England, as well as continental Europe, to lend credence to his dictionary.

Other important colleges of music were also established in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Trinity College of Music was founded in 1872, and the Guildhall School of Music established in 1880.⁴¹ Thomas Dunhill, in his article on “British Chamber Music” for Cobbett’s *Cyclopedic Survey*, describes that the result of these new schools and teachers was that “more composers were taught their business, more

³⁹ C.L. Graves, *The Life and Letters of Sir George Grove* (Macmillan, 1903), 205.

⁴⁰ Stradling and Hughes, 21.

⁴¹ Thomas Dunhill, “British Chamber Music,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 197.

executants were trained, and more music of all kinds was heard, especially chamber music.”⁴²

While music education was being given a boost by new colleges and Grove’s *Dictionary*, Walter Pater (1839-94) published his *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* in 1873. This work presented a new aesthetic of artistic value, which carried over into the realm of music. The book discusses the attributes of the Italian Renaissance (the “original renaissance”) and calls for “the love of art for art’s sake.”⁴³ Pater also stresses the love of the intellectual, the imaginative, and a “more liberal way of conceiving life.”⁴⁴ This sense of freedom was an awakening for the Victorian age. It is interesting to note that one of George Grove’s earlier professions had included editing the *Macmillan Magazine* (1863-83), which included Pater’s *Studies*, as Pater’s book challenged the artistic complacency of Victorians. In addition, political events in Europe were contributing to a sense of disorder. A united Germany had emerged out of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871 and was now viewed as a powerful force in Europe. Italy had also gained its independence as a nation in 1866. Not only were these countries now politically powerful, but they also had strong, established musical traditions. There was a great need for a successful musical and artistic culture in England, if it was to be competitive in all respects with other European countries.

Britain looked to its cultural past, especially the Elizabethan era, to gain confidence for the future. The literature of Shakespeare was popular and Neo-Gothic

⁴² Dunhill, 197.

⁴³ Walter Pater, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1873), 213.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

architecture came into vogue, the Houses of Parliament being a prime example. In the book *Vaughan Williams Studies*, Alain Frogley says that because of the political upheaval and uncertainty of the future in Britain, there was “a search for reassurance and inspiration in previous golden ages of the nation’s history, the Elizabethan era in particular.”⁴⁵ Morton Latham’s lecture, “The Musical Renaissance in England,” given at Stanford’s College, Trinity in 1888, reflects England’s desire to connect with a successful past in hopes of a bright future. Latham’s lecture claimed that the European Renaissance of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had actually happened in England “before it had shown itself in Germany or France.”⁴⁶ Latham then connected the earlier renaissance to his own time, saying “composers like Alexander Campbell Mackenzie, Hubert Parry and Charles Stanford, give promise that musical England will hold her place among the nations in the century we are rapidly approaching.”⁴⁷ Stradling and Hughes say that Latham’s lecture, “created a direct comparison between the new men of the 1880s and a recognized “Golden Age,” establishing a line of spiritual descent.”⁴⁸

The formation of new schools of music and new artistic philosophies sparked the English Musical Renaissance; the emergence of vast numbers of concert series added further fuel to the movement. Music was being heard in many new venues as the century came to a close. Table 1 lists the concert series that took place throughout England.

⁴⁵ Alain Frogley, ed., *Vaughan Williams Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 8.

⁴⁶ Morton Latham, *The Renaissance of Music* (London: Stott, 1890), 175.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Stradling, 35.

Table 1***Concert Series in England⁴⁹***

Concert Series	Location	Dates
Cambridge University Musical Society	Cambridge	founded 1843
W.S. Bennett's Chamber Concerts	Hanover Square Rooms, London	(1843-56)
Musical Union	Willis's Rooms, London	(1844-80)
Monday Popular Concerts	St. James Hall, London	(1859-98)
Sir Charles Hallé's Chamber Music Recitals	Manchester	founded 1858
Saturday Afternoon Popular Concerts	St. James Hall, London	(1865-98)
Cambridge University Musical Club	Cambridge	founded 1871
Musical Artist's Society	London	(1873-99)
Edward Dannreuther's Musical Evenings	Dannreuther's home at Orme Square, London	(1874-99)
People's Concert Society	Various locales in London	founded 1878
Oxford University Musical Union	Oxford	founded 1884
Concerts at South Place Ethical Institute	Finsbury	founded 1887
Musical Guild	London	(1889-98)
Concerts of British Chamber Music	Queen's Hall, London	(1894-99)
Oxford University Musical Club	Oxford	founded 1900
King Cole Chamber Music Club	London	(1900-1920s)
Broadwood Chamber Concerts	St. James Hall, London	(1902-1912)
Thomas Dunhill	London	(1907-12)
Classical Concert Society	London	(1907-1922)
National Gallery Concerts	National Gallery, London	(1939-46)

⁴⁹ List of concert series compiled in William A. Everett, *British Piano Trios, Quartets, and Quintets, 1850-1950: A Checklist* (Warren, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 2000), 19-20.

As mentioned earlier, the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music also provided the public with many chamber music performances. It was at the “Monday Pops” concerts that Cobbett had first heard Joachim, the star of the series. These new concert series were significant to chamber music in that they provided opportunities for British composers’ works to be performed and for the public to hear contemporary chamber music. Dunhill stressed the importance of the English forming their own chamber music ensembles and steering away from being dependent on foreign talent. He describes how “the recognition of British players came first. The recognition of British composers followed a little later.”⁵⁰

The Musical Union concerts, managed by John Ella, began in London in 1844 and continued until 1880. These chamber concerts were given in the afternoons and included both British and foreign performers. This series produced the first program notes in booklets, which were given to concert subscribers a few days before each performance. Another innovation of the series was its use of a central platform for the musicians, surrounded by the audience. Later concerts at St. James’ Hall also adopted this arrangement.

The English composer and pianist, William Sterndale Bennett, also organized a series of chamber music concerts that ran from 1843-1856. Bennett often played the piano for many of the performances. The Quartet Association was another concert series, and although it only lasted for three seasons, it employed many respected string players such as Prosper Sainton, Henry Hill, and Alfredo Carlo Piatti. The series introduced little-

⁵⁰ Dunhill, 197.

known compositions of the time such as Beethoven's posthumous quartets, the chamber music of Robert Schumann, and several British works by William Sterndale Bennett, Edward Loder, and George Alexander Macfarren.

The most significant chamber music series was the Monday Popular Concerts at St. James' Hall. These concerts were managed by Arthur Chappell and organized by Chappell and Company. The first concert was held in 1859 and featured Mendelssohn's Piano Quintet in B-flat major, Op. 87. A Saturday "Pops" concert series was added in 1865. These concerts originally had begun as semi-private rehearsals for the Monday concerts, but eventually the programs were separated and the Saturday "Pops" began independent concerts in 1876. Many performers' reputations in England were established at St. James' Hall. Some of the prominent performers were Joseph Joachim, David Popper, Alfredo Carlo Piatti, Richard Mühlfeld, Clara Schumann, Sir Charles and Lady Hallé, Arthur Rubinstein, Hans von Bülow, Ernst von Dohnányi, Liza Lehman, and Plunket Greene. The Popular Concerts were influential in bringing chamber music to a new audience. Thomas Dunhill said of Chappell's programming, that instead of presenting the more popular type of music, he "changed the public taste."⁵¹

Although British composers were largely ignored by the "Pops" series, the public began to appreciate and take a serious interest in chamber music. For example, it was at these concerts that almost the whole chamber music repertoire of Johannes Brahms was introduced to England. In the early stages of the series, Chappell would often devote concerts to the music of one composer, such as Felix Mendelssohn or Wolfgang

⁵¹ William S. Meadmore, "British Performing Organizations," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 201.

Amadeus Mozart. Occasionally, a British composition by Stanford or Parry might be heard, but in a few cases, they were actually apologized for in the programs. However, the concerts did include many British string players in combination with foreign performers. This included the musicians Alfred Gibson, W.E. Whitehouse, and Haydn Inwards. William S. Meadmore said that it was at these concerts that, “the art of chamber music came to fruition in England.”⁵² The concerts were so popular that other areas of British culture made reference to them. Robert Browning mentions Chappell and his series in his poem, “The Founder of the Feast.” Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado* (1885) also mentions the concerts:

The music hall singer attends a series
Of masses and fugues and “ops”
By Bach, interwoven
With Spohr and Beethoven
At classical Monday Pops⁵³

The People’s Concert Society ran another significant chamber music series that began in 1878. This series was important because it offered concerts in London and other counties at a much lower cost. Chamber music concerts held at the South Place Institute at Finsbury also offered low-priced tickets to the public. These concerts began in 1887, and were held on Sunday evenings. Alfred J. Clements managed the series, which was also supported by Richard Walthew and John Saunders. Londoners who could not afforded concert subscriptions appreciated the low price of these events.

⁵² Meadmore, “British Performing Organizations,” 201.

⁵³ William S. Gilbert, *The Mikado* (London: Macmillan, 1928; London: Godfrey Cave, 1979), 70.

Ernest Fowles was the first to launch a concert series focusing on British composers. His Concerts of British Chamber Music were held at Queen's Hall from 1894-1899. The more established British composers that were presented were Samuel Wesley, George Alexander Macfarren, Hubert Parry, Charles Stanford, Algernon Ashton, Ernest Walker, W.H. Speir, and J.C. Ames. The younger generation included Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, William Hurlstone, Alfred Wall, Walford Davies, Joseph Speaight, and Richard Walthew.

Composers such as Joseph Holbrooke and Thomas Dunhill started chamber music series to highlight their own compositions, as well as other English contemporary composers. Dunhill's concerts began in 1907, with a goal of reviving British chamber works that had been forgotten or underperformed. John Ireland's compositions figured heavily in this series. In addition to these professional recitals, there were also several amateur organizations that promoted and practiced chamber music. These groups included the Oxford and Cambridge Musical Club in London and the King Cole Chamber Music Club. Both clubs allowed amateur members and their friends to participate in chamber music concerts.

While concert series were flourishing in England, the number of professional chamber groups vastly increased around the turn of the twentieth century. Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey* presents a list of the contemporary chamber music ensembles, as compiled by Meadmore. The list includes fifty-four string quartets, ten piano quartets, and eleven piano trios, as well as an octet and a harp ensemble. Many of these groups performed British works or premiered contemporary works from other countries. Some of

the ensembles gave concerts in schools and villages, whereas others toured internationally. Women musicians claimed equal status in these groups, with approximately fifteen of the groups being entirely composed of female performers. The existence of these various professional groups indicated that chamber music was taking a much more prominent spot in the musical culture of England.

The International String Quartet was one of the groups that not only played many British works, but also introduced British music to other countries. The ensemble was originally known as the Music Society String Quartet and its original members were André Mangeot, Dorothy Christian, Rebecca Clarke, and May Mukle. In 1925, the quartet performed at a three-day festival of English music in Hamburg. Concerts of Purcell's fantasias were also given by the quartet in England and other countries.

The Kendall Quartet was an all-female string quartet consisting of Katherine Kendall, Marjorie Clemens, Dorothy Jones, and Edith Hanson. This quartet's contribution to the performance of chamber music was significant in its desire to reach out to different communities. The group performed small concerts for country villages and numerous English schools. Kendall often spoke to the audience about the pieces before they were played. Meadmore says of Kendall's talks, "many listeners with a prejudice against chamber music have ultimately become interested by this method."⁵⁴ The quartet gave an extensive international tour in 1925, visiting such places as Ceylon, the Malay States, Singapore, Java, Australia, and South Africa. They were the first ensemble from England to ever visit these places.

⁵⁴ Meadmore, "British Performing Organizations," 206.

Another quartet to perform abroad was the Isabel McCullagh Quartet consisting of Isabel McCullagh, Gertrude Newsham, Helen Rawdon Briggs, and Mary McCullagh. Founded in 1920 and invited by the Contemporary Music Centre to perform at the festival of the International Music Society at Salzburg, it was the only British quartet to perform at the annual festival. The ensemble was also the only professional string quartet in Liverpool, when it began giving concerts. In a series of six concerts in Liverpool in 1827, they presented the complete string quartets of Beethoven.

John Saunder's Quartet, which was founded in 1892, became famous for playing at the South Place Concerts, and was also known as the South Place Quartet. They were the first permanent ensemble in London in the 1890s, and performed at various music societies in the city. At South Place, John Saunders took part in 239 concerts, which were as popular as the previous Monday "Pops" Concerts at St. James' Hall. Saunders was important to the promotion of chamber music, in his willingness to assist young composers. He gave the premieres of most of the chamber music of Walthew, Holbrooke, and Speaight. The clarinet quintet of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and the string sextet of Cyril Scott were written for the Saunders Quartet, with additional players. The quartet also performed the six prize string quartets of the 1905 Cobbett Competition at a "Phantasy Concert," given at both Bechstein Hall and South Place.

Two other groups that had connections to Cobbett, were the Helen Egerton Quartet and the Winifred Small Quartet. The Egerton Quartet, made up of Helen Egerton, Helen Gough, Dorothy Jones, and Gwendolyn Griffiths, was responsible for playing the string quartet entries of the 1915 Cobbett Competition for the judges, performing them in

Cobbett's house in St. John's Wood. Cobbett was also influential in suggesting the use of "Anthology" programs for the Winifred Small Quartet, whose members included Louise d'Oliveira, Susan Spain-Dunk, Marie Dare and Winifred Small. These programs were meant to present chamber music to what Meadmore called, "the semi-musical laymen."⁵⁵ One such "anthology" program consisted of single movements from the quartets of Ludwig van Beethoven, spanning the different periods of his life.

Other ensembles that continued to keep new British chamber music alive were the Jessie Snow Quartet and the Walenn Quartet. The Snow Quartet always performed a British composition in their London recitals, and premiered the chamber works of Thomas Dunhill, Thomas German Reed, and Walford Davies. The Walenn Quartet also performed in London, and consistently played British works.

Well-known chamber groups with piano included the Aeolian Players, which was founded in 1925 with the goal of playing new works. The group was a piano quartet with flute, instead of cello. Many works were written specifically for the unique combination of instruments in their quartet. The first English group to be known solely as a standard piano quartet was the Henkel Piano Quartet. They began in 1911 and included the musicians Lily Henkel, F. Hirt, Alfred Hobday, and Ivor James. Their first performance included the *Phantasy Piano Quartet in F-Sharp minor* of Frank Bridge, which had been commissioned by Cobbett. The quartet was also the first English ensemble to travel to Spain, where they toured extensively, introducing the country to previously unknown works.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 209.

The Quartet Players was formed in 1921 and started a chamber music series in Portsmouth, England. The concerts were free of charge, and the attendance was massive. The first audience numbered 1,100 people, and a crowd of 1,350 attended the second concert. Another interesting ensemble was the Chaplin Trio, which was a piano trio begun by Nellie Chaplin. The trio's goal was to "revive old music and dances,"⁵⁶ and play them on period instruments. The members were three sisters, who played harpsichord, viola d'amore and viola da gamba, in addition to the standard instruments of a piano trio.

In the last half of the nineteenth century, the English public was exposed to a wealth of chamber music showcased in the concert series and clubs. By the turn of the century, there were a large number of established professional British performing groups. The public also had a chance to take part in music themselves, through a new movement of competition festivals, which began around 1850. The general idea of these competitions was to give amateur performers, including children, the chance to win prizes for outstanding performances. These competitions further educated and trained the English public, and contributed to the appreciation of music. Walford Davies said the motivation behind these competitions was "to pace one another on the road to excellence."⁵⁷ There were various competitions for solo voice, vocal quartets, and choirs in Northern England and London, as early as 1855. However, John Spencer Curwen's 1882 festival at Stratford in East London is generally regarded as the starting point for the

⁵⁶ Ibid., 211.

⁵⁷ Frank Howes, *The English Musical Renaissance* (New York: Stein and Day, 1966), 125.

national movement of competition festivals. Mary Wakefield originated the idea of turning a competition into a festival, in which the competitors joined in a final concert of some of the pieces, as well as participating in a designated large-scale work. Wakefield organized vocal competitions in Kendal, associated with a local flower show, beginning in 1885. Her idea was emulated by at least thirty-six centers across the country. She presented the idea of forming an Association of Competition Festivals in 1905, which was incorporated as the British Federation of Music Competition Festivals in 1921.

There were several types of competition festivals. Some were purely vocal or choral. Others focused on vocal and instrumental soloists. There were a few for chamber music, and even some for folk dancing. Like Wakefield's example, certain competitions highlighted the joint performance more than the actual competitions, and some even eliminated the competitive idea, in which criticism was made privately. The competitions especially strengthened the tradition of choral singing, and produced some new music from composers such as Edward Elgar, Granville Bantock, Armstrong Gibbs, and George Dyson. Frank Howes said in his book, *The English Musical Renaissance*, that this competition movement "enriched English musical life . . . and made the country more musical, more appreciative, more aware than it was a hundred years ago."⁵⁸ Cobbett followed in this tradition by his sponsorship of the phantasy competitions, calling for professional composers, rather than amateur musicians.

Although music was being cultivated in England through education, concerts, and competition in the latter half of the nineteenth century, British composers still had not

⁵⁸ Ibid., 128.

found their own compositional voice. They began to look to their own country for inspiration, in particular, folksongs. As early as 1843, the Reverend John Broadwood privately published a collection of sixteen traditional songs that were sung at rural festivals and Harvest Homes in and around Surrey and Sussex. Broadwood was adamant that the songs be notated exactly as he heard them. The title page of the collection reads, “Airs are set to music exactly as they are now sung.”⁵⁹ Rev. Broadwood’s niece, Lucy Broadwood, continued his task of collecting folk music by later republishing his work, with various additions. She joined forces with John Alexander Fuller-Maitland to produce *English Country Songs* in 1893, which was a milestone in the folksong revival. Sabine Baring-Gould, a parson-squire, was another folksong collector, who assembled songs from Devon and Cornwall. The use of modality in the folksongs made them sound different from contemporary music, such as the use of Phrygian mode in “The White Paternoster.”

Northern England had seen an interest in the revival and preservation of folksong even earlier in the century. A volume of melodies used by players of the Northumbrian small-pipe was published in 1805 in Newcastle. The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne began in 1855 to collect ancient tunes of Northumberland. As a later result of this collection, John Stokoe edited a publication of ballad airs and pipe tunes in 1882. W.G. Whittaker used Stokoe’s book as the basis for his edition of *North Country Ballads, Songs, and Pipe Tunes* (1921).⁶⁰ These folksong collections from northern

⁵⁹ Ibid., 77.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 79.

England are significant because they represent the rare instance of regional folk music. Most folksongs in England spread across borders and counties. However, in these works, several melodies are truly native to the region. The small-pipes were only found in this area of northern England, making the pipe tunes distinctive.

The work of these individual collectors had brought about the need for a cooperative effort by the end of the century. In 1898, the English Folksong Society was formed in London. Its goal was “the collection and preservation of folksongs, ballads and tunes, and the publication of such of these as may be deemed advisable.”⁶¹ The first vice-presidents were John Stainer, Charles Stanford, Alexander Campbell Mackenzie, and Hubert Parry. Some of its members included musicians such as Frederick Corder, John Spencer Curwen, Plunket Greene, and Edward Elgar. Researchers Lucy Broadwood and Fuller-Maitland also joined. *The Journal of the Folksong Society* was begun a year after the group formed. In 1904, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Cecil Sharp joined the organization and encouraged the society to become even more active in collecting folksong material. Sharp became a spokesman for the group and collected over 3,000 English melodies. In addition, he rediscovered English traditional dance tunes. His work also included a collection of 1,700 tunes of English origin from the mountains of Kentucky.⁶² Sharp was vigorous in his campaign of “bringing the songs back into the

⁶¹ Ibid., 79.

⁶² Ibid., 80.

daily lives of the English people.”⁶³ His approach to collecting is found in his book *English Folksong: Some Conclusions* (1907).

Vaughan Williams represented the effect the folk music revival had on contemporary composers. He did not consider music to be an “international language” and felt that, “any school of national music must be fashioned on the basis of the raw material of its own national song.”⁶⁴ His lectures on “National Music” in 1932 reflect his desire for composers to draw inspiration from the folk music of their country. He agreed with Sir Henry Hadow, who said, “the composer bears the mark of his race . . . and there is no music . . . that has not drawn inspiration from the breast of the mother country.”⁶⁵ Vaughan Williams himself collected over 800 songs and spent about thirty days each year, over a span of ten years, “in the field.” He also became the music editor for the new *English Hymnal* (1906) and included in it thirty-five folk tunes from a variety of sources.⁶⁶

Howes said of the folksong revival in the book, *English Musical Renaissance*, “it has brought forth good fruit: the best of English songs written since the beginning of the century . . . have come from those who have at one time or another nourished themselves on folksong.”⁶⁷ He notes the works of Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Patrick

⁶³ Maud Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), 46.

⁶⁴ Trend, 100.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Stradling and Hughes, 66.

⁶⁷ Howes, 83.

Hadley, Gerald Finzi, Edmund Rubbra, Ernest John Moeran, and John Ireland as being influenced by folk music.

Vaughan Williams comments in Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey*, that one of the most interesting developments of modern English music was the influence of folksong on the younger composers.⁶⁸ He noticed the use of folksong particularly in their chamber music. As an example, Vaughan Williams mentions Percy Grainger's chamber music, which contains varied treatment of folk tunes, as well as original compositions following the character of the various folk idioms. Vaughan Williams believed that because of the work of the aforementioned researchers, these younger composers were exposed to this music, and it was natural for them to use it as a means of expression.⁶⁹ Cobbett's competition in 1917 called for the composition of a "Folksong Phantasy."

The folksong revival in England happened concurrently with a revival of Tudor music. Stradling and Hughes refer to these two revivals as the "twin legacies" of the English musical past.⁷⁰ Articles in the first edition of Grove's *Dictionary* (1879-1889) had a profound impact on the study of Tudor music. Barclay Squire contributed an article on "Collections of Virginal Music" and William Smith Rockstro wrote about madrigals and motets, among many other topics. These articles served to give the public a new view of their musical past, in an accessible form. Editions of early music were made available, with the publication of Fuller-Maitland's *English Carols of the Fifteenth Century* (1893),

⁶⁸ Ralph Vaughan Williams, "Folksong in Chamber Music," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 411.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 412.

⁷⁰ Stradling and Hughes, 61.

the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (1894-9), and Edmund Fellowes' *English Madrigal School* (1913-24). Richard Terry established a performance tradition of early music at Westminster Cathedral, exposing the public to the sounds of the Tudor composers. A passion for early instruments drove Arnold Dolmetsch to study and manufacture early musical instruments from the Tudor period.

The Musical Antiquarian Society, which began in 1840, published nineteen volumes of music from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, providing source material for the Tudor revival. Dr. Edward Rimbault edited several of the volumes, including the music of William Byrd's five-part Mass, Thomas Morley's ballets, Orlando Gibbons' fantasies for viols, Michael East's Psalms, Thomas Bateson's madrigals, an edition of Henry Purcell's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, and a volume of anthems.⁷¹ Purcell's music was represented in four of the nineteen volumes. The Society lasted only seven years, but provided an important resource of early music.

Fuller-Maitland, who had also played a role in the folksong revival, contributed to the Tudor revival, especially in the area of Elizabethan keyboard music. Along with his brother-in-law Barclay Squire, he edited *The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (1894-99), which was dedicated to Queen Victoria. As George Grove was preparing the first edition of his *Dictionary*, he asked Fuller-Maitland and Squire for a report on the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. Fuller-Maitland catalogued the collection in 1879, sparking his interest in early music. He was inspired further by concerts of early music given at the Music and Inventions Exhibition at South Kensington in 1885, which presented displays of

⁷¹ Howes, 89.

instruments, manuscripts, printed books, and musical artifacts. Alfred Hipkins, who had worked in the piano-making firm of Broadwood and was an expert on instruments, organized these concerts. Hipkins wrote the book *Musical Instruments, Historic Rare and Unique* (1888). Fuller-Maitland studied piano and harpsichord with Rockstro, with whom he collaborated in producing *English Carols of the Fifteenth Century* (1893). In addition to contributing collections of early music, Fuller-Maitland was the general editor for the second edition of Grove's *Dictionary* (1904-10).

Edmund Fellowes' major contribution to the Tudor revival was the *English Madrigal School* (1913-1924). The work, consisting of thirty-six volumes, set new standards in editorial accuracy and represented a period of music starting with William Byrd in 1588, and ending with Thomas Tomkins in 1622. Fellowes provided both library editions and practical performance editions of the madrigals. He made an important discovery that Elizabethan composers had issued their madrigals in sets, rather than individually, and spent a number of years transcribing all of the sets he could find. Fellowes sought to produce more reliable editions of the madrigals by using original sources. He promoted the music through many lectures, performances and even early gramophone recordings. His madrigal editions were used by the "English Singers," a popular and widely traveled performing group.

Another significant contribution to the Tudor revival was the efforts of Richard Terry at Westminster Cathedral. At the Royal College of Music, Charles Stanford was known to have urged his students to "enjoy Palestrina for twopence," the price of the bus

fares to Westminster.⁷² Terry was the organist and director for the cathedral from 1901-1924. While there, he revived and established a performing tradition of early English composers, such as the Tudor composers Robert Fayrfax, John Tavener, Thomas Tallis, and William Byrd. Many of these composers' works were contained in the series, *Tudor Church Music* (1929), which Terry helped edit.

In the area of instrumental music from the Tudor and Stuart periods, Arnold Dometsch was the researching pioneer. He came from a family of instrument makers and used this knowledge to try and recreate or improve instruments from earlier periods. In 1889, he came upon the collections of old instruments and manuscripts written for them at the British Museum in London. Although he had been a music teacher at Dulwich College, he gave up his job after this discovery and devoted his time to researching early music of other countries. He was interested in historical performances of music and how they could be replicated with the use of proper, period instruments.

At the British Museum and also in the library of the Royal College of Music, Dolmetsch found many English fantasies for viols. In 1890–92, he performed some of these as musical examples for Frederick Bridge's Gresham Lectures. Works included fantasies for viols by John Jenkins, Christopher Simpson, William Lawes, and Matthew Locke. Cobbett attended these lectures, which inspired his idea of a modern version of the fantasy form. In his own home workshop, Dolmetsch reproduced viols of different sizes and restored antique keyboard instruments, which he sold to the public. He also did much to promote his instruments by giving recitals in small concert halls and homes. His

⁷² M. Kennedy, "Vaughan Williams, Whitman, Parry," *The Listener*, 12 November 1964, 159.

antique instruments became popular, as did his unconventional concerts (the performers dressed in period costumes and applause was discouraged). Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey* contains a short entry for Dolmetsch that admits there was not enough space to outline his achievements in the revival of interest in early music. The *Cyclopedic Survey* entry quotes Henry Colles, who said, "Dolmetsch re-created the domestic consort of the seventeenth century."⁷³

A revival of Henry Purcell's music accompanied the renewed interest in Tudor music. Purcell (1659-1695) composed during the Stuart period, but represented the last great English composer before the "foreign occupation" of Handel. To those involved in contributing to the modern English Renaissance of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the earlier "Golden Age" of English music was seen as beginning with the Elizabethan era, and ending with the death of Purcell.⁷⁴ Purcell's entry in the first edition of Grove's *Dictionary* was even longer than J.S. Bach's. The modern English Renaissance felt a need to put Purcell on equal footing with Bach and establish a musical heritage for England, apart from continental influence. In the *Oxford History of Music*, Parry made the claim that:

Purcell's work covers more ground than that of any other composer this century. . . The most brilliant moment in the history of 17th century music remained outside the general evolution of European art, the style was too individual and uncompromising to appeal to foreigners.⁷⁵

⁷³ Walter Willson Cobbett, "Dolmetsch, Arnold," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 331.

⁷⁴ Stradling and Hughes, 36.

⁷⁵ Hubert Parry, "Music of the Seventeenth Century," in *Oxford History of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1902), 306-7.

The Purcell Society was founded in 1876 with the goal of publishing, studying, and performing Purcell's works.⁷⁶ Its committee consisted of William Sterndale Bennett, George Alexander Macfarren, William Cummings and Ebenezer Prout. It produced two volumes of Purcell's music by 1887. The Society later placed Cummings as editor and Barclay Squire as honorary secretary, and by 1922, twenty more volumes had been produced. The Novello Company also published many inexpensive performing editions of Purcell's scores, while Frederick Bridge and Godfrey Arkwright produced additional scholarly editions of Purcell's music. Even before the Purcell Society formed, there had been a Purcell Club (1836-1863), which was dedicated to performances of Purcell's music and participated in the bicentenary celebration of his birth. The bicentenary of Purcell's death brought about more performances of his work, including the opera *Dido and Aeneas* at the Royal College of Music, which had not been performed on stage since 1699.

Some of the later composers that were affected by this Purcell revival were Ralph Vaughan Williams, William Hurlstone, Gustav Holst, Michael Tippett, and Benjamin Britten. Vaughan Williams edited two volumes of Purcell's *Welcome Odes* (1905, 1910). Michael Trend's book, *The Music Makers*, says that Hurlstone's music was influenced by the instrumental music of Purcell.⁷⁷ One example of this influence is Hurlstone's arrangement of a Purcell harpsichord suite arranged for string orchestra. Gustav Holst made his choirs sing Purcell's music and his students at Morley College gave the first

⁷⁶ Howes, 91.

⁷⁷ Trend, 50.

performance since 1695 of Purcell's opera, *Fairy Queen*. Both Tippett and Britten admired Purcell's musical setting of the English language in its "carry and freedom of [the] vocal line."⁷⁸ Tippett was also influenced by Purcell's ground basses and used his own versions in his opera, *The Midsummer Marriage*. Britten used a theme of Purcell's for a set of variations in his work, *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. The tenor Peter Pears and Britten also performed many of Purcell's songs, with realizations composed by Britten. Pears said of Britten's vocal music, "there blows . . . a strong revitalizing south-east wind which has rid English music of much accumulated dust and cobwebs, and he renewed the vigor of the sung word with Purcellian attack."⁷⁹

In the area of chamber music, Arthur Eaglefield Hull writes in Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey* that the publication of Purcell's three, four, and five-part fantasias in full score was the "most notable research in fifty years."⁸⁰ Purcell's fantasias were in the same form as the Elizabethan fancies. Hull thanks the editors Philip Heseltine and André Mangeot for "bringing these treasures to light and making them available to chamber music parties."⁸¹

⁷⁸ Ibid., 225.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 239.

⁸⁰ Arthur Eaglefield Hull, "Purcell, Henry," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 2, I-Z, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 250.

⁸¹ Hull, 250.

CHAPTER III

THE FANCY

The area of early English music that directly affected Cobbett was the fancy. Cobbett attended Sir Frederick Bridge's Gresham Lectures⁸² on the subject. These lectures enabled Cobbett to hear the fancies of Thomas Ravenscroft, Richard Deering, John Ward, William Lawes, Matthew Locke, and Henry Purcell, which were performed as musical examples. The fancies were a revelation to Cobbett in their use of striking harmonies and string effects. They also had a special place in the history of English chamber music. In one of his lectures, Bridge mentioned that nearly every composer of instrumental music wrote fancies between 1590 and 1670. He called the fancy the "counterpart of the chamber quartet and trio of the present day."⁸³ Cobbett found these works so fascinating that he "was moved to commission a number of composers of the younger generation to write so-called phantasies for various combinations."⁸⁴

The fancy evolved partly because of the mechanics of lutherie being developed. Music needed to be written that could show what stringed instruments could do when called upon to replace the voice. It was common for madrigals to be written in three, four,

⁸² The Gresham Lectures were free lectures given in London to the public by those receiving Gresham Professorships, which were awarded in seven areas of study, including music. They were established in London in 1596. Bridge was elected a Gresham Professor in 1890 and gave several lectures on early music.

⁸³ Walter Willson Cobbett, "Fancy," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 385.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

or five parts and use sets of instruments, when singers were not available. Many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century publications' title pages indicated that instruments could substitute for the voice. Material for instrumentalists, such as sets of variations, were soon developed based on given grounds, such as the *In Nomine* of the Roman liturgy. From this the fancies were derived. Like their name suggests, fancies had a free character. In them, composers were given license to indulge in many kinds of devices such as fugal and contrapuntal work.⁸⁵

Free compositions were common in other countries at the time, but do not exhibit the same characteristics as those that were popular during the Tudor period. In Jeffrey Pulver's article about the English Fancy, he considers this English version of a fantasia to be a "purely native product."⁸⁶ Although the Italian *ricercar* or fantasia could have influenced its composition, the fancy soon developed as a "distinct art form, different in character and spirit from anything produced on the continent."⁸⁷

The fancies first appeared around the end of the sixteenth century with composers such as William Byrd, Orlando Gibbons, John Ward, and Richard Deering. By the middle of the seventeenth century, thousands of fancies were being composed, showing more distinctively English characteristics. The English fancies usually contained several themes or subjects, much variety in rhythm, and often highly imitative polyphony, equal among the instruments involved. These fancies were written for the "chests of viols" that were popular not only in court, but also in cathedrals, colleges, and gentlemen's homes.

⁸⁵ Jeffrey Pulver, "The Fancy," *Musical Times* 63 (June 1922): 396-397.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 397.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

The desired combination of instruments in a “consort” of viols would include two treble viols, two tenor viols and two bass viols. Concertante-style playing even developed in the fancies, where the bass viols would frequently be given the important melodic material. Well-known composers writing fancies in the mid-seventeenth century were Michael East, William Lawes, John Jenkins, and John Cooper (Coperario). Purcell’s fancies were some of the last in this genre. He was born the same year that Oliver Cromwell died (1658) and just before the Restoration began. Purcell wrote over fifteen fantasias, or fancies, for viols. *Grove’s Dictionary* describes Purcell’s use of contrapuntal elaboration, expressive dissonance, and chromaticism in these fancies as giving the last examples of this genre a “unique brilliance and intensity.”⁸⁸

Cobbett admired certain characteristics of different composers’ styles of fancies. He found Orlando Gibbons’ fancies to be “grave, dignified, and ecclesiastical,” whereas he considered Ward’s more “rhythmical, pointed, and vigorous.” Purcell’s fancies contained “harmonic subtlety, contrapuntal richness and rhythmical swing.” Cobbett must have looked forward to what new characteristics would appear in his modern invention of the fancy, or “phantasy.”⁸⁹

One of the factors that might have led to the decline in the fancy’s popularity was the changing taste of the public in favor of lighter music. In his *Compendium* (1667), Christopher Sympson discusses the decline of the fancy, which had been gradually becoming more complex, “This style of music was much neglected because of the

⁸⁸ Christopher D. S. Field, “Fantasia: To 1700,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed January 16, 2005).

⁸⁹ Cobbett, “Fancy,” 385.

scarcity of auditors that understand it; their ears being more delighted with light and airy music.”⁹⁰ Charles II was known for disliking the fancy, perhaps because “he could not count his way through it.”⁹¹ Dr. Ernest Walker wrote about the state of chamber music after the decline of the fancy in the *Music Student Supplement*:

After Purcell, the stream of such music ran as a rule rather shallow for many a long year, still it never ran completely dry. But names changed, of course. We talked not of Fancies, but of Sonatas, Trios, or Quartets. And so the word Phantasy comes to us, under Mr. Cobbett’s auspices, with a pleasant old-world flavour about it that, perhaps, rather obscures its essential features; it is not musically a resurrection of something in the past, it is a modification of something in the present.⁹²

When Cobbett started the phantasy competitions in 1905, his description of what he desired for his “modified” version of the phantasy was rather simple. The composers were to write a phantasy quartet “to be performed without a break, and to consist of sections varying in tempo.” The quartet was to be in one movement form, and was supposed to be less than twelve minutes in length. Cobbett also desired the string parts to be of equal importance.⁹³

Following the first competitions, scholars took Cobbett’s ideas and tried to explain or further define the new version. For example, in the second edition of *Grove’s Dictionary*, Fuller-Maitland describes the genre using the same terms as Cobbett.

⁹⁰ Pulver, 397.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Dunhill, 197.

⁹³ Walter Willson Cobbett, “Cobbett Competitions and Commissions,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 284.

However, he adds that the works are “free from the structural laws of the ‘classical’ form.” He goes on to say that a slow movement could replace the development section of the sonata form, and the piece could also include a scherzando section. In addition, there should be a logical connection to the thematic material of the first part. The return of the first part could retain characteristics of the first section, but did not necessarily have to repeat it. Basically, in the phantasy, the “fundamental outline” should be retained. Fuller-Maitland compares the compositional techniques employed in the phantasies to the “transformation of themes” commonly used by Franz Liszt, which was becoming a modern tendency in composing.⁹⁴

Stanford also had opinions on Cobbett’s new form and wrote about it in his book, *Musical Composition* (1911). Stanford considered the phantasy a “tabloid preparation of the three or four movements of a sonata.” He thought its existence was due in large part to the excessive length of many modern works.⁹⁵ In examining the phantasies that were produced for the Cobbett competitions and commissions, the majority of composers did not adhere strictly to the views of Stanford or Fuller-Maitland. Most did keep to Cobbett’s simple rules, however, such as the moderate length, continuity of flow, and some variety in tempo.

Ernest Walker also discusses the attributes of the modern phantasy in his article in *The Music Student*. Because of the compressed form, composers sought to balance the conciseness of their ideas or themes with the ability to take other sections in a “leisurely”

⁹⁴ Cobbett, “Cobbett Competitions and Commissions,” 285- 286.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 286.

manner. The continuity of the music contributed to an “organic unity,” capturing the ideas, expression, and ultimately the listener’s attention. Walker compares the composer to a painter who envisions his best work in a single look, even though there will be much to observe in the painting. Walker states that he is convinced that the phantasy “has a distinct future before it, and its forms are capable of well-nigh unlimited variety.” A final practical consideration of the phantasy is the fact that because of its short length, it could easily fit into a concert program.⁹⁶ During a time where large chamber works by Brahms and Beethoven were still popular, this must have been an enticing benefit to composers who wanted their works performed.

Walker also discusses whether the modern phantasy can be considered British. In a non-derogatory way, he considers the modern phantasy to be British only because Cobbett happened to be British. What was more important than nationality was the fact that Cobbett had afforded “a chamber music outlet, to activities that had been mainly exercised in orchestral channels.”⁹⁷ Symphonies, overtures, and concertos had tended to evolve in various shapes and forms, but chamber music had mostly adhered to more structured forms. Walker compliments Cobbett further by predicting that Cobbett’s phantasy would become an academic term parallel to Liszt’s symphonic poem.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Ibid., 287.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE COBBETT COMPETITIONS

Cobbett sponsored five phantasy competitions, which took place every few years from 1905 to 1919. Each competition required the composition of chamber music in a different combination of instruments or a specific style of phantasy. The different combinations included string quartet, piano trio, and violin and piano duo. Cobbett also called for a dance phantasy and folksong phantasy in his later competitions. All the competitions required submissions exclusively from British composers, except for the competition for a violin and piano piece in 1909. This particular competition was international and drew the largest number of entries. Ironically, the first place winner, John Ireland, was British. Many of the winners of the competitions were students at the Royal College of Music, and a significant number of winners were women.

The Worshipful Company of Musicians⁹⁹ helped supply funding for the first two competitions, after which, Cobbett became the sole sponsor of the competitions. Many of the winning works were published by leading companies of the day such as Novello and Co., Augener, Schott, and Stainer and Bell. Contemporary ensembles performed several of the phantasy works on concert series during this time period. The publicity of the

⁹⁹ The Worshipful Company of Musicians started as a musicians' guild in London around 1500 with the goal of promoting the arts and sciences. During Cobbett's lifetime, the guild served musicians by awarding prizes, medals and sponsoring competitions. Henry Raynor, "Worshipful Company of Musicians," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed January 16, 2005).

competitions, the publication of these new works, as well as their performances, contributed greatly to Cobbett's goal of promoting British chamber music.

Cobbett's first phantasy competition began in 1905. He called for British composers to write a string quartet in the phantasy genre. In the *Musical Times*, Cobbett listed his initial objectives for these competitions:

My object was to 1.) call the attention of native composers to the trend of the British mind toward emotional reticence, and to the value of such a mentality in the composition of chamber music in which the absence of exaggeration is counted a great merit; 2.) introduce a short form into the chamber music repertoire; 3.) institute a renaissance of the Fancies of the 17th century. . . ¹⁰⁰

The Worshipful Company of Musicians helped sponsor the event. The winner would receive fifty pounds; lesser amounts would also be awarded. The panel of judges included Alexander Mackenzie, Alfred Gibson, and Hermann Sternberg. Sixty-seven manuscripts were received and six prizes were awarded.¹⁰¹ Table 2 displays the winners of this competition.

The jury selected eight of the compositions (six phantasies were ultimately chosen) for Cobbett and his professional musician friends to play through. Cobbett thought that in order to really appreciate chamber music, one had to play it oneself. The result of the competition for Cobbett was the "revelation of the names of young men who, till then unknown to me, have since risen to fame in chamber music circles."¹⁰² All of the

¹⁰⁰ Walter Willson Cobbett, "More Plain Words," *Musical Times* 59 (February 1918): 63.

¹⁰¹ "Prize Phantasies," *Musical Times* 47 (July 1906): 489.

¹⁰² Cobbett, "More Plain Words," 63.

winning works were published by Novello and Company and were performed on June 22, 1906, at Bechstein Hall (now Wigmore) in London, by the Saunders Quartet.

Table 2

1905 Cobbett Competition for Phantasy String Quartet

Prize Awarded	Composer	Title	Publisher
First	William Hurlstone	Phantasy in A minor and A Major	Novello and Co.
Second	Frank Bridge	Phantasy in F minor	Novello and Co
Third	James Friskin	Phantasy in D Major	Novello and Co
Fourth	Haydn Wood	Phantasy in F Major	Novello and Co
Fifth	Waldo Warner	Phantasy in F Major	Novello and Co
Sixth	Joseph Holbrooke	Phantasy in D minor	Novello and Co

Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey* contains interesting descriptions of some of these phantasy works. Cobbett was close friends with the winner, Hurlstone, and had thought he knew the composer's style well. However, after opening the envelope with the anonymous composer's name revealed, he was surprised. Cobbett describes the work as being a "mosaic of themes" and "full of promise."¹⁰³ Hurlstone's phantasy was basically in four short movements, built up from a few themes. Richard Walthew compares this plan to Liszt's compositions, and shows a phrase in the quartet that resembles a similar phrase in Liszt's B minor piano sonata. The character of Hurlstone's work, however, was in a more classical vein. Although Walthew found the finale to be "scrappy," he greatly

¹⁰³ Cobbett, "The Chamber Music Life," 261.

admired the string writing throughout.¹⁰⁴ A *Musical Times* review called it “rich in subject matter” and a “composition of distinct merit in its musicianly and pleasure-giving qualities.” This review also appreciated its conciseness and called it a “welcome example of sweetness *not* long drawn out.”¹⁰⁵

Cobbett noted that Bridge’s *Phantasy Quartet in F minor* was the most popular among chamber musicians, possibly because of its moderate technical difficulty.¹⁰⁶ Edwin Evans describes, in the *Cyclopedic Survey*, the quartet’s rousing rhythmical opening, its “crooning” second subject, and the andante section containing beautiful violin writing with enharmonic modulations. The work finishes “brilliantly.”¹⁰⁷

The third place winner, James Friskin’s *Phantasy Quartet in D major*, according to Cobbett, was “a piece of light music opening with a burst of rollicking fun.” Apparently, Friskin’s teacher, Charles Stanford had a high opinion of his student and thought that Friskin had deserved the first prize. Although Friskin’s piece was not heard much in England, it was played with success in New York, where the composer moved to live.¹⁰⁸

The *Phantasy Quartet in F major* was significant because it represented Haydn Wood’s first work in the chamber music genre. Cobbett called Wood’s phantasy “one of

¹⁰⁴ Richard Walthew, “Hurlstone, William,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 2, *I-Z*, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 583-584.

¹⁰⁵ “Prize Phantasies,” 489.

¹⁰⁶ Edwin Evans, “Bridge, Frank,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, *A-H*, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 188.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁰⁸ Cobbett, “The Chamber Music Life,” 261.

the best things he has done.”¹⁰⁹ Holbrooke’s phantasy, which received the sixth-place prize, was distinctive for its similarity to a suite, and contained sections labeled “Departure,” “Absence,” and “Return.” There is a Brahmsian influence in Warner’s *Phantasy Quartet in F major* which won the fifth-place prize. His work was included in the London String Quartet’s programs for a number of years. Already, these phantasy quartets were catching the attention of the public.

The next competition, held in 1907, required the composition of a phantasy piano trio. The Worshipful Company of Musicians helped sponsor again, and once more, sixty-seven British composers applied. Five prizes were awarded along with supplementary prizes, as shown in Table 3.¹¹⁰

Table 3

1907 Cobbett Competition for Phantasy Piano Trio

Prize Awarded	Composer	Title	Publisher
First	Frank Bridge	Phantasy in C Minor, H. 79	Augener
Second	James Friskin	Phantasy in E Minor	Novello and Co.
Third	John Ireland	Phantasy in A Minor	Augener
Fourth	Alice Verne-Bredt	Phantasy: Trio in One Movement	Schott
Fifth	Susan Spain-Dunk	Phantasy in A Minor	(Still in MS)
Supplementary Awards	J.A. Harrison, Hugh Blair, Sidney Goldsmith, Harold White, Ernest Halsey		

¹⁰⁹ Cobbett, “The Chamber Music Life,” 261.

¹¹⁰ Cobbett, “Cobbett Competitions and Commissions,” 284-285.

Cobbett was impressed with Bridge's winning trio. At a meeting of the Concert-goer's club in 1911, he described it in this way, "Mr. Bridge's Trio is of remarkable beauty and brilliance, and stamps him as one of our foremost composers for the chamber."¹¹¹ It is not surprising that Bridge was the most frequent winner of these competitions. Cobbett also thought Bridge's composition was the "best thing written as yet for piano and two strings by any British composer."¹¹²

Ernest Walker noticed "an undeniable power about the main ideas" of the trio by Bridge. He thought the themes were treated with dignity and admired the curves of the melodies and broad lines of the harmonies.¹¹³ The debut performance of the piece was performed at a banquet of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, apparently with great success. The London Trio performed it as well and decided to undertake the performance of all three of the phantasy trios in their 1909 season.

Ireland's phantasy, in particular, was received with great acclaim. The composer was called back twice after the performance. This was significant because the concert also included the major work of Johannes Brahms, the *Piano Trio in B major*, Op. 8, a continental import. The crowd responded more favorably to the British work than to one of the staples of German chamber music. A review of Ireland's trio noted that it was characterized by "extreme brilliancy and strenuousness, and being rich in

¹¹¹ Dunhill, 197.

¹¹² Cobbett, "The Chamber Music Life," 261.

¹¹³ Evans, 189.

musicianship.”¹¹⁴ The trio is essentially an extended sonata movement with a classic-romantic feel.

The London Trio concerts also elicited a review of Friskin’s trio. The reviewer thought the work too somber, but felt it would “prove attractive to lovers of the reflective in music.”¹¹⁵ The Trio is presented in five sections and begins with a melancholy melody in the cello. It has a dirge-like character, which might have been influenced by Friskin’s Scottish heritage. Susan Spain-Dunk won recognition in this competition, as well as the next. Both her trio and Alice Verne-Bredt’s are described as being full of charm. Spain-Dunk was actually in Cobbett’s own private string quartet.

The third competition took place in 1909 and was different in several ways. Cobbett did not call for a phantasy, but rather asked for a piece in sonata form. The competition was international, and drew 134 entries from around the world. Cobbett’s outlook for this competition was more universal. He said, “he dreamed of a masterpiece coming from some country as yet little known to the world of chamber music.”¹¹⁶ It was to the jury’s delight that they discovered new talent again in their own country, John Ireland. The other composers that placed are listed in Table 4.

Ireland’s winning composition is in conventional sonata form and consists of three movements: Allegro leggiadro, Romance, and Rondo. Cobbett mentions Ireland’s sonata in his *Cyclopedic Survey* as having become a standard part of the violin repertoire, both in England and abroad. The reaffirmation of Ireland’s talent was found when he

¹¹⁴ “The London Trio and British Phantasies,” *Musical Times* 50 (March 1909): 178-179.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 179.

¹¹⁶ Cobbett, “The Chamber Music Life,” 261.

again won first prize for his *Sonata No. 2 in a minor* in another competition in private circles. This composition, finished in 1917 during the First World War, had immediate success in the concert hall, being played several times by Albert Sammons and William Murdoch at Aeolian Hall to packed crowds. Ireland actually had to decide which publisher he wanted to accept the work.¹¹⁷

Table 4

1909 Cobbett Competition for a Sonata for Violin and Piano

Prize Awarded	Composer	Title	Publisher
First	John Ireland	Sonata in D Minor	Augener
Second	Eric Gritton	Unknown	Unknown
Third	Geoffrey O'Connor Morris	Unknown	Unknown
Fourth	Susan Spain-Dunk	Sonata in B minor	(Still in MS)

Eric Gritton, a Mendelssohn scholar at the Royal College of Music, took second prize. Like Ireland, he was a student of Stanford. Geoffrey O'Connor Morris won third prize and also had a phantasy string quartet published by Stainer and Bell. Spain-Dunk won the supplementary prize for her *Sonata in B minor* and was recognized for her compositions “avoiding the common fault of undue length.”¹¹⁸

A string quartet in sonata, suite or fancy form was called for in the 1915 competition. Cobbett also specified that the two violin parts be of equal importance.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ M. Drake-Brockman, “Spain-Dunk, Susan,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 2, I-Z, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 439.

There was an audition of four of the forty-five works that were submitted before a jury consisting of fifty chamber musicians and composers. Two composers received the top prize, and William Reed placed second, as can be seen in Table 5.¹¹⁹

Table 5

1915 Cobbett Competition for String Quartet

Prize Awarded	Composer	Title	Publisher
First	Albert Sammons	Phantasy in B Major, Op. 8	Boosey and Hawkes
First	Frank Bridge	String Quartet in G Minor	Winthrop Rogers
Second	William Reed	Fifth Quartet in A Major	Augener

One of the top prizes went to Albert Sammons. Better known for his playing than composing, he formed the “New String Quartet” in 1910, which later became known as the “London String Quartet.” This quartet championed and performed many modern works. Cobbett called his phantasy “a work of marked originality.”¹²⁰

Bridge’s *String Quartet in G minor* also won a top prize. The public immediately found it favorable. A contributor to the *London Times* said of the first movement, “It is not the actual invention of themes which impresses one at once. Rather it is the power of suggesting many ideas by different uses of the same theme which makes the first

¹¹⁹ Cobbett, “More Plain Words,” 63.

¹²⁰ Walter Willson Cobbett, “Sammons, Albert,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 2, I-Z, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 328.

movement grow up into a remarkably eloquent whole.”¹²¹ The London String Quartet performed Bridge’s work at the Monday Popular Concerts on November 4, 1915. The second-place winner, William Reed, was known for his position as leader of the London Symphony Orchestra for twenty-three years. Cobbett found that his string quartet contained “graceful writing and some striking harmonic effects.”¹²²

Following the trend of exploring British folksong, the competition of 1917 requested composers to write a string quartet or piano trio based on folksongs of any of the four British nations. According to Cobbett, the folksong phantasies did not fit his conception, but were “by no means disappointing.” Table 6 shows the four prizes that were awarded.

Table 6

1917 Cobbett Competition for a Folksong Phantasy

Prize Awarded	Composer	Title	Publisher
First (Trio)	James Forrester	Folksong Phantasy Trio	Novello and Co.
Second	Arnold Trowell	Trio on Ancient Irish Folk Tunes, Op. 32	Novello and Co.
First (Quartet)	Waldo Warner	Folksong Phantasy in G minor	Ricordi
Second	Herbert Howells	Phantasy String Quartet in C Major, Op. 25	Curwen

¹²¹ Evans, 191.

¹²² Walter Willson Cobbett, “Reed, William,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 2, I-Z, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 328.

Cobbett said this competition was an experiment.¹²³ Folksong movements generally could be set in three different ways: as simple, straightforward harmonizations, variation sets, or phantasies and larger forms based on folksong. The larger forms could surround the folksong with original material or use a medley of songs.

Not much has been documented about Forrester's winning trio except Cobbett's comment that it was "a musicianly work of melodious charm."¹²⁴ The second place winner Arnold Trowell was a cellist from New Zealand whose style was mostly classical, but whose themes were usually developed quite freely. Cobbett thought his works had a modern, but not eccentric, feel.¹²⁵ The trio is a freely developed work, which contains several old folk melodies woven together in many contrasting moods.

Herbert Antcliffe, in his article on the "Recent Rise of Chamber Music in England," declared Warner's *Phantasy Quartet on a Berkshire Folk-Song* to be the most popular and frequently performed chamber work of the time.¹²⁶ He thought the work was "doing much to make chamber music the music of the people."¹²⁷ The quartet is based on the tune "Dance to your Daddy," and although the entire work uses this tune, it is rather disguised throughout, making it hard for the listener to detect. Cobbett thought the

¹²³ Cobbett, "More Plain Words," 63.

¹²⁴ Walter Willson Cobbett, "Forrester, James," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 328.

¹²⁵ Walter Willson Cobbett, "Trowell, Arnold," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 2, I-Z, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 521.

¹²⁶ Herbert Antcliffe, "The Recent Rise of Chamber Music in England," *Musical Quarterly* 6 (January 1920):18.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

quartet was “more brilliant than folksongish.” This chamber work had great success in America, being played in nearly every state by the London String Quartet.¹²⁸

Howells’ *Phantasy Quartet in C major*, which took second-place, was built on modal tunes he composed himself. The treatment of the tunes is in keeping with the folksong tradition. Marion Scott comments on Howells’ composition in the *Cyclopedic Survey*, “Howells combines the spontaneity of a phantasy with the logical design which intelligence demands.” Scott points out other features of the quartet, such as its clever use of tone color and the “poetic nature of the harmonies.”¹²⁹

The *London Times* advertised the next Cobbett competition in 1919 for a Dance Phantasy for piano and strings. The entrants had to be British, and the work needed to be moderate in length. The composition could be a “ballet in miniature,” or music that “contains the soul of the dance and lends itself to dance interpretation.”¹³⁰ The *Musical Quarterly* described it as being a “correlation of chamber music with dance rhythms.”¹³¹ Cobbett intended these works to be “light music” and quoted Mozart as saying, “the man who cannot write a good dance tune is not worthy of the name of composer.”¹³² The two winners are listed in Table 7.

¹²⁸ Cobbett, “The Chamber Music Life,” 262.

¹²⁹ Marion Scott, “Howells, Herbert,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 574.

¹³⁰ “The Dance and the Sonata,” *London Times*, 18 June 1919, 10.

¹³¹ Antcliffe, 18.

¹³² Cobbett, “Cobbett Competitions and Commissions,” 284-285.

Table 7*1919 Cobbett Competition for a Dance Phantasy for Piano and Strings*

Prize Awarded	Composer	Title	Publisher
First	Armstrong Gibbs	<i>The Enchanted Wood</i> for piano, solo violin, and string quintet	Curwen
Second	Cecil Hazelhurst	<i>The Red Plague</i>	(Still in MS)

Although Cobbett was sympathetic to Gibbs' romantically conceived *Enchanted Wood*, he did not feel that it really contained the "urge to dance."¹³³ Gibbs frequently used descriptive titles, although he said that he did not usually have an image in mind while composing. He eventually rearranged this piece for ripieno parts, and it was performed by the Erhart Chamber Orchestra. Cobbett felt this version was much more effective.¹³⁴ Little has been recorded about Hazelhurst's phantasy and it is still in manuscript. The dance phantasy was the last of Cobbett's phantasy competitions, but he required the works he commissioned to be in this genre as well.

¹³³ Cobbett, "The Chamber Music Life," 262.

¹³⁴ Marion Scott, "Gibbs, Armstrong," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 461.

CHAPTER V

COBBETT COMMISSIONS AND AWARDS

During the time frame of the phantasy competitions, Cobbett also decided to commission several phantasy chamber works in various combinations of instruments. Eleven new chamber compositions were composed between 1910 and 1912. Many of these composers knew Cobbett personally or had participated in the earlier competitions. Several publishing companies, such as Goodwin and Tabb, Stainer and Bell, and Schott, published the “Cobbett Series” of commissioned works. These commissions were part of Cobbett’s goal of founding a library with works in the phantasy genre. Ernest Walker wrote in praise of Cobbett:

Mr. W.W. Cobbett is the onlie begetter of the Modern British Phantasy--a fortunate reincarnation, in exact musical parallel of men like Rasoumowsky and Galitzin, who not only commissioned string quartets from Beethoven. . .but took themselves an enthusiastic part in performing the music they had called into being.¹³⁵

Walker wrote these comments in 1915, and already the composition of twenty-four new chamber works and their publication could be credited to Cobbett’s activities. Table 8 presents the phantasies that Cobbett commissioned between 1910 and 1912.

Two of these commissioned works are worth singling out, Bridge’s *Phantasy Piano Quartet in F-sharp minor* and Vaughan Williams’ *Phantasy String Quintet*.

¹³⁵ Cobbett, “Cobbett Competitions and Commissions,” 285.

Table 8

Cobbett Commissions

Composer	Title	Date Composed	Publisher
Frank Bridge	Phantasy in F-sharp Minor for Piano Quartet	1910	Augener
James Friskin	Phantasy in F Minor for Piano Quintet	1910	Stainer and Bell
Benjamin Dale	Phantasy for Viola and Piano	1911	Schott
Thomas Dunhill	Phantasy Trio for Piano, Violin, and Viola	1911	Stainer and Bell
James McEwen	Phantasy String Quintet with Two Cellos	1911	(Still in MS)
Ethel Barns	Phantasy Trio for Two Violins and Piano	1911	Schott
Ralph Vaughan Williams	Phantasy String Quintet with Two Violas	1912	Stainer and Bell
Richard Walthew	Phantasy Piano Quintet in E Minor	1912	Stainer and Bell
B. Walton O'Donnell	Phantasy for Cello and Piano	1912	(Still in MS)
Donald Tovey	Phantasy for Clarinet Quintet	1912	Unknown
York Bowen	Phantasy for Violin and Piano	1912	(Still in MS)

In a discussion of the piece in the *Cyclopedic Survey*, Edwin Evans considers the *Phantasy Piano Quartet in F-sharp minor* to be Bridge's finest work and the most striking of his many phantasy compositions. The layout of the work surrounds an allegro vivace section with an extended andante con moto tempo. The conclusion is in a tranquillo mood. According to Evans, the tone of the piece is "somber, reflective, and emotionally significant."¹³⁶ Ernest Walker also loved the piece. He raved, "I know few things in British chamber music more satisfying than the last five and a half pages . . .

¹³⁶ Evans, 190.

Twenty eight bars of really fine music, with a serene largeness and dignity about them which are none too common anywhere nowadays.”¹³⁷

At Cobbett’s eightieth birthday party, Bridge’s piano quartet and Vaughan Williams *Phantasy String Quintet* were performed. Cobbett said Vaughan Williams’ work exemplified what he envisioned the phantasy genre to be.¹³⁸ Although he does not explain any further why this was, Scott Goddard’s analysis of the piece gives clues. The quintet begins with a viola melody that winds its way upward through a pentatonic scale. This theme, reminiscent of folksong, is the essence of the work and it evolves in different ways throughout the piece. The “mournful exaltation of the theme” pervades the quintet and the same phrase returns at the end of the last movement. Goddard sees the piece reflecting Vaughan Williams’ blend of “courage and humility.”¹³⁹

In addition to the phantasy competitions and commissions, Cobbett established prizes for chamber music at the Royal College of Music. From 1920-27, Cobbett gave fifty guineas¹⁴⁰ annually for the study of chamber music. In 1928, these prizes were established permanently by an endowment from Cobbett. The prizes covered not only the composition of new chamber music, but also the performance of chamber music. Cobbett also awarded special prizes in several of the competitions to quartets and quintets that formed on their own to rehearse without professional assistance. Table 9 contains a list of

¹³⁷ Evans, 190.

¹³⁸ Cobbett, “The Chamber Music Life,” 262.

¹³⁹ A. H. Fox-Strangeways, “Williams, Ralph Vaughan,” in *Cobbett’s Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 2, I-Z, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 583.

¹⁴⁰ A guinea is equivalent to twenty-one shillings. The term “guinea” was still used in Cobbett’s day when discussing professional fees.

these various types of awards from 1920-1927.¹⁴¹ Not only did these prizes at the Royal College of Music foster new composition and the exploration of British music, but they also led to the establishment of regular quartets, some continuing on a professional basis.

Table 9

Cobbett Awards at the Royal College of Music

Date	Type of Award
1920	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance of standard works of chamber music • performance of chamber music by British composers (special prize for groups that rehearsed without aid.)
1921	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance of chamber works by British composers: Eugene Goossens, Ralph Vaughan Williams, William Hurlstone, James Friskin, or Walford Davies
1922	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance of standard chamber works, preference for British composers
1923	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • composition of chamber works by college students • performance of the prize works
1924	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • best performance of chamber music, special prizes reserved for British works • performance of British works without aid and performed at the College informal concerts
1925	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • composition of a phantasy quartet or quintet for strings, less than fifteen minutes • performance of prize works and standard chamber music
1926	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (same as 1925)
1927	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance of standard trios and quartets at informal concerts

¹⁴¹ Walter Willson Cobbett, "Cobbett Prizes," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol.1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 288.

Cobbett's competitions extended beyond mere performance or composition. He challenged British luthiers to submit their best violins for quartet playing. These competitions took place in 1918 and 1923. Concerts were given at Aeolian Hall using the instruments, and the audience participated in the voting. The winners were A. Richardson (1918) and W. Glenister (1923).¹⁴²

The last of the major awards that Cobbett sponsored was through the Worshipful Company of Musicians, the city guild of London, which sponsored the first two phantasy competitions. Cobbett endowed a silver gilt medal, "The Cobbett Medal," in 1924 to be given annually to a musician who made a significant contribution to the area of chamber music. Many of the phantasy composers received medals, as well as other patrons of music, like Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. This medal is still being awarded annually.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Cobbett, "Cobbett Competitions and Commissions," 288.

¹⁴³ Leslie Sheppard, 201.

CHAPTER VI

CYCLOPEDIA SURVEY OF CHAMBER MUSIC

A discussion of Cobbett's legacy to chamber music would not be complete without acknowledging his efforts as an editor and writer on music. He contributed articles frequently to *The Strad* and wrote sixty articles for *Grove's Dictionary*. He was the editor of a unique publication called *The Chamber Music Supplement*, which was associated with *The Music Student*, a newsletter at the Royal College of Music. This journal, which ran from June 1913 to November 1916, systematically examined chamber music starting with duos, trios, quartets, etc . . . Wind chamber music and a methodical look at British chamber music was also included. Furthermore, this journal contained general information about recent performances, news, and modern chamber works.¹⁴⁴ The influence of Cobbett's journal can be traced in Robert Maas' creation of the Cobbett Association in 1990. His purpose was as follows:

The Cobbett Association is dedicated to the preservation, dissemination, performance, publication and recording of rare and neglected chamber music of merit; chamber music which is no longer in the standard repertoire. The Association publishes a periodical, *The Chamber Music Journal*, and maintains a copying library.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Leslie Sheppard, 202.

¹⁴⁵ "Cobbett Association Past and Present," <http://www.cobbettassociation.org> (accessed April 19, 2006).

The experience of editing the journal played a role in Cobbett's idea for his major undertaking, the *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music* (1929).

At the age of eighty, Cobbett embarked upon the enormous task of creating a book surveying the world's chamber music. Cobbett's musician friends had made the need for this type of book known to him. Because he was an amateur musician, Cobbett felt somewhat unqualified for the job. However, the *Chamber Music Journal* provided him with a trial run of sorts. Ultimately, he decided the need outweighed his misgivings.

Cobbett purposefully included the presence of reviews and essays on various chamber music topics to make the *Cyclopedic Survey* more readable. In the articles he contributed, he tried to represent the amateur chamber musician. One exception is his article "The Chamber Music Life," which is admittedly autobiographical. Besides describing his chamber music experiences in this entry, there are musings on ethics, individuality, sight-reading, practice, nervousness, friendship, instruments, and competitions. The other contributors to the survey were left to their own "individual leanings, to work for the glory of chamber music."¹⁴⁶

Cobbett states his definition of chamber music for the book as being "ensemble music suited for playing in a room, without ripieno parts, and extending from duos to nonets." In the book, composers' biographies are limited to birth and death dates, and compositions that are still in manuscript are ignored. Cobbett acknowledges the skill of

¹⁴⁶ Walter Willson Cobbett, "Preface," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol.1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), vi.

the editors of similar books, such as Francois-Joseph Fétis' *Biographie universelle de musiciens*, Robert Eitner's *Quellen-Lexicon*, and *Grove's Dictionary*.¹⁴⁷

Sir Henry Hadow, a director of the Royal College of Music, wrote the introduction to *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey*. He begins with positive words, "One of the most encouraging signs of the times is the growing prevalence of interest in chamber music." Hadow describes chamber music as "an art as pure as sculpture and as enduring." He gives an explanation of the need for a survey of chamber music. Previously, the study of chamber music had been hindered because of the lack of organized material. Information was scattered among biographies and dictionaries of music, and textbooks. As far as Hadow knew, this was the first attempt to collect all the facts pertaining specifically to chamber music. He compares Cobbett's new wealth of information to an "opulent banquet" to which the reader has been invited.¹⁴⁸

Cobbett's legacy continues as well in his creation of the Cobbett Free Libraries. As one of twenty male members of the Society of Women Musicians, he donated the library to them in 1918. They maintained the library until the society disbanded in 1972. The collection contains "every chamber work of importance published by British composers" and was intended to be open to the public.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Cobbett, "Preface," vi.

¹⁴⁸ Henry Hadow, "Introduction," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), x.

¹⁴⁹ Walter Willson Cobbett, "Cobbett Free Libraries," in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, vol. 1, A-H, ed. Walter Willson Cobbett (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), vi.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Cobbett stated in the autobiographical article of his *Cyclopedic Survey* that:

since I first began to play chamber music with serious intent I have regarded this branch of art with a crescendo of interest, which has to my amazement gathered in intensity with the flight of time, and even yet may not have reached its culminating point.¹⁵⁰

Just as Cobbett's interest in chamber music grew stronger over time, the public's interest in chamber music and British works increased due to Cobbett's promotional activities. Cobbett's legacy to future generations' interest in this branch of art is still ongoing and has not reached its culminating point.

Cobbett looked back to England's past in his use of the fancy form. Rather than merely recreate the music and its structure, he used it as inspiration. Cobbett reinvented the form to fit the needs of the times and create an excitement for music. His competitions involving the phantasy increased the number of British chamber works, the performance of these works, and led to a generation of enthusiastic composers. These composers had the challenge of finding their voice in this singular vision of the phantasy. Although the free structural character of the phantasy was liberating for composers, the short length required by Cobbett's competitions also provided limitation.

¹⁵⁰ Cobbett, "The Chamber Music Life," 254.

Britain now has a wealth of chamber music from the time period in which Cobbett lived. His Free Library continues to this day to be open to the public. Musicians can still use his *Cyclopedic Survey* as a helpful research tool and the Cobbett Medal is still being awarded for services to chamber music. It would be difficult to trace just how many composers were influenced by the simple idea of the phantasy form. Several composers still used this form after the competitions had been long over. Benjamin Britten wrote his *Phantasy for Oboe and Strings*, Op. 2 in 1932.

One single vision of what Cobbett accomplished for chamber music is reflected in a portrait he had commissioned from the artist Frank Salisbury in 1926.¹⁵¹ This illustration was intended to be the frontispiece for the *Cyclopedic Survey*. In the center of the portrait stands Cobbett himself playing the violin. Even though he was an amateur, this positioning shows his wish to always be actively involved. The musicians are enclosed in an intimate, inviting space. The portrait includes two audience members listening, in addition to the performers. One of the audience members is even standing, again showing active involvement in her listening. The musicians are underneath an archway and in front of a landscape painting that seems to go on endlessly. It is as if that through this archway of chamber music we are led into unknown and exciting possibilities. A scroll hangs from the archway reading, “Music of the finer kind is the soul of things revealed in sound.”¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Leslie Sheppard, 202.

¹⁵² Leslie Sheppard, 202.

Most significantly, Cobbett instructed the artist to include statuary figures with early instruments behind him. Cobbett is paying homage to the music of Britain's past. However, all the musicians are facing forwards. Perhaps future musicians will look back at the music of the British composers influenced by Cobbett and be inspired to invent new visions for their own future.

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