

CHAN 6542

CHANDOS COLLECT

Percy GRAINGER

Famous Folk-Settings

Bournemouth Sinfonietta
Kenneth Montgomery

	Percy Grainger (1882–1961)	
	Famous Folk-Settings	
	From 'Youthful Suite'	5:16
1	II Rustic Dance	3:26
2	IV Eastern Intermezzo	1:50
3	Blithe Bells	3:23
	Free ramble – on a theme by J.S. Bach: 'Sheep may safely graze'	
4	Spoon River	4:53
	American Folk-Music Setting No. 2	
5	My Robin Is to the Greenwood Gone	5:53
	Settings of Songs and Tunes from William Chappell's <i>Old English Popular Music</i> No. 2	
6	Green Bushes	8:40
	Passacaglia on an English Folksong British Folk-Music Setting No. 12	
7	Country Gardens	2:18
	Orchestrated by Adolf Schmid	
8	Mock Morris	3:29
	Room-music Tit-bits No. 1	

9	Youthful Rapture	6:01
	for solo cello Room-music Tit-bits Unnumbered	
10	Shepherd's Hey	2:12
	for Room-music Twelve-some British Folk-Music Setting No. 3	
11	Walking Tune	3:30
	for Wind Five-some Room-music Tit-bits No. 3	
12	Molly on the Shore	3:50
	Irish Reel British Folk-Music Setting No. 1	
13	Handel in the Strand	4:45
	Clog Dance	
	TT 54:57	
	Bournemouth Sinfonietta	
	Moray Welsh solo cello	
	Philip Martin piano	
	Kenneth Montgomery	

Grainger: Famous Folk-Settings

Although the many settings and compositions in folk-style are only one aspect of the diverse and often eccentric musical personality of Percy Grainger, they have always been the main source of his fame as a composer. Grainger was born in Australia (at Melbourne), studied in Germany, toured the world as a pianist of some virtuosity, worked in Britain, fell in love with Scandinavia and eventually made his home in White Plains, New York, becoming an American citizen in 1918.

His **Youthful Suite** dates from his seventeenth year, when he was still a student at the Frankfurt Conservatory and before he became involved in actively collecting folk music, but the movements included on this disc attest to his feeling for that idiom. The pastoral 'Rustic Dance' with its 6/8 lilt is followed by 'Eastern Intermezzo'. Its stamping rhythms and unexpected turns of phrase show an early enthusiasm for Oriental music which Grainger had discovered while exploring Melbourne's Chinatown as a boy.

Bach was always one of Grainger's idols, and **Blithe Bells**, a version of the famously popular 'Sheep may safely graze' from the Cantata, BWV 208, is written in affectionate tribute. Grainger takes what he liked to call a

'free ramble' through the tune, with bell-like percussion evoking the pastoral scene. Both this and **Spoon River**, an arrangement of nineteenth-century Americana, are, in Grainger's term, 'elastically scored' to permit playing by small or large ensembles.

The composer became a friend and admirer of Frederick Delius, and another 'ramble', **My Robin Is to the Greenwood Gone**, idyllically flowing from the first four bars of the well-known tune, is in a style much like that of Delius. It was written in 1912 for eight instruments or for piano, to be played, as instructed, with a 'drowsy lilt'. The Passacaglia on **Green Bushes** features twenty-six variously decorated repetitions of a folk-tune which Grainger had collected in Lincolnshire during his countryside expeditions between 1905 and 1909.

At this time he pioneered the use of wax cylinders in recording for the English Folk-song Society. The leading members included Cecil Sharp who drew Grainger's attention to the morris-dance tune destined to earn the composer fame and a modest fortune as **Country Gardens**. First written for two whistlers and a few accompanying instruments, it was published in a version for

piano in 1919, and the beginnings of radio broadcasting quickly made it a hit number in various other arrangements.

Of the remaining pieces on this disc, **Mock Morris**, **Youthful Rapture** and **Walking Tune** are all original works by Grainger, who sometimes had difficulty convincing others that they were not further fruits from his folk music collections, so close are they to their idiom. Hating the term 'chamber music', Grainger published all three as what he would call 'Room-music Tit-bits'; he equally abhorred such terms as 'quintet', a term he rejected in favour of 'Wind Five-some' for the *Walking Tune*.

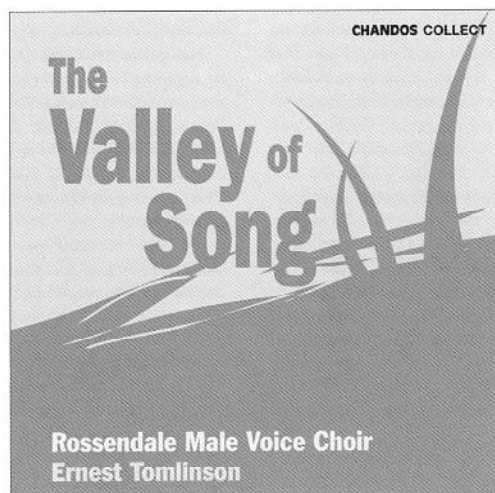
So it is that **Shepherd's Hey** is described as scored for 'Room-music Twelve-some', the listed instruments including '3 fiddles, 2 middle-fiddles, 2 bass-fiddles'. It was elaborated from another tune in Cecil Sharp's

collection, taken down from a fiddler in Devonshire ('Hey' is a particular figure used in morris dancing). Like the 'Irish Reel' **Molly on the Shore**, it combines a genuine affection for the folk-tune's origins with an ear for both homely sentiment and high spirits.

Handel in the Strand was a title bestowed by a banker friend of Grainger's, as the image that came to mind when hearing the 'Clog Dance', as the composer planned to call it, which Grainger had written for piano on the basis of the variations by Handel nicknamed 'The Harmonious Blacksmith'. The piece epitomises Grainger's liking for 'vulgar' music, in the literal sense of 'pertaining to the multitude', as it is designed for their unabashed entertainment.

© Noël Goodwin

Also available



The Valley of Song
CHAN 6604

You can now purchase Chandos CDs directly from us. For further details please telephone +44 (0) 1206 225225 for Chandos Direct. Fax: +44 (0) 1206 225201. Chandos Records Ltd, Chandos House, Commerce Way, Colchester, Essex CO2 8HQ, UK E-mail: chandosdirect@chandos.net Website: www.chandos.net

Any requests to license tracks from this or any other Chandos disc should be made directly to the Copyright Administrator, Chandos Records Ltd, at the above address.

This recording is sponsored by Harveys of Bristol.

Recording producer Brian Couzens

Sound engineer Ralph Couzens

Recording venue Christchurch Priory, Dorset; March 1978

Design Cass Cassidy

Booklet typeset by Michael White-Robinson

Copyright Copyright Control

© 1979 Chandos Records Ltd

© 2005 Chandos Records Ltd

Chandos Records Ltd, Colchester, Essex CO2 8HQ, England

Printed in the EU

CHANDOS COLLECT

CHAN 6542



PERCY GRAINGER (1882–1961)

Famous Folk-Settings

- | | | | | | |
|---|--|------|----|----------------------------|----------|
| 1 | From 'Youthful Suite' | 5:16 | 9 | Youthful Rapture | 6:01 |
| 2 | II Rustic Dance | 3:26 | | for solo cello | |
| 3 | IV Eastern Intermezzo | 1:50 | 10 | Shepherd's Hey | 2:12 |
| | | | | for Room-music Twelve-some | |
| 4 | Blithe Bells | 3:23 | 11 | Walking Tune | 3:30 |
| | Free ramble – on a theme by J.S. Bach: | | | for Wind Five-some | |
| | 'Sheep may safely graze' | | 12 | Molly on the Shore | 3:50 |
| 5 | Spoon River | 4:53 | | Irish Reel | |
| 6 | My Robin Is to the Greenwood | 5:53 | 13 | Handel in the Strand | 4:45 |
| | Gone | | | Clog Dance | TT 54:57 |
| 7 | Green Bushes | 8:40 | | | |
| | Passacaglia on an English Folksong | | | | |
| 8 | Country Gardens | 2:18 | | Bournemouth Sinfonietta | |
| | Orchestrated by Adolf Schmid | | | Moray Welsh solo cello | |
| | | | | Philip Martin piano | |
| | Mock Morris | 3:29 | | Kenneth Montgomery | |

© 1979 Chandos Records Ltd © 2005 Chandos Records Ltd Chandos Records Ltd • Colchester • Essex • England

GRAINGER: FAMOUS FOLK-SETTINGS - Bournemouth Sinfonietta/Montgomery

CHANDOS
CHAN 6542

GRAINGER: FAMOUS FOLK-SETTINGS - Bournemouth Sinfonietta/Montgomery

CHANDOS
CHAN 6542