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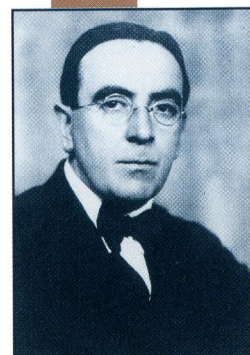


Nigel Luckhurst

RICHARD HICKOX

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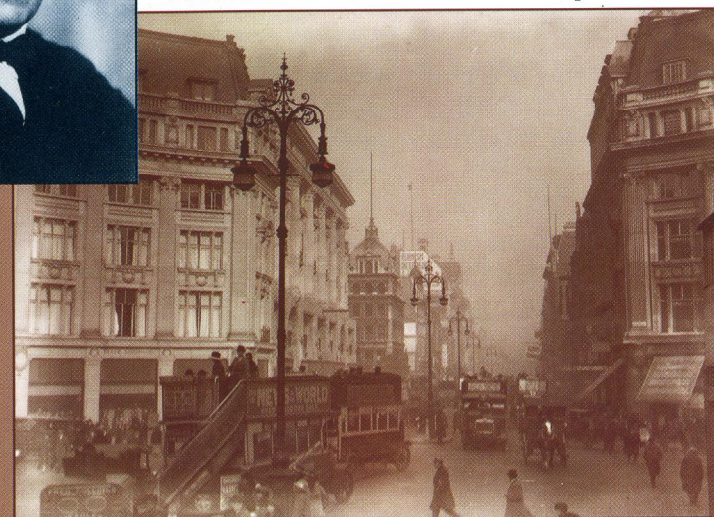
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JOHN IRELAND

A London Overture
These Things shall Be
Greater love hath no man

The Holy Boy
Vexilla Regis
Epic March



London Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
RICHARD HICKOX conductor

JOHN IRELAND (1879-1962)

- 1 **A London Overture** (13:35)
Andante moderato - Allegro brioso - Meno mosso - Tempo d' Allegro
- 2 **These Things shall Be** (22:12)
for baritone, chorus and orchestra
- 3 **Greater love hath no man** (6:50)
motet for soprano and baritone soli, chorus and orchestra
- 4 **The Holy Boy** (A Carol of the Nativity) (2:40)
for string orchestra
- 5 **Vexilla Regis** (Hymn for Passion Sunday) (11:51)
for chorus, trumpets, trombones and organ, with SATB soli
- 6 **Epic March** (9:08)
Allegro energico - Largamente

TT = 66:46 DDD

BRYN TERFEL baritone

PAULA BOTT soprano · **TERESA SHAW** contralto

JAMES OXLEY tenor

LONDON SYMPHONY CHORUS

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

RODERICK ELMS organ

RICHARD HICKOX conductor

JOHN NICHOLSON IRELAND was born near Manchester and spent most of his life in London, though with interludes in the Channel Islands and Sussex. His was a life of restricted horizons — choirmaster at the same Chelsea church for 22 years, and professor of composition at the Royal College of Music for 15, yet his music chronicles the wanderings of a restless spirit. A pupil of Sir Charles Stanford, he was also a noted composition teacher, his pupils including E J Moeran, Benjamin Britten and Geoffrey Bush. Moeran found him 'a wise adviser and an astute critic... a firm believer in the value of the study of strict counterpoint'. Although Ireland wrote a large number of songs and his piano music dominated the repertoire of British music teaching for many years, there are only a dozen or so works for orchestra. This programme thus gives a sure feel for his orchestral style.

A London Overture

This work originated as *A Comedy Overture*, the test piece for the Crystal Palace National Brass Band Contest in 1934. On 26 May 1936 Adrian Boult, then Director of Music at the BBC, suggested to Ireland that he should orchestrate it for that year's Promenade Concerts. It occupied the composer through the whole of the summer, the first performance having to be put back at least once; it was finally heard at Queen's Hall on 23 September. Shortly after completing the full score Ireland wrote to Boult underlining that 'the piece is now of far greater artistic significance, more complex in detail, technically difficult and subtle in style, than in its original form'.

At first called *In Town* this title was dropped because it was too similar to a contemporary work of Eric Coates. However, as *A London Overture* it immediately caught on, and the little figure of four notes heard after the slow introduction was recognised as representing the cry of a London bus conductor: 'dilly, Piccadilly!' Though, as the composer remarked 'beyond that, the work has little to do with Piccadilly, or at any rate, the Piccadilly of 1938'. Slower music signals the development section, with solo horn tone evident, and the words 'Memento mori' appear in the score. To underline the feeling of remembrance muted strings outline the melody of Schumann's song *Widmung* ('Dedication', 'Devotion') ('Du meine Liebe, du mein Hertz'). Could this be a passing reference to Richard Tauber's then popular hit with Schumann's song known as *Hearts*

Desire? Between 1917 and 1920 Ireland had composed his three *London Pieces* for piano (*Chelsea Reach*, *Ragamuffin* and *Soho forenoons*) and said his overture should be 'regarded as the fourth, and is in a similar light and unportentous manner'.

These Things shall Be

Early in 1937 Ireland was approached by the BBC with a commission for music for the BBC's Coronation Concert to mark the crowning of King George VI which was to take place in May that year. After some initial haggling over fees Ireland quickly responded with a scheme to set eight of the 15 verses of the idealistic poem 'A Vista', from *Lyrics of Life and Art*, by John Addington Symonds the younger (1840-1893), and the sketch was ready during April. Ireland remarked that he felt the words were 'an expression of British national feeling at the present time'. In fact he had earlier made a quite different setting of these words for *The Motherland Song Book* published in 1919. The composer made a few adjustments to the words, most notably where 'Sad heart' becomes 'Say heart' at the beginning, and 'Transcending aught' becomes 'Transcending all' in the last line.

It was delivered bit by bit — the first half of the chorus part on 12 April. Ireland was not a quick worker and sensing that he could not finish it in time he recruited his friend and pupil Alan Bush to assist in preparing the full score. Ireland would indicate the instrumentation he had in mind, Bush would then prepare the full score following Ireland's oral instructions. By 22 April the BBC had the remainder of the chorus part and the first half of the full score. The remainder of the full score, dedicated to Alan Bush, arrived at the BBC only a fortnight before the first performance. After the first performance in the BBC's Coronation Concert broadcast on 13 May 1937, Eric Fenby prepared the piano reduction used in the published vocal score. The first public performance followed at Queen's Hall on 1 December that year. Both this and the Coronation Concert were conducted by Sir Adrian Boult.

Rather late in the day Ireland decided to incorporate *The Internationale* into the music, and Alan Bush obliged him by writing it out. Ireland put the tune on the horn after the words 'paradise' at the end of the penultimate stanza. Almost immediately he had cold feet and asked the critic Edwin Evans not to identify the tune in his programme notes, and after its first public hearing he wrote a new horn part at this point. The shadow

of the First World War hung long over Ireland, as it did more overtly over the works of many of his contemporaries, and it is not surprising that the 'These things shall be' motif is also found in other works, in particular in his setting of Rupert Brooke's *The Soldier* (1917) at the words 'If I should die'.

Greater love hath no man

Ireland produced several hymns and church pieces that became well-known. None better than this motet, a meditation for Passiontide, written in 1912 for Charles Macpherson (then sub-organist at St Paul's) and his choristers at St Paul's Cathedral, and orchestrated in 1924. The words are a patchwork of verses from the New Testament, including *St John*, *Peter*, *I Corinthians* and *Romans*, and opening with words from *The Song of Solomon*.

The Holy Boy

This 'carol of the Nativity' was written as a piano solo on Christmas day 1913, and it was the third of the four Preludes published in 1918. After the First World War he arranged it both for violin or cello and piano and as an organ solo. During the second world war he used it to produce a short choral setting of Herbert S Brown's poem 'Lowly, laid in a manger', and in the version for string orchestra recorded here. There was a real-life 'holy boy', one of Ireland's choristers at St Luke's, Chelsea. He was Robert Glasby, the son of a sculptor who became Ireland's landlord. A cherubic sculptured head of the young boy remained a treasured possession of Ireland, even after the boy, by then in his early thirties, had died in tragic circumstances.

Vexilla Regis

Ireland withdrew almost all his earlier music including *Vexilla Regis*. For chorus accompanied by trumpets, trombones and organ, this is by a large margin the earliest piece in this programme, composed in 1898. The nineteen-year-old Ireland was then still a student of Stanford, and was assistant organist at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square, London. Stanford was so pleased with the piece he persuaded Walter Alcock, Director of Music at Holy Trinity, to perform it, and Ireland conducted. It was not published until the year after Ireland's death, although the composer had approved its revival.

This Hymn for Passion Sunday sets words by Bishop Venantius Fortunatus (530-609 AD) translated from the Latin by JM Neale. Ireland, for all his many years' connection with the Church was curiously ambivalent about his religious beliefs. To his mentor, Father Thompson, Ireland wrote (on 16 July 1936) 'I am a bad sort of (Anglo) Catholic — not a constantly practising one, tho it is ever in my heart and mind. It is the only thing which represents and prevents what is permanent — and age-long. As one grows older & ambitious pride & all becomes rather lacking in fire and significance, ones heart must turn towards what represents permanence. I do not wish ever to lose this. I am a Pagan, a Pagan I was born & a Pagan I shall ever remain. That is the foundation of religion. The deepest religious emotions I have ever felt have been at the Ceremonies on the Thursday and Friday before Easter — and what we cannot have — the ceremonies on the Saturday before Easter as practised by the Roman Church — something absolutely agelong & from everlasting — the rekindling of Fire — *Lumen Christi*.

Epic March

In a letter dated 28 November 1940, at the prompting of the Ministry of Information, Sir Adrian Boult, then still Director of Music at the BBC, wrote to John Ireland suggesting he consider composing a patriot march, combining the spirit of *A London Overture* and the broad tune of *These Things shall Be*. By the following spring the matter had not progressed, and in a letter to Sir Adrian, Ireland reported 'I have thought the matter over carefully, and it is certain that I cannot do anything on the lines of 'Pomp and Circumstance' No 1. It is not what I feel appropriate at the present time... What I have in mind is stern and purposeful rather than jolly or complacent.' By 5 June Ireland was ready to send Boult a rough sketch of the opening of the march for his approval, quoting Winston Churchill 'grim and gay' as a possible title. Later he wrote to Father Thompson 'I shall aim at strength and definition rather than excessive brilliance'. 'The BBC wanted something jolly and hearty, but that is not my idea at all. ... There is something rational to be said in a direct and forcible way & I hope I may be given the power to do this work aright. You may specially remember me in this at the Altar, as I know it will help me. Except the Lord build the house...' In July 1941 the V-Campaign (the Morse for the letter V — dot dot dot dash) became the subject of press comment — and Ireland was

quick to point out that the opening theme of his march, quite fortuitously adopted this very device.

By 2 September, Ireland, to whom the whole thing was not coming easily, wrote to Sir Adrian again, announcing the completion of the first section and discussing whether to use the tune from *These Things shall Be* and whether to have it in triple or duple time. In the end he wrote something new. Ireland briefly considered 'The Liberators' as a title. On the published score he printed the definition of 'Epic' taken from Nuttall's Standard Dictionary: 'Concerning some heroic action or series of actions and events of deep and lasting significance in the history of a nation or a race'. It was first performed on the opening night of the 1942 Promenade Concerts on 27 June.

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These Things shall Be

Say, heart, what will the future bring
To happier men when we are gone?
What golden days shall dawn for them,
Transcending all we gaze upon?

These things shall be! A loftier race
Then e'er the world hath known, shall rise
With flame of freedom in their souls
And light of science in their eyes.

They shall be gentle, brave and strong,
Not to shed human blood, but dare
All that may plant man's lordship firm
On earth and fire and sea and air.

Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every brain and heart shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.

They shall be simple in their homes,
And splendid in their public ways,
Filling the mansions of the state
With music and with hymns of praise.

In aisles majestic, halls of pride,
In gardens, groves, and galleries,
Manhood and age and youth shall meet,
To grow by converse inly wise.

New arts shall bloom, of loftier mould,
And mightier music thrill the skies,
And every life a song shall be,
When all the earth is paradise.

These things — they are no dream — shall be
For happier men when we are gone:
Those golden days for them shall dawn,
Transcending all we gaze upon.

John Addington Symonds

Greater love hath no man

Many waters cannot quench Love, neither can
the floods drown it. Love is strong as death.
Greater Love hath no man than this, that a man
lay down his life for his friends.

Who His own Self bare our sins in His own
Body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins,
should live unto righteousness.

Ye are washed, . . . ye are sanctified . . . ye are
justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus . . . Ye
are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a
holy nation . . . that ye should shew forth the
praises of Him Who hath called you out of
darkness into His marvellous light.

I beseech you, . . . brethren, by the mercies of
God, that ye present your bodies a living
sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is
your reasonable service.

Vexilla Regis

The Royal banners forward go,
The Cross, shines forth in mystic glow;
Where he in flesh, our flesh who made
Our sentence bore our ransom paid.

There whilst He hung His sacred side
By soldier's spear was open'd wide
To cleanse us in the precious flood
Of water mingled with His blood.

Fulfill'd is now what David told
In true prophetic song of old
The God the heathen's King should be
For God is reigning from the Tree!

O tree of glory, tree most fair,
Ordain'd those Holy limbs to bear,
How bright in purple robe it stood
The purple of a Saviour's blood!

Upon its arms like balance true
He weighed the price for sinners due
The price which he alone could pay
And spoiled the spoiler of his prey.

To Thee eternal Three-in-One
Let homage meet by all be done
And by the Cross Thou dost restore —
So rule and guide us evermore

Amen.

*Bishop Venantius Fortunatus
(530-609 AD)
translated by J M Neale*

JOHN NICHOLSON IRELAND wurde in der Nähe von Manchester geboren und verbrachte die größte Zeit seines Lebens in London, wenn auch mit Zwischenspielen auf den Kanalinseln und in der englischen Grafschaft Sussex. Die Horizonte seines Lebens waren beschränkt — 22 Jahre lang Chorleiter an derselben Kirche in Chelsea und 15 Jahre lang Professor für Komposition am Londoner Royal College of Music — doch seine Musik berichtet von den Wanderungen eines rastlosen Geistes. Er war ein Schüler von Sir Charles Stanford, später selbst ein berühmter Kompositionslehrer, und unter seine Schüler zählen E. J. Moeran, Benjamin Britten und Geoffrey Bush. Moeran hielt ihn für einen "weisen Ratgebenden und scharfsinnigen Kritiker... der fest an den Wert eines Studiums des strengen kontrapunktischen Satzes glaubte". Obwohl Ireland eine große Zahl von Liedern schrieb, und seine Klaviermusik lange Jahre das britische Unterrichtsmaterial dominierte, gibt es nur etwa ein Dutzend Werke für Orchester. Dieses Album gibt daher ein sicheres Gefühl für seinen Stil.

A London Overture

Dieses Werk entstand ursprünglich als *A Comedy Overture* (Eine Lustspiel-Ouvertüre) und Teststück für den Crystal Palace National Brass Band Contest (Nationaler Wettbewerb für Blechblaskapellen) im Jahre 1934. Am 26. Mai 1936 schlug Adrian Boult, damals Musikdirektor der BBC, Ireland vor, er solle es für die Promenadenkonzerte desselben Jahres orchestrieren. Zuerst nannte er es *In Town* (In der Stadt), gab diesen Titel jedoch auf, weil er einem zeitgenössischen Werk von Eric Coates zu ähnlich war. Als *A London Overture* hatte es jedoch sofort Erfolg, und von der kleinen Viertonfigur, die gleich nach der langsamen Einleitung zu hören ist, wurde sofort behauptet, sie repräsentiere den Ruf eines Londoner Busschaffners: "dilly, Piccadilly!" Obwohl, wie der Komponist bemerkte, "das Werk abgesehen davon wenig mit Piccadilly, oder zumindest mit Piccadilly von 1938 zu tun hat". Langsamere Musik kündigt die Durchführung an, in der der Klang eines Solo-Horns prominent ist, und in der Partitur erscheinen die Worte "Memento mori". Zur Verstärkung dieses Gefühls zeichnen die gedämpften Streicher die Melodie von Schumanns Lied *Widmung* ("Du meine Seele, du mein Herz") nach.

These Things shall Be

Anfang 1937 erhielt Ireland den Auftrag Musik, — für das im Mai stattfindende Krönungskonzert zu schreiben. Ireland reagierte mit einem Plan, acht der fünfzehn Strophen des naiv-utopischen Gedichts "A Vista" (Eine Aussicht) aus *Lyrics of Life and Art* (Gedichte von Leben und Kunst) von John Addington Symonds d.J. (1840-1893) zu setzen, und die Skizze wurde im April fertig. Ireland bemerkte, er fühle, daß die Worte einen "Ausdruck britischen Nationalgefühls der Gegenwart" darstellten. Er hatte sogar bereits früher eine ganz andere Vertonung dieser Worte für *The Motherland Song Book* (Mutterländisches Liederbuch), das 1919 veröffentlicht wurde, angefertigt. Ireland arbeitete nicht schnell, und da er spürte, daß er nicht rechtzeitig fertig werden würde, bat er seinen Schüler und Freund Alan Bush, ihm bei der Anfertigung der Orchesterpartitur zu helfen. Ireland notierte, welche Instrumentation er im Sinn hatte, und Bush erstellte die Partitur. Am 22. April erhielt die BBC die Chorstimmen und die erste Hälfte der Partitur. Der Rest der Partitur folgte zwei Wochen vor der Uraufführung. Ireland widmete das Werk Alan Bush, und nach der Uraufführung, die am 13. Mai 1937 im Rundfunk übertragen wurde, fertigte Eric Fenby den Klavierauszug für die Veröffentlichung an. Die erste öffentliche Aufführung folgte im gleichen Jahr am 1. Dezember in der Londoner Queen's Hall; beide Aufführungen wurden von Sir Adrian Boult dirigiert.

Greater love hath no man

Ireland komponierte mehrere Hymnen und andere Kirchenmusik, die weite Bekanntheit erlangten. Keine aber besser als diese Motette, eine Meditation für die Passionszeit, die 1912 für Charles Macpherson (damals Unterorganist an St. Paul's) und seine Chorknaben in der St. Paulskathedrale geschrieben wurde; die Orchestrierung folgte 1924. Die Worte sind aus Versen aus dem Neuen Testament, einschließlich dem *Johannesevangelium*, den *Petrusbriefen*, dem *1. Brief an die Korinther* und den *Römerbriefen* zusammengestellt; die Worte des Anfangs stammen aus dem Hohen *Lied Salomonis*.

The Holy Boy

Dieses "*Lied von der Geburt Christi*" entstand als Klaviersolo am 1. Weihnachtsfeiertag 1913 und wurde 1918 als das dritte der vier Präludien veröffentlicht. Nach dem Ersten

Weltkrieg bearbeitete Ireland es sowohl für Violine oder Cello und Klavier als auch als Orgelsolo. Während des Zweiten Weltkrieges benutzte er es als Grundlage für einen kurzen Chorsatz auf Herbert S. Browns Gedicht "*Lowly, laid in a manger*" (Niedrig, in eine Krippe gelegt) und für die Fassung für Streichorchester, die hier aufgenommen wurde.

Vexilla Regis

Dieser Hymnus für den Passionssonntag vertont Worte von Bischof Venantius Fortunatus (560-609) in der Übersetzung aus dem Lateinischen von J. M. Neale, und ist für Chor mit Begleitung von Trompeten, Posaunen und Orgel gesetzt. Er wurde 1898 komponiert und ist bei weitem das früheste Werk in diesem Programm. Der neunzehnjährige Ireland studierte damals noch bei Stanford und war stellvertretender Organist an der Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square, London. Stanford war mit dem Stück so zufrieden, daß er Walter Alcock, den Musikdirektor an der Holy Trinity Church dazu überredete, es aufzuführen, und Ireland dirigierte. Es wurde erst nach dem Tode Irelands veröffentlicht, obwohl der Komponist seine erneute Aufführung erlaubt hatte.

Epic March

In einem Brief vom 28. November 1940 schrieb Sir Adrian Boult, damals noch Musikdirektor der BBC, auf Veranlassung des Informations-Ministeriums mit dem Vorschlag an Ireland, er sollte sich die Komposition eines patriotischen Marsches überlegen, der die Stimmung von *A London Overture* und die breite Melodik von *These Things shall Be* verbinden sollte. Bis zum nächsten Frühjahr passierte nichts, und in einem Brief an Sir Adrian berichtete Ireland: "Ich habe mir die Sache genau überlegt, und ich kann sicherlich nichts nach der Art von 'Pomp and Circumstance' Nr. 1 liefern. Es scheint mir für unsere Zeit nicht angemessen... Was ich im Sinn habe, ist eher streng und entschlossen als fröhlich oder selbstzufrieden."

Im Juli 1941 machte die "*V for Victory*"-Kampagne der BBC, in der das Morsesignal für den Buchstaben V (kurz-kurz-kurz-lang) stellvertretend für *Victory* ("Sieg") auf einer Trommel gespielt gesendet wurde, Schlagzeilen in der Presse, und Ireland machte schnell darauf aufmerksam, daß das Anfangsthema seines Marsches (wenn auch rein zufällig) genau dieses rhythmische Schema verwendete. In der gedruckten Partitur zitierte er die

Definition von "*Epic*" (Episch) aus Nuttall's Standard Dictionary: "Eine heroische Handlung oder Reihe von Handlungen und Ereignisse von tiefer und dauerhafter Bedeutung in der Geschichte einer Nation oder Rasse betreffend". Es wurde im Eröffnungskonzert der Promenadenkonzert 1942, am 27. Juni, uraufgeführt.

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Übersetzung: Renate Maria Wendel

JOHN NICHOLSON IRELAND naquit près de Manchester et passa la plus grande partie de sa vie à Londres, si l'on excepte quelques séjours dans les îles Anglo-Normandes et le Sussex. Sa vie fut celle d'une personne aux horizons limités: maître de chapelle à la même église du quartier de Chelsea, à Londres, pendant 22 ans et professeur de composition au Royal College of Music pendant 15 ans. Pourtant sa musique est la chronique des vagabondages d'un esprit pétillant. Ancien élève de Sir Charles Stanford, il fut lui-même un professeur de composition remarquable, et compta parmi ses étudiants E. J. Moeran, Benjamin Britten et Geoffrey Bush. Moeran le trouvait "fin conseiller et critique avisé... croyant fermement en la valeur d'une étude stricte du contrepoint". Ireland écrivit un grand nombre de mélodies; dans l'enseignement, sa musique pour piano domina plusieurs années le répertoire britannique; mais, par contre, il n'a produit environ qu'une douzaine d'œuvres pour orchestre. Aussi, le programme choisi pour cet enregistrement devrait-il permettre de mieux apprécier son style.

A London Overture

Cette œuvre était à l'origine *A Comedy Overture*, un des morceaux d'essai du concours national d'orchestres de cuivres, au Crystal Palace (de Londres) en 1934. Le 26 mai 1936, Adrian Boult, alors Directeur de Musique à la BBC, proposa à Ireland d'orchestrer son Ouverture pour l'interpréter aux "Promenade Concerts" de l'année suivante, ce qu'il fit. Le premier titre *In Town* (En ville) dut être abandonné car il rappelait trop celui d'une composition contemporaine d'Eric Coates. Mais sous celui de *A London Overture* le morceau retint l'attention du public qui reconnut dans la petite figure à quatre notes (qui suit l'introduction lente), le cri d'un receveur d'autobus londonien "dilly, Piccadilly!". Mais, comme le compositeur le remarquait lui-même, "En dehors de ça, l'ouvrage n'a pas grand'chose à voir avec Piccadilly, ou, tout au moins, le Piccadilly de 1938". Une musique plus lente signale la section du développement, le son du cor solo est mis en évidence et les mots "Memento mori" figurent sur la partition. Pour faire ressortir l'esprit commémoratif de ce passage, les cordes assourdies esquissent la mélodie de Schumann, *Widmung* (dévouement, vénération) ("Du meine Liebe, du mein Hertz") (Toi mon amour, toi mon cœur).

These Things shall Be (Ces choses adviendront)

Au début de 1937, Ireland reçut une commande pour le Concert du Couronnement que devait donner la BBC au mois de mai de la même année. Ireland accepta et présenta un projet: mettre en musique les 15 strophes de "A Vista", un poème naïf, utopique, extrait des *Lyrics of Life and Art* (Poèmes Lyriques de la vie et de l'Art) de John Addington Symonds (1840-1893). L'esquisse était prête au mois d'avril. Ireland disait entendre dans les mots "comme une expression du sentiment national britannique du moment", mais en fait, il avait mis ces mêmes vers en musique des années auparavant pour le *Motherland Song Book* (Livre de chansons de la mère-patrie), publié en 1919. Ireland travaillait lentement, et sentant qu'il ne pourrait finir la tâche à temps, il recruta les services de son ami et élève Alan Bush pour l'aider à écrire la partition complète; Ireland indiquait l'instrumentation qu'il avait en tête et Bush la couchait sur le papier. Le 22 avril, la BBC recevait la partie chorale et la première moitié de la partition complète; le reste ne lui fut remis que deux semaines avant la première. Ireland dédia l'œuvre à Alan Bush

et après sa première diffusion le 13 mai 1937, Eric Fenby en fit une réduction pour piano, celle qui fut utilisée dans la publication de la partie vocale. La première interprétation publique eut lieu le 1er décembre de la même année, au Queen's Hall de Londres. En ces deux occasions, l'orchestre était placé sous la direction de Sir Adrian Boult.

Greater love hath no man (Nul homme ne peut faire preuve de plus d'amour)

Ireland composa plusieurs hymnes et autres chants d'église qui devinrent célèbres. Mais le plus connu de tous est ce motet, une méditation pour la semaine de la Passion, écrit en 1912 à l'intention de Charles Macpherson (alors organiste en second à la cathédrale Saint-Paul) et de ses choristes de la cathédrale, puis orchestré en 1924. Les paroles sont un mélange de citations et de vers extraits, d'abord du Cantique des Cantiques, puis de l'Evangile selon Saint-Jean et des Epîtres de Saint-Pierre et de Saint-Paul.

The Holy Boy (Le Divin Enfant)

A l'origine ce chant de Noël (1913) était un solo pour piano, il fut publié sous forme de Prélude (le troisième d'un groupe de quatre) en 1918. Après la première guerre mondiale, Ireland en fit deux arrangements: un pour violon — ou pour violoncelle — et piano et un pour orgue (solo). Pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale il s'en servit à nouveau, mettant en musique pour chorale le poème d'Herbert S. Brown "Lowly, laid in a manger" (Couché dans la crèche) et en en faisant une version pour orchestre à cordes, celle qui est enregistrée ici.

Vexilla Regis

Cet hymne du dimanche de la Passion met en musique les paroles de l'évêque Venance Fortunat (530-609 après J.C.) traduites du latin par J.M. Neale. Il est écrit pour chœur, trompettes, trombones et orgue. C'est indiscutablement la pièce la plus ancienne de ce programme, puisqu'elle fut composée en 1898. Ireland était alors âgé de dix-neuf ans, organiste en second à l'église de la Sainte Trinité, à Sloane Square (Londres), et toujours étudiant. Stanford, son professeur, aima tant cette œuvre qu'il persuada Walter Alcock, Directeur de musique à la Sainte Trinité, de la faire interpréter à l'église; Ireland était au pupitre. Elle ne fut publiée qu'un an après la mort du compositeur bien qu'il eût approuvé sa reprise.

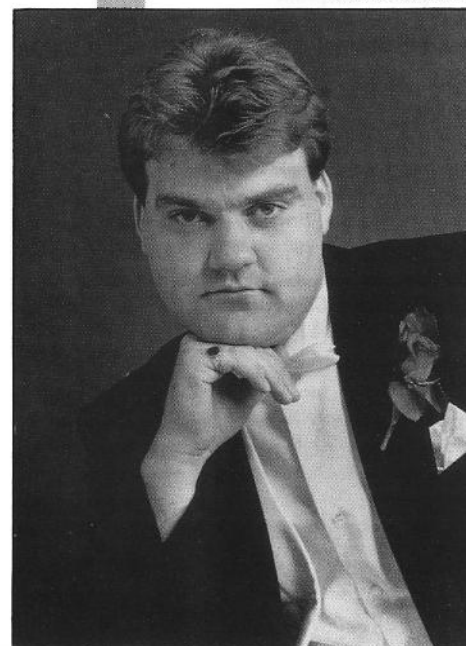
Epic March (Marche épique)

Une lettre datée du 28 novembre 1940, que le Ministère de l'Information avait demandé à Sir Adrian Boult, alors Directeur de musique à la BBC, d'écrire à John Ireland, lui propose d'écrire une marche patriotique, dans l'esprit de *A London Overture*, sur un air rappelant (plus ou moins). *These Things shall Be*. Au printemps suivant, n'ayant toujours rien soumis, Ireland s'en explique par lettre à Sir Adrian: "J'ai pensé soigneusement à votre suggestion, mais il est certain que je ne peux absolument rien produire dans le genre de 'Pomp and Circumstance, No. 1'. Ce n'est pas ce qui convient, je crois, au moment présent... Ce que j'ai en tête est beaucoup plus sévère et réfléchi qu'enjoué ou apaisant".

Au mois de juillet 1941 la Campagne V-comme-Victoire (illustrée par les sons de la lettre V en morse: point, point, point, trait) faisait l'objet des commentaires de la presse et Ireland ne perdit pas de temps à souligner que le thème d'ouverture de sa marche avait adopté, tout à fait par hasard, cette même cadence. Sur la partition publiée il fit imprimer la définition du mot "Epique", telle qu'elle figurait au Dictionnaire Nuttall: "qui concerne quelque action héroïque ou une série d'actions et d'événements d'une signification profonde et durable dans l'histoire d'une nation ou d'une race". La marche fut interprétée à la soirée d'ouverture des "Promenade Concerts" le 27 juin 1942.

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Traduction: Paulette Hutchinson

BRYN TERFEL



Fritz Curzon

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• **A Chandos Digital Recording**

• Recording Producer: Brian Couzens

• Sound Engineer: Ralph Couzens • Assistant Engineer: Peter Newble

• Editor: Tim Oldham

• Recorded in St Jude-on-the-Hill, London NW11 on 24-26 April 1990

• Front Cover Photograph of John Ireland, courtesy of the John Ireland Trust.

Photograph of Oxford Street seen from Regent Street (1924), courtesy of the Topham Picture Source, Kent.

• Sleeve Design: Jaquetta Sergeant • Art Direction: Miranda Cook

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C

IRELAND: ORCHESTRAL & CHORAL WORKS - LSO & Chorus/Hickox

CHANDOS
CHAN 8879**CHANDOS****CHAN 8879****JOHN IRELAND (1879-1962)**

- 1 A London Overture (13:35)**
Andante moderato - Allegro brioso - Meno mosso - Tempo d' Allegro
- 2 These Things shall Be (22:12)**
for baritone, chorus and orchestra
- 3 Greater love hath no man (6:50)**
motet for soprano and baritone soli, chorus and orchestra
- 4 The Holy Boy (A Carol of the Nativity) (2:40)**
for string orchestra
- 5 Vexilla Regis (Hymn for Passion Sunday) (11:51)**
for chorus, trumpets, trombones and organ, with SATB soli
- 6 Epic March (9:08)**
Allegro energico - Largamente

TT = 66:46 DDD**BRYN TERFEL baritone****PAULA BOTT soprano • TERESA SHAW contralto • JAMES OXLEY tenor****LONDON SYMPHONY CHORUS****LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA****RODERICK ELMS organ****RICHARD HICKOX conductor****CHANDOS RECORDS LTD.**
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