

ELGAR

Complete Organ Works

Organ Sonatas • Vesper Voluntaries • Nimrod

Tom Winpenny, Organ



Organ Sonata No. 1 in G major, Op. 28 (1895)	27:33
1 I. Allegro maestoso	8:57
2 II. Allegretto	4:38
3 III. Andante espressivo	7:00
4 IV. Presto (comodo)	6:49
5 Cantique, Op. 3 (1912) (version for organ)	3:44
6 Solemn March (1894) (arrangement by Elgar of 'To the sumptuous banquet' from the cantata <i>The Black Knight, Op. 25</i> , 1893)	2:39
Vesper Voluntaries, Op. 14 (1889)	18:43
7 Introduction	1:35
8 No. 1. Andante	1:14
9 No. 2. Allegro	2:04
10 No. 3. Andantino	2:11
11 No. 4. Allegretto piacevole	1:32
12 Intermezzo	0:36
13 No. 5. Poco lento	2:10
14 No. 6. Moderato	1:37
15 No. 7. Allegretto pensoso	2:03
16 No. 8. Poco allegro – Coda	3:28
17 Loughborough Memorial Chime (1923) (version for organ)	5:29
Organ Sonata No. 2, Op. 87a (1930/1932) (arr. Sir Ivor Atkins [1869–1953] from <i>Severn Suite, Op. 87</i>)	14:02
18 I. Introduction	2:39
19 II. Toccata –	3:59
20 III. Fugue – Cadenza –	5:43
21 III. Coda	1:37
22 Imperial March, Op. 32 (1897) (arr. Sir George Clement Martin [1844–1916] for organ)	4:55
23 Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36 'Enigma' – Variation 9: Nimrod (A.J. Jaeger) (1898–99/1932) (arr. William Henry Harris [1883–1973] for organ)	3:47
24 Five Military Marches, Op. 39 'Pomp and Circumstance'– No. 4 in G major (1907) (arr. George Robertson Sinclair [1863–1917] for organ)	5:26

Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

Complete Organ Works

Edward Elgar was born in Broadheath, outside Worcester, to William Henry Elgar – a music shop proprietor and piano tuner – and Ann (née Greening), a recent convert to Roman Catholicism. In his youth, Elgar received violin lessons, but was otherwise musically self-taught, and he immersed himself in the absorbing musical environment of Worcester through the city's music societies, the cathedral's choral services and his father's music business. By the late 1870s he was the leader of local orchestras, and from 1878 played in a number of the city's triennial Three Choirs Festivals (Hereford and Gloucester hosting intervening festivals). In 1879 he was appointed bandmaster at the psychiatric hospital in nearby Powick where he extended his practical instrumental knowledge by coaching and composing for the staff. Introspective by nature, he found respite and inspiration in walks and cycle rides around the Malvern Hills, whose beautiful panorama he had known from his birthplace.

Elgar's voracious musical appetite initially made him determined to study at the Leipzig Conservatory. A lack of means prevented this; however, a visit to the city in 1882 – Elgar's fiancée Helen Weaver was then a Conservatory student, though he would break off the engagement – proved especially influential, exposing him to performances of works by Schumann, Brahms and Wagner. Though a career as a violinist beckoned, compositional ambition dominated his life. He married Caroline Alice Roberts in 1889; soon they made an unsuccessful move to London. While there, the Worcester Festival commissioned an overture: *Froissart* was accepted by Novello and began a long-standing relationship with the publisher. Further well-received works such as *Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf* (1896) and the *'Enigma' Variations* (1898–99) helped to establish Elgar's reputation. *The Dream of Gerontius* (1900) demonstrated his supreme skill in the oratorio genre; in Germany Richard Strauss was its ardent enthusiast, declaring Elgar 'the first English progressivist'. Subsequent works such as the *First Symphony* (1908) and the *Violin Concerto* (1910) secured Elgar's legacy, while dignified ceremonial works such as the *Coronation Ode* (1902) and the five *Pomp and Circumstance Military Marches* (1901–30) particularly appealed to the popular mood of Edwardian Britain.

Burdened with the impression of being an 'outsider' – underlined by his Catholicism, social class and provincial upbringing – Elgar craved acceptance by the musical establishment. His manifold honours included the Order of Merit (1911), appointment as Master of the King's Music (1924) and a baronetcy (1931). His creative energy diminished significantly following his wife's death in 1920, though the final year of his life brought about a renewed outpouring: the unfinished opera *The Spanish Lady* and partially completed *Third Symphony*.

The organ was a formative part of Elgar's musical upbringing. Initially he observed his father accompanying and improvising for services at St George's Catholic Church in Worcester; later (from the age of 15) he regularly played for Mass, and improved his technique by studying didactic publications by W.T. Best and J.C.H. Rinck. He eventually succeeded his father as the church organist from 1886 to 1889. Worcester Cathedral held similar importance: later in life Elgar recalled rushing from Mass at St George's to the Cathedral to hear the concluding voluntaries played on the Hill organ, newly installed in the cathedral's south transept in 1874. William Done, Cathedral organist since 1844 and ex officio director of the Worcester Three Choirs Festival, had taken kindly to the young musician, allowing him – while a child – to borrow music books from the Cathedral library; in 1884 Done would premiere Elgar's *Sevillana* with the Worcester Philharmonic Society. In 1886 the aging organist appointed Hugh Blair as his assistant. Blair quickly befriended and encouraged Elgar. Done soon handed over his duties to Blair, though remained titular organist until 1895. Following Blair's resignation from Worcester Cathedral in 1897, Elgar established a deep and life-long friendship with Blair's successor, Ivor Atkins, with whom he collaborated on many projects, including an edition of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, and who acted as a sounding board for newly completed drafts such as the oratorio *The Apostles*.

Elgar composed the *Sonata in G major* [1]–[4] in 1895 at the request of Blair for the visit of a group of American church musicians to Worcester. Orchestral in conception, the work displays Elgar's familiarity with the diverse and characterful timbres of the Hill instrument. Elgar admitted that Blair had insufficient time to prepare the complex work (skilful control being required to effect its many necessary stop changes smoothly): Blair had received the score a mere four days before the recital. The Worcestershire Chronicle reported that 'a very large congregation listened with evident pleasure', but Rosa Burley, a headmistress friend of Elgar's, wrote that Blair 'made a terrible mess of poor Elgar's work'.

The imposing opening of the *Allegro maestoso* [1] – tempered by an introverted, wistful second subject – bears similarities to Elgar's cantata *The Black Knight*, dedicated to Blair in 1893; yet the *Sonata's* dedication to Charles Swinnerton Heap acknowledges another enthusiastic supporter's recent performances of the same cantata. The *Sonata's* second movement is a lighter *Intermezzo* [2], its delicate chamber ensemble-style writing suitably demonstrating the instrument's quieter registers. A heartfelt melody characterises the subsequent *Andante espressivo* [3], a truly symphonic slow movement which stems from an 1887 sketch entitled '*Träumerei*'. The concluding *Presto* [4] is an energetic finale of considerably athleticism which contrasts anxious and carefree themes. Its central passage revisits the previous movement's principal melody.

Cantique [5] has its origins as an *Andante arioso* from *Harmony Music No. 6*, an incomplete wind quintet of 1879 forming part of Elgar's 'Shed' music – his early extended chamber works composed for private performance by Elgar (as bassoonist), alongside his brother and friends. In 1912 he made three arrangements of the charming C major movement, which is characterised by a dotted rhythm figure, for piano, organ and full orchestra. The latter two arrangements were dedicated to Blair.

In 1894, following the successful performance of *The Black Knight* at the previous year's Worcester Festival (for which Blair had commissioned the work), Elgar offered an organ arrangement of the *Solemn March* [6] to Novello to capitalise on the cantata's recent publication. The cantata sets Longfellow's translation of Ludwig Uhland's eponymous ballad: the march, a fine example of Elgar's noble melodious style, originally accompanied the chorus 'To the solemn banquet came every knight and every dame'.

Newly married and trying to establish himself in London, Elgar completed the *Vesper Voluntaries* [7]–[16] in late 1889 while the couple lived at a relative's house in Upper Norwood. Installation around the same time of an organ at the property may have influenced the composition of the sequence of short, liturgically suitable works of the style that Elgar and his father may have extemporised at St George's. The music was soon published and the attractive miniatures are framed by a processional-style D minor introduction which re-emerges as an affirming D major coda.

In May 1923 Elgar received a request for a piece for the inauguration that summer of the Loughborough War Memorial Carillon, to be played by the distinguished Belgian carillonneur Jef Denyn. Elgar corresponded with the commissioner, William Starmer, over the practicalities and limitations of the instrument and suggested also making an organ arrangement. Though only completed in draft, the organ version of *Loughborough Memorial Chime* [17] amply reveals the work's melancholic charm.

In 1932 Ivor Atkins unsuccessfully persuaded Elgar to arrange for organ his recent *Severn Suite* (1930) for brass. Having just toiled on its orchestral transcription, Elgar was disinclined to make a further arrangement, but encouraged Atkins, in close consultation, to undertake the work, which became the *Organ Sonata No. 2, Op. 87a* [18]–[21]. In the brass suite the movements are given descriptive titles: the stately *Introduction* [18] represents Worcester Castle, the animated *Toccata* [19] a tournament, and the solemn *Fugue* [20] – an early version of which Atkins had performed for the reopening of the renovated organ in 1925 – the cathedral itself. Atkins chose to omit the original fourth movement (a minuet), substituting his own cadenza to precede the coda [21].

In 1896 Elgar's publishers, Novello, requested two works to capitalise on the celebrations for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Queen Victoria's reign the following year. Elgar obliged, penning the cantata *The Banner of St George* to words commissioned by the publisher, and the *Imperial March* [22]. First performed at a concert in Crystal Palace, this military march was immediately successful, receiving many performances during the course of the jubilee year, including at a royal garden party and at the Royal Albert Hall. The work quickly cemented Elgar's reputation as a composer able to provide dignified and uplifting ceremonial works. The understated opening gives way to fanfare figures which unwind into a middle central section which introduces a relaxed dotted rhythm passage sharing similarities with a theme in the final movement of the recently composed *Sonata in G major* for organ. The recapitulation is surmounted by a triumphant coda derived from the work's initial theme. The work's highly idiomatic arrangement for solo organ is by Sir George Martin, organist of St Paul's Cathedral from 1888 to 1916.

Nimrod [23], the ninth of Elgar's '*Enigma*' *Variations* (1898–99), depicts Elgar's friend and music editor at Novello Augustus Jaeger. (The nickname is a pun – Nimrod is described in the Old Testament as a 'mighty hunter'; Jaeger is German for hunter). The variation's nostalgic solemnity has helped it to become synonymous with national ceremonies of remembrance and reflection. The arrangement, published in 1932, is by William Harris, later organist of St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

The organist of Hereford Cathedral from 1889 to 1917, George Robertson Sinclair, was immortalised along with his bulldog Dan in another of the *Variations*. Through the Three Choirs Festival, Sinclair enjoyed a close friendship with Elgar and arranged for solo organ the *Pomp and Circumstance Military March No. 4* [24] of which he was the dedicatee. The apotheosis of Elgar's rousing ceremonial style, the march contrasts ebullient opening passages with an expansive, stirring melody.

Elgar and Hereford

Edward Elgar had a long association with Hereford, originating in part from his friendship with George Robertson Sinclair, the cathedral organist. Sinclair, appointed in 1889, would have been present at Worcester Cathedral at the 1890 premiere of the Three Choirs Festival commission of Elgar's overture *Froissart*, which the composer conducted. For the 1897 Hereford festival Sinclair commissioned Elgar's majestic *Te Deum and Benedictus*. Elgar was arguably at the height of his artistic powers when from 1904 to 1911 he and his family lived at Plâs Gwyn, a large house on the outskirts of Hereford overlooking the River Wye. Works he composed during this period include the two symphonies, the oratorio *The Kingdom*, and the *Introduction and Allegro* for strings. In 1905, in spite of holding no position on the city council, Elgar was offered, though he declined, the mayoralty of Hereford. He took part in his last Three Choirs Festival in 1933 in the city, conducting an arrangement for viola of the *Cello Concerto* (Lionel Tertis was the soloist), and his oratorios *The Dream of Gerontius* and *The Kingdom*. In 2005, a sculpture by Jemma Pearson of Elgar, standing with his bicycle and looking towards Hereford Cathedral, was unveiled on Cathedral Green.

Tom Winpenny

The Organ of Hereford Cathedral

Henry Willis, 1892
Restored by Harrison & Harrison, Durham, UK, 2004

The historic organ of Hereford Cathedral was built by Henry Willis in 1892, superseding an 1864 instrument by Gray and Davison which Willis had altered and enlarged in 1879. The earliest instrument in the cathedral for which detailed records survive was an organ by Renatus Harris in 1686 which stood on a quire screen; this instrument was regularly rebuilt during the 18th and early 19th centuries before the extensive restoration and reordering of the cathedral between 1841 and 1863. The present organ is situated on the south side of the quire and retains the colourful display pipes designed by Gilbert Scott for the Gray and Davison organ which occupied the same location.

This internationally famous organ is significant for preserving the original Willis pipework and fundamental character of the instrument, albeit with subsequent small changes. The Willis firm made minor alterations and additions in 1909, and in 1933 – when the organ's action was changed to electro-pneumatic – the console was repositioned on the north side of the choir. Harrison & Harrison restored the instrument in 1978, providing nine new stops, relocating the Choir organ to the lower part of the case (which originally housed the console), and re-siting the Tuba rank prominently at the top of the instrument. Further cleaning and renovation was undertaken by Harrison & Harrison in 2004.

The organ ranks heard in this recording are almost exclusively those of 1892 and 1909.

Tom Winpenny

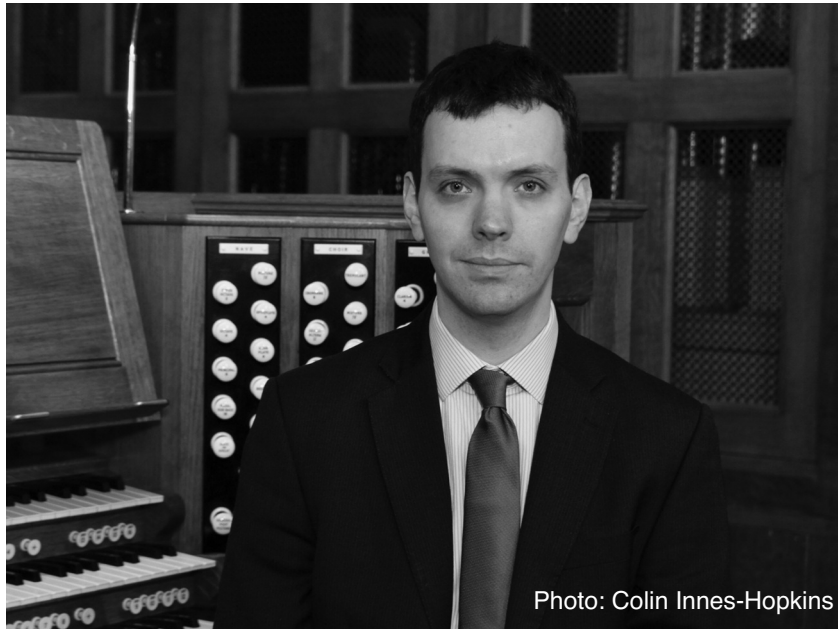


Photo: Colin Innes-Hopkins

Tom Winpenny is assistant master of the music at St Albans Cathedral, where he accompanies the daily choral services and directs the Cathedral Girls Choir. He previously served as sub-organist at St Paul's Cathedral, London. He is currently a trustee of the Royal College of Organists. Winpenny has broadcast frequently on BBC radio and featured on American Public Media's *Pipedreams*. He was an organ scholar at King's College, Cambridge, twice accompanying *A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols*. As a soloist, he has performed internationally, with recent engagements in Sweden, Germany, Italy and the US. His wide-ranging discography includes music by Mozart, Liszt, Lutyens, McCabe, Joubert and Francis Grier. For Naxos, his solo recordings include Messiaen's *La Nativité du Seigneur* (8.573332) and *L'Ascension* (8.573471), music by Judith Bingham (8.572687 and 8.574251), Williamson (8.571375–76), and Francis Pott's monumental Passion symphony *Christus* (8.574252–53). Winpenny also directs St Albans Cathedral Girls Choir in recordings of music by Mendelssohn (8.572836), Mathias (8.573523) and Michael Haydn (8.574163).

Pedal Organ

32' Double Open Bass (from 16')
 16' Open Bass
 16' Open Diapason
 (partly from Great)
 16' Bourdon
 8' Principal*
 8' Stopped Flute*
 4' Fifteenth*
 4' Open Flute*
 Mixture IV*
 32' Bombarde
 (from Ophicleide, 1909/20)
 16' Ophicleide (1909)
 16' Trombone
 8' Trumpet
 4' Clarion (1978/2004)

Choir Organ

8' Open Diapason
 8' Claribel Flute
 8' Lieblich Gedacht
 8' Dulciana
 4' Gemshorn
 4' Lieblich Flute
 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Nazard+
 2' Spitzflute*
 1 $\frac{3}{5}$ ' Tierce+
 Mixture III*
 8' Trumpet+

Great Organ

16' Double Open Diapason
 16' Bourdon
 8' Open Diapason No 1
 8' Open Diapason No 2
 8' Open Diapason No 3
 8' Claribel Flute
 8' Stopped Diapason
 4' Principal No 1
 4' Principal No 2
 4' Flute
 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Twelfth
 2' Fifteenth
 Mixture III
 Mixture IV*
 16' Double Trumpet
 8' Trumpet
 4' Clarion

Swell Organ

16' Contra Gamba
 8' Open Diapason
 8' Stopped Diapason
 8' Salicional
 8' Vox Angelica (tenor C)
 4' Principal
 4' Lieblich Flute
 2' Fifteenth
 Mixture III
 16' Dulzian+
 8' Oboe
 16' Double Trumpet
 8' Trumpet
 4' Clarion
 Tremulant

Solo Organ (enclosed)

8' Viola da Gamba
 8' Voix Célestes (tenor C)
 8' Harmonic Flute
 4' Concert Flute
 2' Hohl Flute
 8' Clarinet†
 8' Orchestral Oboe†
 8' Cor Anglais (1909)
 8' Tromba†
 4' Glockenspiel (39 gongs, 1909)
 (unenclosed)
 8' Tuba (unenclosed)
 Tremulant

All stops dating from 1892 except:

* new rank, Harrison & Harrison, 1978

+ new rank, Henry Willis III, 1933

Earlier work all by Henry Willis & Sons

† extra octave of pipes in bass

Compass:

manuals CC—a (58 notes)

pedals CCC—F (30 notes)

Full complement of couplers, including sub-
 and super-octave couplers

Electropneumatic key and stop action

Divisional and general piston memories; stepper

Balanced expression pedals to the Swell and

Solo Organs

General crescendo pedal



The Willis organ of Hereford Cathedral
Photo: Peter Dyke

The organ was a formative part of Edward Elgar's musical upbringing, and for a time he was organist at St George's Catholic Church in Worcester. The symphonic scale and distinctive themes of the *First Sonata* contrast with the more liturgical atmosphere of the *Vesper Voluntaries*, while the rousing *Second Sonata* is an arrangement of Elgar's *Severn Suite* for brass. This album comprises Elgar's original works for organ as well as the complete arrangements made by the composer himself and those made by four distinguished contemporary organists.

**Sir Edward
ELGAR**
(1857–1934)

1–4	Organ Sonata No. 1 in G major, Op. 28 (1895)	27:33
5	Cantique, Op. 3 (1912) (version for organ)	3:44
6	Solemn March (1894) (arranged from <i>The Black Knight</i>)	2:39
7–16	Vesper Voluntaries, Op. 14 (1889)	18:43
17	Loughborough Memorial Chime (1923) (version for organ)	5:29
18–21	Organ Sonata No. 2, Op. 87a (1930/1932) (arranged for organ by I. Atkins)	14:02
22	Imperial March, Op. 32 (1897) (arranged for organ by G.C. Martin)	4:55
23	'Nimrod' from 'Enigma' Variations, Op. 36 (1898–99/1932) (arranged for organ by W.H. Harris)	3:47
24	Pomp and Circumstance March No. 4 (1907) (arranged for organ by G.R. Sinclair)	5:26

Tom Winpenny
on the 'Father' Willis organ of Hereford Cathedral

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet • Recorded: 14–15 July 2021 at Hereford Cathedral, UK
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1–5 7–21 • This album was made with generous support from Mrs Margaret and Dr Stephen Leese.
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with this recording • Cover photo: *Edward Elgar* (2005) by Jemma Pearson, Hereford Cathedral Green

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