

## EAST RIDING CHURCH MUSIC & MUSICIANS BETWEEN THE WARS

A Lecture by Professor Gordon Reynolds, L.V.O., Chairman of the Society given in the Quire of Beverley Minster on Saturday 21 May 1994.

To begin with, we have to try to set aside our experiences of these last few fascinating days when, in the company of like-minded companions, it has been possible to explore a rich field of highly-appreciated beauty – beauty of landscape, architecture and sound. Perhaps most significant of all is the fact that, without any kind of reservation, we are able to enjoy and discuss it all not just in isolation, but in the context of a nation-wide culture, in which the East Riding of Yorkshire proudly plays its part. Beverley and its breath-taking Minster rank high in the list of sights to be seen. The Humber Bridge has linked Beverley to the once alien shore of Lincolnshire. Television has done its best to make the inside of the Minster as familiar as the outside – though there's a long way to go before they get the proportions right. And the same may be said of the music. Wonderful though it is to see the riches of the organ case rising above the choir screen, it is a little disappointing that its equally rich and glorious roar with which it supports massed hymn-singing should be represented so thinly and distantly. And though it may be true that he who runs may read (not a thing I would advise anyone to try) it seems to be generally accepted that those who view are unlikely to notice discrepancy in sound.

There is another factor which might nowadays be taken for granted, the link with the University of Hull, now very well-established, a two way link firmly sustained by Alan Spedding, whose faith and industry over many years have been so rightly crowned by the award of a Doctorate. This in itself indicates the quality expected and provided by the Minster, as it maintains its honoured and hard-working place in the world of cathedral music. For we have to remember that Beverley shared with Ripon and Southwell the duties of outposts to York Minster and though cathedral status has not been bestowed here as it was at Ripon and Southwell, yet the distinctive nature and surpassing beauty of Beverley Minster make the very obvious demand that it should offer the full glories of cathedral worship in a manner worthy of its environment.

But now, to go back in time. I hope you will understand that my observations, my memories of another age, are those of a boy whose isolation musically and culturally was shared by everyone in the East Riding suffering the limiting disability of being unable to afford a wider horizon. The one hopeful pointer to a world outside was the wireless, in our case a two-valve Cossor – but we didn't get that until I was eight or nine. When, with much travail, it had been installed and its oscillations brought under control, my father invited me to look in the paper to see what was on. I had to look for a list of times and names. So I read '2.30 Bonny Prince Charlie; 2.45 Feather Duster ....' 'God love me', my father interrupted, 'that's the racing tips.' When we did make contact with the air waves and some music squeaked in, my father frowned and said 'See if you can get a fellow talking.'

You have to go south for eight miles to find my earliest musical centre, Holy Trinity, Hull, its tower rising with a somewhat military air, and its wide west front facing, not the antiseptic toytown paving stones that are there now, but, at least on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, a market whose dilapidated stalls, presided over by smooth-tongued salesmen, offered shabbiness at rock bottom prices. Between the tatty aisles mooched a rumination of folk in no great hurry, some of them dipping into a penn'orth of chips, others slowly sampling ice cream cornets. This was the Great Depression. At one end of Holy Trinity's south side was the Labour Exchange, surrounded by disillusioned ex-warriors from World War 1. At the other end was the Elizabethan Grammar School, where Andrew Marvell and William Wilberforce gained enough learning to take them to Cambridge. In my day this was known as the Choir School, and it once had been exactly that, as Frederic Bentley Mus Bac Oxon would remember. He'd been organist and choirmaster since 1881, and was still there in my infancy. I was born opposite the church and was carried in long before I could pad across myself. I remember hearing 'Hear my prayer' quite a long time before I heard the Ernest Lough record, and I remember standing under the tower to watch Mr Bentley, an angelic old gentleman with snowy white hair, play the end voluntary. He was the Legend, the end of an era. He had been my brother's choirmaster. My brother Leslie, I must add, had been temporarily suspended from the choir for conducting an experiment. He had, in

the interests of science, dropped a piece of wood, quite a small piece of wood, from the top of the tower. This had narrowly missed a passer-by who, with scant regard for scientific research, had made known his objection to being bombarded from 150 feet up. Clearly, there was a future for a boy like this – and he did, indeed become the Rector of Walkington. I know no more about Mr Bentley, I'm sorry to say, though I do have a photograph of his saintly back view, playing the Forster & Andrews. According to my mother, he had a reputation for living somewhat beyond his means (in Pearson Park, for goodness sake, a mere organist) and he bought his wife strawberries out of season.

When Frederic Bentley died, there was much concern about who could possibly succeed him. I remember my mother saying that a very smart young man from Leeds had been appointed. This was the dapper, neatly moustached, rather soldierly Norman Strafford. He was my choirmaster and I was devoted to him. How he became my choirmaster can be very briefly told. He was allowed a short space of time to settle in and then my seven-year-old person was presented to him. I had to stand beside him on the organ platform and I expect was so awed by the mechanics of the thing that my contribution was minimal. Mr Strafford said to my mother (and I heard it) 'There's not a lot there, but we'll see what we can do'. With this minimal testimonial I became one of, I believe, thirty probationers (forgive me if time has multiplied these figures, but I do know that Norman Strafford's intention, doubtless modelled on Leeds Parish Church, was to have a very large choir of boys, and my memory has in mind sixty). A probationer wore one of the scruffier single-breasted black cassocks and his Eton collar was held together by a bow of the pop-on variety, whereas a chorister was permitted a decent black tie. My rise to seniority was very slow, and I don't think I was even noticed until when, seven years later and next to the Decani prefect, I announced that I thought my voice was breaking (I don't think it ever really got going) and that I would like to begin thinking about being an organist. The news was received with old-world courtesy and the advice to get in some good groundwork on the organ. I was immensely relieved that my departure was not taken for misery and that my idea of being an organist was not laughed to scorn. Now, you must not on any account imagine that being ignored by one's choirmaster is a bad thing. Indeed, if you find yourself worrying about your boys, try pretending they don't exist. With luck they will remember your every word and gesture and will try to follow in your footsteps at the earliest opportunity. That's how it was with me. My abiding memory of Norman Strafford is of his passionate interest in words. Some years later I learnt from one of his pupils, John Sanderson, that organ lessons were interlaced with consideration of Dickens characters and situations. I certainly relished the vivid nature of his accompaniment of the psalms. We sang psalms until they swam out of our ears, and the engraving they did into my memory is coloured by subtle and sometimes torrential tone colours which clearly defined the godly and the ungodly, which helped the Lord to smite his enemies in their hinder parts and which broke the heads of Leviathan in pieces and gave him to be meat for the children in the wilderness. He helped the Lord divide the Red Sea in two parts, he smote the hard rock so that the waters gushed out, and he noted the lions roaring after their prey – and every mention of the close of day produced a veiled effect, so that one knew the moon and the stars would soon be there too. Hymns also, quite slowly done (he sometimes had to gather in a congregation of two thousand) became symphonies gorgeously wrapped in appropriate textures. All this, I'm sure, as well as his sweeping orchestral accompaniments to oratorios and cantatas, was born of his experience with the Moody-Manners Opera Company, which he served as a répétiteur. It never occurred to me to ask him for lessons, though when I had already become a professional, he asked me why I hadn't.

In these days of student grants, it's strange to look back on a time when only a scholarship would relieve the burden of paying fees, and there was no way individual lessons could be subsidised. As ill-luck would have it, I was never the scholarship type, either by natural endowment or by training, and we were a family of slender purse, so I was of necessity channelled into an inexpensive aspect of music which, as far as the church side of it is concerned, proved not only socially instructive but entertaining too. There was no music at school, but it was just possible to supplement the piano lessons which Florence Suddaby gave me (she was a pupil of Mark Hambourg, but rather less

percussive) with organ tuition from John Ellis of Christ Church, Hull. But I ought to interpose here that I had, with more boldness than sense, answered an advertisement for a Sunday School organist at St Paul's Church, Hull, where I was taken on despite my evident lack of experience. I was, at least, very fond of hymns, and the vicar was very deaf. So I met my first two-manual Forster & Andrews instrument, sunk in a dusty chancel pit, at the back of which, wind was intermittently supplied by a red-haired youth of cheerful if garrulous disposition. St Paul's was quite a large church, seating 900, but nothing like Christ Church which, with its galleries, could hold 1654 persons. Moreover, the organ had been enlarged in 1904 at a cost of £1100, a lot of money then. It had been a west gallery instrument, but when I arrived, it was already at the south east side of the church, but not in the least boxed in – in fact, from the gallery there was a wonderful view of its considerable proportions. It was a fine three-manual, I think Forster and Andrews, but with a balanced Swell pedal inscribed Ward of York. A tracker action instrument, which taught me not to rely on couplers, but electrically blown. I could practise whenever I wished, and so I ploughed through John Stainer's book, getting on to the pieces at the end far too quickly (I don't think Mr Ellis could be bothered to listen to too many exercises). I hope this slice of autobiography isn't too tedious but I'm really leading you into a vanished world, perhaps of no great musical significance, but of great social interest. Christ Church has been demolished, like so many Hull churches and chapels. The Luftwaffe did most of the damage, but there had been much earlier declarations of redundancy, the most publicised being the church of St John the Evangelist, whose square tower appears, along with the domes of the Dock Offices, in many old prints and in an atmospheric picture by Atkinson Grimshaw in the Ferens Art Gallery. The picture also shows the Wilberforce Monument, which then stood alongside Monument Bridge, the frequent raising of which was responsible for many choristers' late arrivals at Holy Trinity practices. The church was built in 1791 at the sole expense of the Reverend Thomas Dykes LL.B., who was its minister for 56 years and whose grandson, John Bacchus Dykes, became its organist at the age of 10. Contemporary descriptions praise its stained glass windows and its monuments. Frederick Thornsby's *Dictionary of Organs and Organists* published in Bournemouth in 1913 records that the organ was built in 1865 by Forster & Andrews and opened by Dr Spark of Leeds. It had three manuals and 26 speaking stops, with tracker action. The organist of the day, John Ellis, says 'Flutes and diapasons very fine. All solid work. No fancy stops'. Dear John Ellis played for the last service in the church, which was declared redundant, and very bitter about it he was. The Archbishop of York had finally said 'I will give you my blessing', to which Mr Ellis mentally added 'Your blessing, maybe, but not God's'. It does seem sad that the first church to be built outside the watery limits of the Old Town, and noted for its artistic interior, should have been deliberately demolished. The bridge by which it stood was the site of Beverley Gate, at which Sir John Hotham, in 1642, denied entrance to King Charles I. No doubt financial considerations were, as usual, the root cause of the demise of St John's Church. Sturdy independence does seem to have been a Hull characteristic at least since the days of the Civil War. If I may, I'd like to read you two short extracts, offering two rather striking views from the same place. First, from Edward Baine's *History, Directory and Gazetteer of the County of York, 1823*:

In 1545, the liturgy of the Church of England being abolished, the soldiers quartered in Hull entered the churches, took out the Common Prayer Books and, with drums beating and trumpets sounding, carried them to the Market Place, where they consigned them to a fire already provided for the purpose amidst the acclamations of the spectators.

Less than 150 years earlier, at a time when much of Catholic England resented links with Rome, a manuscript held by the Corporation of Kingston upon Hull reads:

10th December 1509. Certificate of an amount collected in Holy Trinity Church in aid of the rebuilding of the Basilica of the Apostles Peter and Paul at Rome.

This marked individuality, or cussedness as it may be known, may have provided fertile ground for a vast proliferation of sectarian places of worship from the 18th

century onwards, reaching galloping proportions in the nineteenth. So, when the All Clear sounded after a major air raid in 1941, we had lost not only Christ Church, St Stephen's, with its tall spire and three-manual Hill organ played by Hubert Hogg, but very many places of worship of all denominations, many of them enormous, commodious and possessed of fine organs. I was describing this not long ago, when a friend said 'Did Hull have air raids? I never knew that.' Excusable, perhaps, since wartime security only allowed 'a town on the north east coast' to be mentioned – but Hull did have 86 major air raids, and 85 per cent of its housing was damaged or destroyed, as was half the city's shopping centre. It was into that shopping centre, into the City Square, in fact, that I transported my father at dawn on the pillion of my little Francis Barnett (he was concerned with the maintenance of the water supply, and his car couldn't come to him, because of craters in the roads). It was a melancholy sight. The white stone of the Ferens Art Gallery (built on the site of the old St John's) was now a vivid red, covered with brick dust from the Prudential building across the square, which had simply disappeared, leaving many dead in the basement restaurant. The organ of the City Hall was badly damaged, and many another in Hull was either damaged or destroyed. This desolation was only the dread climax of a long period of very weary making-do, with services held only during daylight hours because of the impossibility of blacking out churches and chapels, with choirs much reduced because of men and women being called up, or engaged on civilian duties, organs sometimes unplayable because of power cuts and because of a general lack of sleep at the proper time. Evening concerts had to be abandoned and I remember attending a performance of *Messiah* given by the Choral Union in Holy Trinity, with no orchestra, but with Eric Bell at the organ. John Long was with me and I remember his remarking how effective the organ was for such broad effects. (Since its rebuild by Comptons in 1936, not everyone was reconciled to its brilliance and power). This may be the moment to mention that, though the Hull Choral Union gave three well-advertised concerts each season, it was only *Messiah* which was a guaranteed sell-out. There seemed to be a resistance to Wagner and even Verdi, but *Messiah* was a must, with everyone holding breath for John Paley's 'The trumpet shall sound' as he activated the phenomenal length of the natural trumpet.

One of the sad things about the war-time demise of the the City Hall as a concert venue was that we were for ever denied the sight of the platform clock hidden by a green baize cover whenever Sir Henry Wood came to conduct the Hull Philharmonic Orchestra. Those who had to leave early to catch buses or trains had to provide their own means of gauging the time. I seem to recall also an occasion on which Norman Strafford advertised that the first part of a Choral Union concert was to be devoted to madrigals. This was not to everyone's taste – and so there was a considerable disturbance as those with no great love for the Tudors bustled in. Mr Strafford let them settle down and then said how sorry he was that the vagaries of local transport had denied so may people the pleasure of hearing their madrigals – and so he was very happy to ask the choir to sing them again.

But, to return for a moment to the multiplicity of places of worship in Hull, it is worth quoting Abraham de la Pryme, a considerable researcher into the archaeology and social history of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and who was at one time Reader at Holy Trinity. In 1695 he wrote in his Diary, speaking of Hull:

"a mighty factious town, there being many people of all sects in it."

Among the churches which are no more – I have mentioned St Stephen's, a very large church with a spire reaching 180 feet – St James's Church was another fine building, with a lively acoustic and a very effective organ, and whose organist, J. W. Hudson, was a leading local musician; and All Saints, Margaret Street, reminiscent in situation, in architecture and in churchmanship of its London namesake, had as its organist Dr G. H. Smith, author of *A History of Hull Organs and Organists*, believed to be the first of its kind. Dr Smith, as an officer of the ISM in Hull, welcomed Norman Strafford when he first arrived as, many years later, Frederick Arnold, also on behalf of the ISM, welcomed me on my return to Hull. Dr Smith had also been organist of St Augustine's, Newland, a beautiful church which I also served for a short time as organist. Its splendid acoustic lent presence to a small two-manual Fitton & Haley

organ, and its magnificent choir stalls were in three rows, reading upwards, boys, women, men. It also had, as Vicar since 1907, The Reverend Edward Charles Cree, a kindly but forceful eccentric who had once held a living in Mexico. The fascination of Mexico still remained, and he would take long holidays there. St Augustine's became a victim of subsidence and had to be demolished. The same thing happened to St Nicholas, Hesse Common, built at the beginning of the First World War in the Decorated style – and with a very attractive organ loft. So the Church of England, for one reason or another, was considerably deprived of fine and worthy buildings. The air raids of the Second World War created havoc among the buildings of other denominations. One of the pleasures of a winter evening had been to walk along Prospect Street and see the lighted windows of the Presbyterian Church, whose blind organist John Richard Lawson, was an active member of the Hull and District Organists' Association, to which, as a teenager, I was honoured to be admitted (for a very young organist there is nothing more rewarding than being accepted socially by adult organists. An added, but misunderstood, bonus in this case was that meetings were held on the premises of the Girls' Friendly Society.) There is a rather moving entry about Mr Lawson in Frederick Thornsby's book of 1912. It says 'Trained at the Royal Normal College and Academy for the Blind. Recreation: Reading. It was, of course, another blind organist from Hull who achieved fame as a recitalist and composer: Alfred Hollins.

Not far away, in Albion Street, near the Public Library, was a huge Congregational Church, seating 1600 people and with a comparatively modern organ, installed in 1925. The last pre-war Kelly's Directory of Hull gives a close-packed list of Free Church buildings, very many of them of enormous size, and once proudly boasting individual traditions of faith expressed in music. Of these distant memories, one is rather less remote. Queen's Hall became the venue for concerts when the City Hall was out of action. Its very individual organ, which boasted tubular bells, side drum, gong, thunder pedal and two sforzando pedals, had been the pride and joy of J. Arthur Meale, whose party piece was 'The Storm' assisted by the turning on and off of lights. Most organists were envious of this potential for civil disturbance, and longed to be let loose on it. Perhaps the most distinguished name associated with Queen's Hall was Berkeley Mason, who left Hull to join the BBC (there's a historic photograph of him, with Sir Adrian Boult and Sir Walter Alcock, at the console of the new Compton Organ in Broadcasting House). To add to the broadcasting connection, Berkeley Mason's daughter married Leslie Woodgate, the BBC Chorus Master.

Then there were King's Hall and Thornton Hall, as well as many huge chapels, all supplied with good organs and admirable venues for musical concerts. And quite apart from the enormous number of ecclesiastical buildings in the City, one must realise that the entire area of the Old Town, the area between the town docks and the River Hull, was packed with houses and people. For instance, when the Sunday School attended Holy Trinity for a morning service, they filled the entire block of chairs in the centre aisle of the nave and overflowed into surrounding pews. The hymn which covered their departure, their *wise* departure, before sermon, had to be a long one, and it was often supplemented by many bars of organ music, before the patter of tiny feet was abated. All the week there were meetings of one kind and another in the Choir School. There was the Mothers' Meeting and the Mothers' Union, for married mothers. My mother played hymns for both occasions. There were lantern lectures, competitions, a Badminton club – all the things you might find at the centre of a large village. One needs to forget today's rather clinical appearance. The place was teeming with people.

At St Mary's, Lowgate, where the organ has ventral pedals, and contains some Snetzler material, the organist was Walter Porter, who started there in 1875, and was still there when I was a choirboy. Organists did not flit about so much in those days.

It was membership of the Organists' Association which gave me my first taste of church music in the East Riding. There was an efficient deputy system, by which it was possible to gain a variety of experiences, many of them horrific. One had to learn to be flexible and adaptable. Among the low spots I can recall a Methodist Sunday School Festival, the music for which was indescribable. Among the 'interesting' spots, a Baptist total immersion service, where steam from the water gave welcome warmth to the organist's legs. I asked the Minister what kind of music I should play for the actual

ceremony, thinking in terms of *Veni Creator Spiritus*, but he said quite firmly 'Loud music'. So I played the *War March of the Priests*. One of the pleasanter locations was All Saints, North Ferriby, where the organ was at the West End, divided, with the console in the middle, so that people could pass the time of day on their way in (it was on the ground floor) and often say appreciative things about one's preludes. One frail old chap stopped on his way in to ask 'Was the music by Bach, Sir?' When I said it was he added 'Lovely to hear the Old Gentleman's music again'. In the early days of the war, when many organists had been drawn into the forces, I played first at Dalton Holme, where not only Lord and Lady Hotham lived, but also the Bishop of Hull. This was indeed the beginning of the war, because one Sunday morning the Bishop came in to announce that war had been declared. The Hill organ was blown by a hydraulic engine, which tended to ice up in the winter, at which point a gamekeeper would operate the hand pump. The first time it happened, I was quite hypnotised by the sight of rabbit's ears peeping out of his pocket and wagging up and down. It would, I realise, be a dead rabbit. But it had quite an influence on the music.

When the organist of St Mary's, Cottingham, Walter Wright was called up, I stepped into the breach, and I must say Cottingham was very much a going concern, with a good choir of men and boys and a three-manual Forster & Andrews organ, whose console was beautifully placed for directing them. The organ was in such agreeable condition that I was able to give my first organ recital. It was during a choir practice at St Mary's that the curate brought news that Coventry Cathedral had been destroyed.

Shortly after this I was called up to the Royal Air Force and, during the next five years my only new discovery in the East Riding was the organ of Bridlington Priory. This celebrated instrument was far from well, and when I asked Arthur Robinson if I could play it, he recommended pulling out all the stops if a complete chromatic scale was required.

At this depressing moment, I must reveal that my attachment to the East Riding began when I was at school. By then, John Ellis having retired from Christ Church, I was enjoying lessons given by the organist of St John's, Newington, Frederick Arnold, who also started my interest in harmony and counterpoint. After some time, a small advertisement in the Hull Daily Mail announced that the organist of Beverley Minster had a vacancy for a pupil-assistant. It was agreed that I might apply. I think even I thought that being rejected for this would at least cool the fevered brow. My first view of the East End of Minster, bathed in sunlight, was breathtaking; the view from the north transept quite awesome. This was the moment that I knew I had bitten off more than I could chew. Then there was the spiral staircase and the view of the East Window. I have no idea what I played to Dr Andrews, or what we talked about, but his letter to my father, who had written on my behalf, said that I was at a rather elementary stage but was, I remember, 'musical and keen'. This was just a shaving more hopeful than Mr Strafford's opinion some years earlier. As Mr Strafford had offered a place, so Dr Andrews suggested I might care to attend and see what could be done. So the real thrill began of learning to play services, as he put it, in a big building – and I think after some time I was allowed to take a Probationers' practice in the gloomy light of early morning.

And then there was a communication which said, in effect, 'Am in hospital. Minster all yours'. It was, too, and I was immensely grateful for the comfort afforded by the organist-clergyman S. W. E. Jones who left us all too soon for Hereford Cathedral. But there is no denying that for sheer terror, there is nothing like conducting a piece of 8-part Weelkes with a school cap sticking out of the pocket like that rabbit's ears. At a time when School Certificate, or wherever it was called then, should have been filling the mind, mine was taken up by planning services and trying to put a brave face on it all.

As I recall, there was one curious feature of the whole business. Apart from Mr Jones, I had almost no contact with the clergy. Apart from the rehearsals and services, my only conversation on the subject was with the Songmen who kindly gave me lifts home in their cars. They, of course, told me Dr Andrews (who had only recently arrived) was creating a high standard, which was difficult to live up to. I mentally agreed, with some feeling. I learnt that, though John Camidge's Evening Service was still sung, the Doctor was none too keen to know about those days. Things had

changed rather suddenly. On the Doctor's return. I quite rightly became very much the pupil rather than the assistant and had to learn to accept a good deal of criticism, as well as a very great deal of kindly help. Perhaps you would care to sympathise with me when I say that I was so besotted by the wonderful organ and its sound in this gothic heaven, that I spent far too much time improvising. That may not be the way to learn to be an organist, but it is very good for the musical imagination.

Then, all too soon for my liking, Dr Andrews was appointed to New College, Oxford. I remembered what he had said when four men from York Minster occasionally came to augment our Sunday evening choir – 'Our boys plus the York men make a perfect choir'. It was much the same when we were joined by the Ripon choir. And, with no knowledge of Oxford conditions at all, I was sorry because I knew he was going to miss the Beverley sound. It really was a thrill.

And for me, as countless people must be tired of hearing, Beverley has always been, if I may be a Buddhist for a moment, my Shangri-la. All on the basis of a very brief youthful experience. But even then I was aware that, seen from outside, it was also a narrow-minded place. The sort of musical standard Dr Andrews sought was not heralded with delight. For one thing, St Mary's could always claim more boys from the Grammar School, where Harold Malkin, the organist of St Mary's, was the music master. For another thing, it was improper to mention money in connection with church music. Whatever was offered should be freely given. This was in line with the widespread feeling in the East Riding that music was properly an amateur activity. And indeed, Maurice Jacobson, composer, publisher and adjudicator, once told me that the Hull Musical Festival revealed more excellent small amateur choirs than he had met anywhere else in the country. That would be very little comfort to John Long when he arrived. You can't keep a family on pocket money.

When John Long was called up to the Royal Air Force, there was an inevitable musical decline in the Minster. The Cathedral Psalter was re-introduced and the emphasis was on congregational singing. I remember writing to John Horton about it from my Air Force Base. He had been Assistant Organist at the Minster when he was music master at Malet Lambert School in Hull. He was surprisingly forceful about the general attitude to church music, but particularly the view taken by many clergy. John Horton was then evacuated with the BBC to Bristol and invited me to try my hand at a broadcast. That would have been a good idea, but alas there was no way this could be fitted in to my schedule. Curiously, though, not long after the war, I too found myself working for the BBC, in John Horton's old place.

Post-war developments slowly but surely brought about a renaissance. There was tremendous relief when John Long returned and his successors Peter Fletcher and David Ingate added their individual contributions. There is no resemblance now between the present town of Beverley, warm, enthusiastic, welcoming, and the Beverley I once knew. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Minster. In the old suspicious gas-lit times, such a programme as we are enjoying would have been unthinkable. In those far-off days the playing of the organ during daytime did not please Edward Farnaby, the Head Verger. He would say 'Mr Camidge never practised. He only played for the services'. Mr Camidge was, of course, an old gentleman – and I am beginning to sympathise.

I am well aware that what I have offered my audience today falls far short of what should seriously be presented as social history. I can only crave your indulgence for asking you to peer through my spectacles, seeing and recognising the isolation which this part of the country suffered from. I also ask you to rejoice with me in experiencing the riches which Dr Spedding has bought to the Minster's worship, to the glory of God and the satisfaction of those of us who knew all along what the Minster's potential should bring forth.