



PREFACE

During the 1880s Elgar's evolving style was significantly influenced by Schumann's conservative Romanticism. These hitherto unpublished piano miniatures, *Griffinesque* (1884) and *Presto* (1889), together with the anagrammatic *G.E.D.G.E. Variations* (1888) show that this formative influence was especially strong. Elgar's letter to Charles Buck of May 1883, following his first visit to Leipzig the previous January, gives some impression of his interest in Schumann's music: '. . . I heard Schumann principally and Wagner no end . . .'.¹ By July of that year Schumann had become his 'ideal'.² Neither of these pieces, with their sequential phrase structures and figurations, would be out of place among Schumann's own miniatures from *Album für die Jugend*, *Bunte Blätter* or *Album Blätter*.

The manuscript of *Griffinesque* has been made available for this edition by Mr Andrew Davis. It consists of a sheet of printed MS paper on which the piece is written in an ink fair-copy. The ancillary tempo direction *sehr lebhaft* was added in pencil. At the end is the composer's autograph and the date 'Feby. 17 1884'. The piece was probably written for a pupil, but as yet no information has emerged which might explain the title.

The MS of the *Presto* was purchased by the British Library Department of Manuscripts in July 1978 from Mr Richard McNutt and incorporated as Add. MS. 60315. The music is written in ink fair-copy on a double sheet of printed MS. paper which has been trimmed. It shows signs of haste since some accidentals, rests and phrasing and expression indications were omitted. These have been added editorially and enclosed in square brackets. Similarly, slurs are distinguished thus: . There is no title, only the dedication: 'To Miss Isabel Fitton Aug. 8: 1889'. At the end is Elgar's signature followed by the place of composition: 'Saetermo [sic], Malvern, August 8: 1889'. 'Saetermo', a house in The Leas, Malvern, had been leased by Elgar's wife before their marriage in the previous May. Alice Elgar's diary records that on August 8th they went 'To Fair Lea [the Fitton's home], dine, Music. Miss Isabel's 21st Birthday'. Thus *Presto* was Elgar's coming-of-age gift to the future 'Ysobel' of the *Enigma Variations*.

Both *Griffinesque* and the *Presto* are alike in form and tonal structure: ternary form with their middle sections beginning in the mediant minor. Similar patterns can be heard in the *Six Piano Improvisations* that Elgar recorded in 1927.³ This suggests that *Griffinesque* and the *Presto* might also have begun as keyboard improvisations. The latter ends with a quiet whimsical transformation of its opening theme that foreshadows the delicacy and finesse of Elgar's mature music. The choice of small note values for this piece with the tempo instruction *Presto* is perhaps a 'japish' facet of Elgar's humour. A pace of  = *c.* 120 is suggested.

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¹ *Letters of Edward Elgar and other Writings, selected, edited and annotated by Percy M. Young* (Bles, London, 1956), p. 7.

² *ibid.* p. 9.

³ *Elgar on Record*, EMI RLS713.

PRESTO

Presto [♩ = c. 120]

f.1
p leggierissimo

cresc. molto *[f]* *dim.*

pp

3

5

7



Musical score system 1, measures 9-10. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. A *cresc.* (crescendo) marking is present. The system concludes with a *f.lv.* (first ending) bracket and a *Ped.* (pedal) marking.



Musical score system 2, measures 11-12. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand continues with slurred and accented notes. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *cresc.*, *f* (forte), and *pp* (pianissimo). The left hand maintains its eighth-note accompaniment.



Musical score system 3, measures 13-14. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand features chords marked with 'x' symbols. A *dim.* (diminuendo) marking is present. The left hand continues with eighth-note accompaniment.



Musical score system 4, measures 15-16. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Dynamics include *pp*, *cresc.*, and *f*. The right hand has slurred chords, and the left hand has eighth-note accompaniment. A first ending bracket labeled '8' is shown at the end of the system.



Musical score system 5, measures 17-18. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Dynamics include *fz* (forzando). The right hand has slurred notes, and the left hand has eighth-note accompaniment. A first ending bracket labeled 'f.2' is shown at the end of the system.

1

19

20

2 accel. [poco a poco]

21

22

23

Ped.

24

25

26

27

dim.

f.2v.

Ped.

poco rall.

28

29

pp

rall. al fine p

30

31

pp

Fine

[sic]

GRIFFINESQUE

Allegro, sehr lebhaft [♩ = c. 160]

[Edward Elgar]

f.lv.

mf legato

[col Ped.]

5

p

10

cresc. [*mf*]

15

[*p*] *f*

f.2

p [*pp*]

20

Edward Elgar
Feby. 17. 1884