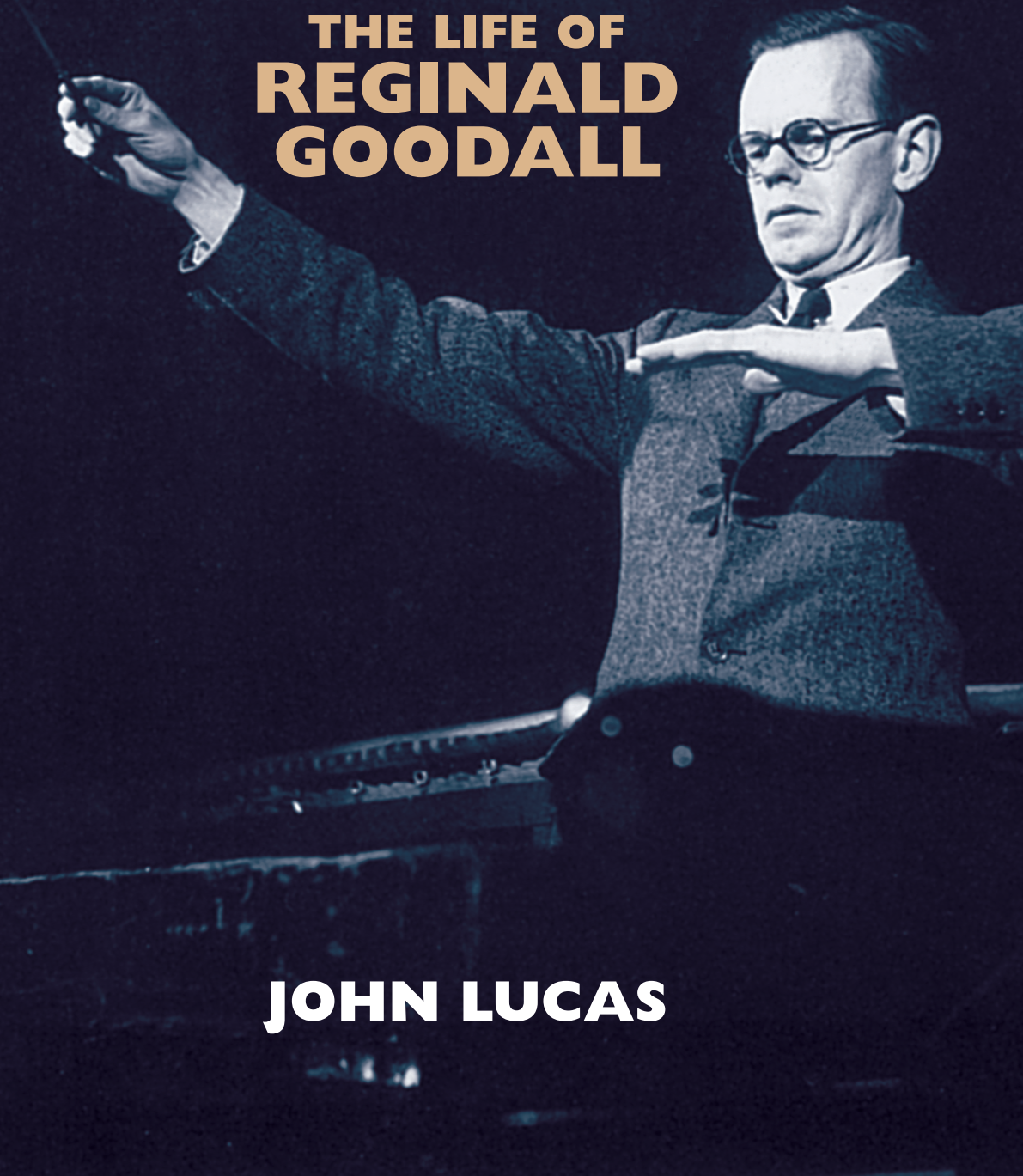


THE GENIUS OF VALHALLA

THE LIFE OF
**REGINALD
GOODALL**

JOHN LUCAS



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THE BOYDELL PRESS

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Originally published as *Reggie: The Life of Reginald Goodall* by Julia MacRae Books, 1993

This edition first published 2009
The Boydell Press, Woodbridge

ISBN 978-1-84383-517-2

The Boydell Press is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
and of Boydell & Brewer Inc.
668 Mt Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620, USA
website: www.boydellandbrewer.com

A CIP record for this book is available
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This publication is printed on acid-free paper

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Foreword

In July 2008 a live broadcast of Reggie Goodall conducting *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg* at Sadler's Wells Theatre in 1968 was made available on CD for the first time, released on Chandos Records' "Opera in English" label. The impact of hearing Goodall's legendary performance, forty years on, was a knock-out, not only among those who, like me, were lucky enough to have witnessed the original production, but also among younger generations. No wonder that after his magisterial account of *The Mastersingers* Goodall was invited to conduct an "English" *Ring* at the London Coliseum in the 1970s. This in turn had inspired *me* to go knocking on doors to ensure that his *Ring* performances were preserved on record. So, the fortieth anniversary year of the seminal *Mastersingers* seemed to me the right moment to hold a public event that would celebrate Goodall's musical legacy, something that would reflect why his influence continues to reverberate through generations of British musicians.

This event, *The Genius of Valhalla*, took place at the London Coliseum on 23 November 2008, bringing together his biographer John Lucas, a panel of artists and administrators closely associated with Goodall – Dame Anne Evans, Norman Bailey, Margaret Curphey, Sir Brian McMaster, Anthony Negus and Nicholas Payne – and a large audience of Goodall fans. The discussion was chaired by Humphrey Burton, whose 1984 BBC-TV profile, *The Quest for Reginald Goodall*, completed a moving and memorable testament to an extraordinary figure in British musical life. But such events are ephemeral and what had become very evident, from both the reception of *The Mastersingers* recording and the enthusiastic response to *The Genius of Valhalla*, was that a new edition of John Lucas's biography of Goodall would not only feed renewed interest in this remarkable musician, but also restore an important strand in the history of operatic development in Britain during the latter half of the twentieth century.

Sir Peter Moores, CBE, DL

Introduction and Acknowledgments

“When you conduct other things – things other than by Wagner – you find there’s something lacking. You miss the richness and the depth and the potency of his music” – Reginald Goodall, talking to the author, 1987.

I FIRST HEARD Goodall conduct in the 1950s. He was on the staff of Covent Garden, though his appearances in the pit there were sporadic. He gave performances of *Manon*, *Turandot* and *Bohème* that were cogent and illuminating, and he breathed life into Britten’s *Gloriana* after its unfortunate premiere under John Pritchard. His *Meistersinger* – “Not my *Meistersinger*,” I can hear him saying crossly, “Wagner’s” – won him glowing notices in the press, as did the performances of *Die Walküre* he conducted on tour. Yet by the end of the decade he had all but disappeared from view. It was puzzling, but I knew nothing then of operatic politics.

At a party at the 1961 Edinburgh Festival I was introduced to a Covent Garden stalwart, the baritone Geraint Evans, who regaled his fellow guests with tales of the Opera House. What, I asked him, had happened to Goodall? He adopted a solemn expression. “Ah, Reginald,” he said, rolling the initial R theatrically. “Poor Reginald.” He then changed the subject. Clearly, as far as Covent Garden was concerned, Goodall was a spent force. Yet seven years later, at the age of sixty-six, he made an extraordinary comeback, with a production of *The Mastersingers* for Sadler’s Wells Opera that demonstrated beyond dispute that here was a great Wagner conductor in a tradition stretching back through Hans Knappertsbusch and Karl Muck to Hans Richter, conductor of the first *Ring* cycle at Bayreuth in 1876.

Goodall had watched Knappertsbusch at work during his visits to Bayreuth throughout the 1950s, and from him had learned how to build the acts in great, seamless arches, how to relate one tempo to another, how to balance the sound so that each individual strand in the orchestral fabric could be heard, how to ensure, through close attention to the dynamic markings in the orchestral parts, that singers were never drowned. Goodall complained that most conductors failed to observe Wagner’s dynamics; as a result, he said, singers were encouraged to sing stridently in order to compete with the orchestral flood. Big steely voices were not for him – he liked voices that were even in quality and sonority from top to bottom of their range. “Too much metal, dear,” he grumbled at even his favourite sopranos when they sang high notes – and he would stick his fingers in his ears to underline the point. In low-lying passages he demanded the rich characteristic of the violin’s bottom string – “More G string, dear” was a constant plea.

Not all singers could cope with Goodall and the demands he made of them. But those who could revered him. A Goodall regular, the bass Gwynne Howell, has written, “He could be infuriating and cuttingly critical with, at peak moments, a quick stamping of the feet. With luck the next singer would arrive – preferably female, he liked female company – and calm would be restored. I would return home on some exhausted high,

but just as I felt I wanted to give up it would all fall into place. All those shaky gestures of his conducting style would become clear and meaningful.”¹

Goodall attached the greatest importance to Wagner’s final injunction to his singers before the 1876 *Ring* at Bayreuth: “Die grossen Noten kommen von selbst; die kleinen Noten und ihr Text sind die Hauptsache” – “The big notes look after themselves; the little notes and their text are the main thing.” All the semi-quavers, said Goodall, were to be given their proper sonority; they were not to be “snatched at”. Words had to be sung with the utmost clarity and attention to meaning. Notes had to be “coloured”, either to mirror the harmonies in the orchestra or to reflect the emotional mood of the scene or phrase. “Angel of death,” he would say to his Brünnhildes in the *Todesverkündigung* in Act 2 of *Die Walküre*, urging them to adopt a dark, grave sound; during King Marke’s long solo in Act 2 of *Tristan*, he would ask the singer to match the timbre of the accompanying bass clarinet. Goodall was responsible for a remarkable flowering of Wagner singing that led to a generation of British and Commonwealth Wagner singers he had coached taking leading roles at Bayreuth, stretching from Jon Vickers in the late 1950s to John Tomlinson and Anne Evans thirty years later.

Goodall was sometimes mocked for his painstaking rehearsal methods, yet he worked in a way that would have been considered natural by Wagner’s earliest interpreters. He was shocked by the fact that international conductors in the latter part of the twentieth century rarely took the trouble to coach the singers for their own productions: “Imagine Klemperer behaving like that! That’s one of the things I like about Barenboim – he works with his singers. He’s one of the few who does, and it shows. Most of the others are flitting here and there, conducting this and that. It makes me tired.”

Goodall worked equally hard to achieve the correct balance in the orchestra. He set great store by sectional rehearsals: strings only, Wagner tubas, the harps. Often he worked with individual players: the timpanist, perhaps, or the bass trumpet. He regarded orchestral musicians not as his servants, but as his peers, though the respect he showed them was not always reciprocated. His detractors accused him of being incompetent in his conducting technique; he was criticised, too, for slow tempi.

“At the sectionals,” said Goodall, “we would discuss balance, and how notes, phrases, should be played. In this way the players could see how they fitted into the picture, how each one of them contributed to the whole. Wagner should be like playing chamber music on a big scale. If all the parts are brought out, it gives the music movement and makes it much richer. The whole meaning and movement of the music must come out of the harmonies. Boulez has said that in Wagner the movement is often in the inner parts, between the top line and the bass, and he’s quite right.² Listen to an average performance of *The Ring* and you’ll find that half of these inner parts are lost. I always say that in Wagner no note is superfluous. Everything must be heard.”

He practised what he preached. Reviewing the CD version of Goodall’s complete recording of *The Ring*, Nigel Simeone picked out the the last seven bars of *Götterdämmerung* as an example “of just how potent Goodall’s handling of Wagner’s orchestral sound-world can be: not only is there more audible detail than is often the case, but the

sense of spaciousness and flow is extraordinary. The very last chord is a typical instance, with the harps beginning their arpeggios before the rest of the orchestra arrive at D flat major. This is no accident of live performance: Goodall achieved this effect every time I heard him conduct the work and the resulting sense of expansive serenity is one I have never heard matched. Almost every page of music has some similar example of the deepest imaginable knowledge, understanding and love of the score.”³

Goodall continued to study the scores of *The Ring* and *Tristan* and *Parsifal* until the end of his life. “Even if you lived to be 150 years old,” he said, “you would still not discover all the secrets of *The Ring*.”

I did not get to know Goodall until the early 1980s. He was already an old man, but he still had three new productions ahead of him: *The Valkyrie* for the Welsh National Opera, *Tristan* and *Parsifal* for the English National Opera. None of those who knew him, myself included, ever thought he would agree to having a biography written about him, but we were all wrong. As I wrote in *Opera* at the time of his death, he seemed to think that by its very existence the book might stand as proof to the world (as if proof were needed) that he had achieved something of note; it would cock a snook at all the bogeymen and bully-boys, both real and imagined, who had dogged his long career. It irked him that his gifts had never been properly acknowledged by Covent Garden, the house that had employed him for most of his career, but he was not a bitter man.

I have used many quotations from Goodall’s conversations in the book. In public he tended to be monosyllabic, but in private his talk was full of musical insights, jokes and piquant observations on the “poseurs” and “routineers” (two favourite words) of his profession. Goodall did not try to cover up his Mosleyite past – and nor does this book. His unwillingness in the immediate aftermath of the second world war to believe the full extent of the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany seems inexplicable and unnerving. In the end he faced up to the terrible truth, but always found it hard to accept that a country that had spawned creative artists as great as Beethoven, Goethe and above all Wagner could also have been capable of such barbarity. “It’s what I thought at the time,” he said. “I can’t change that.” The political views he expressed in later years could be categorised as “left-wing”; the very mention of Margaret Thatcher sent his blood-pressure rocketing skywards. Goodall’s memory for dates, names and places was poor, and it was a red-letter day when, quite unexpectedly, he handed me a bundle of his diaries, some of them dating back to the early 1930s. They were hard to read, incomplete and concerned almost exclusively with appointments, but they provided vital clues to the course of his career.

Scores of people helped me to fill in the gaps. They were headed by the late Maisie Aldridge, who knew Goodall for more than fifty years, and Goodall’s nephew, the late Colonel David Tetley, who not only encouraged me at every turn, but gave me permission to quote from Goodall’s letters and diaries. Others with long memories of Goodall included Philip Blake, a fellow conducting student in the 1930s, Wilfred Stiff, who as a boy sang in Goodall’s church choir in Holborn, and Felix Aprahamian, who allowed

me to use extracts from his pre-war diaries. He and Nicholas Kenyon both read parts of the typescript and made valuable comments on it, as did Peter Heyworth and Terence Kilmartin, who, alas, both died before the book was completed. The Peter Moores Foundation provided generous financial help that enabled me to carry out research in Canada and other places.

Others who provided information and assistance include Elizabeth Abercrombie, Richard Adeney, Joyce Aldous, Ande Anderson, Eric Anderson, Sir Richard Armstrong, Richard Austin, Norman Bailey, John Barker, Geoffrey Bennett, John Blatchley, Christopher Borner (Royal College of Music), Robert Bossert, Bruce Boyce, John Burrows, Moran Caplat, Jeremy Caulton, Clare Colvin (English National Opera archives), Hilda Connell, Patrick Connell, John Copley, Canon Robert Cowan, Joan Cross, Eric Crozier, John Cruft, Jeremy Cullum, Sir Colin Davis, John Denison, Patrick Dingle, John Doe, Lord Donaldson, Denis Dowling, Sir Edward Downes, Leslie Duff, Brian Duffie, Ruth Dyson, Ruth Edge (EMI archives), Sir Mark Elder, Lionel Elton (South Place Concerts), Laurence Elvin, Kenneth Essex, Dame Anne Evans, John Evans, Nancy Evans, Sir Keith Falkner, Norman Feasey, Richard Fisher, Francesca Franchi (Covent Garden archives), Lionel Friend, John Gardner, Fr John Gaskell (St Alban the Martyr, Holborn), James Gibson, Reginald Giddy, Alexander Goehr, Sir William Glock, Livia Gollancz, Elise Goodall, Linda Esther Gray, John Greenstone, Romaine Grigorova, Sir Charles Groves, George Hallam, Suvi Raj Grubb, Arthur Hammond, Derek Hammond-Stroud, Leonard Hancock, the Earl of Harewood, Michael Heyland (Royal Choral Society), Douglas Hopkins, Gwynne Howell, Joan Ingpen, Robert Irving, Roderick Jones, Fr Frank de Jonge, Iris Kells, Michael Kennedy, Leo Kersley, Janet Kersley, Lotte Klemperer, Jean Korn, Adele Leigh-Enderl, Iris Lemare, Marion Littleboy, David Lloyd-Jones, Jonathan Lofft (Royal St George's College, Toronto), John Ludlow, Sir Donald McIntyre, David McKenna, Sir Brian McMaster, Victorine Martineau (British Council archives), Alan G. Melville, John Mitchinson, Sir Peter Moores, Gareth Morris, Victor Morris, Nancy Morse, Anthony Negus, Ralph Nicholson, Richard Nunn, Nicholas Payne, Anna Pollak, Andrew Porter, Dr Alan T. Prince, Henry Prouse, Philip Reed (Britten-Pears Library), Alberto Remedios, Betty Richards, Cressida Ridley, Malcolm Riley (Percy Whitlock Trust), Charles Robinson, Rosy Runciman (Glyndebourne archives), Richard Temple Savage, Robert Slotover, Irene Speir, Canon D. Ralph Spence (St Luke's Church, Burlington, Ontario), Nellie Stannie, Sir John Stephenson, Renee Stewart (Leith Hill Festival), Rosamund Strode, Dame Joan Sutherland, David Syrus, Kendall Taylor, Wilfred Thomas, Marion Thorpe, Sir John Tooley, Edmund Tracey, Jon Vickers, Robert Virgo, Paul Ward, Susan Ward, Derek Williams (Cambridge University Library music department), Douglas Wise, Anne Wood, Reg Woodward, and Emanuel Young. To this list must be added the staff of the Bishopsgate Institute Library; the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, archives; the Diocese of Toronto archives; the Finsbury and the Holborn local history libraries; the archives of the Hallé, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Philharmonia orchestras; the Imperial War Museum; the John Lewis Partnership archives; the Lansdowne Library, Bournemouth; the Lincolnshire Archives; the Mills

Memorial Library, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario; the Theatre Museum; and *Opera* magazine.

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Finally I must thank the book's original publisher, Julia MacRae, for her boundless wisdom and patience, as well as Boydell and Brewer for publishing this slightly revised edition, which has been made possible by a further generous contribution from the Peter Moores Foundation. The ever-vigilant Bruce Phillips has given me invaluable help with the text.

JOHN LUCAS

November 1992; July 2009

CHAPTER I

Lincoln

AS WITH so much in Reginald Goodall's life an air of mystery surrounds the date of his birth. According to his passport he was born in 1902, but the correct date is 13 July 1901. Goodall himself was to blame for the confusion. In the earlier part of his career he would adjust his age to suit the circumstances. When applying for conducting jobs, he might add a few years, to suggest greater maturity and experience than he possessed. Sometimes he took a few years off. Sometimes, it seems, he so confused himself that he could not remember how old he actually was. According to his marriage certificate he was 28 when he married in 1932. In fact he was 31 – just a few months younger than his wife, who was astonished to discover his real age when in 1940 she registered his application for deferment of military service.

Goodall's birthplace was a modest terraced house in Monks Road, Lincoln, a street of red-brick homes and shops that had grown eastwards from the centre of the city in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Then, as now, 78 Monks Road had a small garden at the front and a paved yard at the back. A brass plate on the gate announced that it was the home of A. E. Goodall, music teacher. Albert Edward Goodall, Reginald's father, taught the piano, and was organist and choirmaster at St Peter-at-Arches, a galleried church of 1724 by William Smith that stood on the north-east corner of the High Street and Silver Street.¹ Music, however, was not Albert's main occupation. He was confidential clerk to E. E. Tweed, a leading Lincoln solicitor. Tweed was Clerk to both the city and county magistrates.

Albert's father, Thomas Goodall, was a leather-dresser by trade, though by the time he died his business activities had expanded in other directions. The Lincoln directory for 1894 describes him as a glue manufacturer, with premises at Bracebridge, then a separate parish to the south of Lincoln, but now part of the city itself. His entry for the following year reads, "Glue powder and size works and firewood merchant, asphalter and miller." Thomas and his family were strict Nonconformists. They attended St Catherine's Wesleyan Methodist Church, which urged temperance on its members, a reason perhaps why his son Albert, a convivial and gregarious man, switched his allegiance to the Church of England. One of the few women at St Catherine's who declined to join the temperance league was Reginald's Aunt Ada, who had no objection to the occasional

drink. It was her private joke to lace the trifles she made for church socials with sherry. They were much in demand.

Reginald's mother, Adelaide, was the daughter of a Leicester draper, James Jones. Albert Goodall was 37 and a widower when he married her in June 1900 and brought her to Lincoln to live in Monks Road. They were not rich – Albert's salary as a solicitor's clerk was £160 a year, though he had a small additional income from his musical activities – but they could afford a maid-of-all-work, who slept in a room on the top floor, next to the nursery. A second son, William, was born on 20 July 1902, exactly a year and a week after his brother. Both boys were given only one Christian name, soon shortened to Reggie and Billie. Their father did not care for long strings of names; he found it irritating having to write them out in full at the solicitor's office or in court.

Monks Road is down at heel now, but in the first decade of the century it was considered well-to-do. Next to the Goodalls' terrace was the Arboretum, a pleasant park on the side of a hill, with pavilions, a fountain and a brightly painted cast-iron bandstand, where bands from the barracks and the local engineering works played in the summer. Sometimes the concerts were followed by firework displays. Reggie and Billie were pushed round the Arboretum in their prams, and later played there with their hoops. When they were old enough, they went to Miss Wileman's private school in Nettleham Road.

The boys' parents were very different in temperament. Adelaide Goodall, the least musical member of the family, thought pubs were vulgar and disapproved of her husband's habit of staying out late with his drinking companions. His life revolved round three establishments, all within a short distance of each other: St Peter-at-Arches church, the solicitor's office in Silver Street where he worked, and the Spread Eagle Hotel in the High Street.² Adelaide was well aware that the Spread Eagle's waitresses held a special attraction for her husband, and was wracked with jealousy and unhappiness as a result. Curiously for a man of sybaritic tastes (though the fact that he had once been a keen sportsman may have accounted for it), Albert favoured a strict regimen for his sons. There were cold baths every morning. In 1988, almost eighty years after she joined the Goodalls as the family skivvy in 1910 at the age of 19, Mrs Nellie Stanney remembered:

When I got there, I saw these two little boys, Billie and Reggie. Billie was just as plump as his father, and Reggie was as thin as his mother. Reggie – poor little mite. I always felt sorry for him. They were all for Billie. I don't know why. Reggie always looked so cold and miserable. He always had to have cod liver oil, every morning. When I put the cod liver oil in the spoon he looked at me so miserably. He didn't like it a bit. He was sort of put on. He was ignored too much.³

Reggie was four when he was given his first piano lessons by his father, though Albert was convinced that it was the extrovert Billie who had the greater potential. While Billie continued to be taught the piano at home, the shy and retiring Reggie was sent to have lessons with his half-sister, Agnes, eighteen years his senior and the child of Albert's first marriage. At the time she was living behind the station in Tentercroft Street, where she taught music for a living. Not long afterwards she married Captain Eric Tetley of the Yorkshire brewing family and moved up the hill to live in Greestone Terrace, a cul-de-sac of late-Georgian houses situated just below the cathedral. Unlike Albert Goodall, Agnes had no doubts about her young half-brother's musical abilities. She lavished a good deal of love on him and built up his confidence. In 1910 she persuaded her father that Reggie should attend the Lincoln Cathedral choir school. Albert approached the organist and choirmaster, Dr G. J. Bennett, who agreed to hear the boy.

Bennett was comfortably off, for his wife, Marion, was the daughter of Joseph Ruston, founder of Ruston, Proctor, a Lincoln engineering firm with a world-wide reputation. They lived at North Place, a Queen Anne-style mansion they had built for themselves in Nettleham Road. Reggie was taken there by his father for an audition. Bennett sat at a piano fitted with a pedal-board that corresponded exactly to that of the cathedral's organ. Presumably he liked what he heard, for shortly afterwards Reggie became a fee-paying boarder at the old choir school at 1 Northgate, a terrace of little houses that still stands at the junction with Nettleham Road.

For an English cathedral organist of his time, Bennett had unusually wide sympathies in both religious and secular music, and Goodall always considered himself exceedingly fortunate to have come under his influence. Bennett, said Goodall, laid the foundations of his own musical interests. In his youth Bennett had spent a year at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin, followed by two years in Munich, where his masters had included the celebrated organist and composer, Joseph Rheinberger. Back in London, he had been appointed a professor of harmony and composition at the Royal Academy of Music at the age of 25. His own works, strongly influenced by German Romanticism, included an overture, *Jugendtraum*, which August Manns conducted at the Crystal Palace concerts in 1887. Eight years later he went to Lincoln, where he remained until his death in 1930.

Bennett was a thick-set, fierce-looking man with a reddish face and a large ginger moustache. On Sunday mornings he wore a top hat, morning coat and spats, and carried a rolled umbrella, which he was once seen brandishing at a precentor who had been unwise enough to say he did not wish to hear a certain anthem by Gounod in the cathedral again.⁴ Goodall found Bennett an impressive, if somewhat frightening, figure. Another Lincoln chorister, Reg Woodward, has described some of Bennett's more alarming practices:

In the Song School he would haul a boy by the collar over the music benches at which we stood and administer a beating with a hard and heavy hand. On one occasion this was administered in error to the wrong boy. A shocked silence followed. [On learning of his mistake,] he roared with laughter and said, "Well, it will do for next time." Once he interrupted into the choir during a service and led out a malefactor by the ear.⁵

A dedicated cigarette-smoker (at home he enjoyed a hookah), Bennett was given to sticking his nicotine-stained fingers into the choristers' mouths to make sure they were kept wide open. The boys preferred it when he used the end of his baton for the job; it tasted better. Sometimes the whole choir was the subject of his wrath. The Lincoln historian Laurence Elvin remembered an Evensong at the end of which Bennett played the shortest of voluntaries, rushed to the vestry before the choir could leave the building, admonished the boys and men for their mistakes and took them through the anthem until it was sung to his satisfaction.⁶ But Bennett was not all gruffness and bad temper. He gave sumptuous Christmas parties for the choristers at his home. There were summer parties, too, when he joined in cricket matches on the lawn and whammed tennis balls over the roof of the house to boys waiting on the other side. Anyone who caught a ball got a sixpence. If there were those who disapproved of Bennett's methods as a choir-trainer, few disputed the excellence of the results he achieved: the choir was held to be one of the best of its kind.

Not surprisingly for a pupil of Rheinberger, Bennett had an outstanding technique as an organist. Goodall said it was Bennett's playing of Bach's organ prelude in B minor that first made him aware of the power of great music. Goodall was also introduced to Wagner's music through Bennett, who often played excerpts from the operas at his organ recitals, notably the prelude and Good Friday Music from *Parsifal*. (When "Father" Henry Willis, who had designed and built the cathedral organ, died in 1901, Bennett played in his memory, not some pious piece of Victoriana, but the funeral march from *Götterdämmerung*.) Bennett introduced new compositions by Reger and Karg-Elert, and performed a good deal of French music by Guilmant, Widor and Franck. English organ music rarely featured in his programmes.

The Lincoln choral foundation consisted of nine lay clerks – three altos, three tenors and three basses – and sixteen choristers. A lay clerk could live on his salary then, though some earned extra money by giving singing lessons. In Goodall's time, and for some years afterwards, the basses were Messrs Endersby, Lofthouse and Woodward, whose son Reg Woodward has described them lovingly:

Their idiosyncracies afforded us endless entertainment, their sheer professionalism a standard we envied ... Mr Endersby, a very distinguished looking man, had a vast voice, like the Lord thundering out of heaven. Mr Lofthouse was a Yorkshireman and very proud of it. "Eh, lad, 'ast tha never bin to Leeds? Tha doesn't

know tha's born." He had trouble with his aspirates and we listened eagerly for the verse in the psalm which he rendered as "Why 'op ye so, ye 'igh 'ills. This is God's 'ill." Occasionally he had an argument with his wife, which always ended, "Who's maister in this 'ouse then?" "You are, but I'm nek."⁷

Although a Lincoln chorister's round was arduous, Goodall thrived, for music was now central to his life: in addition to singing in the cathedral, he was having regular lessons in piano and theory from Bennett's assistant, Harry Trevitt. On weekdays the timetable at the choir school included PT before breakfast, morning and afternoon choir practice, and Matins and Evensong in the cathedral; ordinary school lessons had to be fitted into the few gaps that remained in the day. Games were played on Thursday afternoons, when Evensong was sung by the men alone. Services in winter could be a miserable experience, for St Hugh's Choir was unheated; the fantastical canopies of its stalls might be masterpieces of the medieval woodcarver's art, but they went unappreciated by small boys suffering from chilblains brought on by the extreme cold. The rewards were pitiful. The choristers had two 12-day breaks – one after Easter, the other after Christmas – and a fortnight's holiday in August, which even by the standards of the day was very little.

By the time Goodall joined the choir, Bennett had leavened the cathedral's typically English repertoire – canticles by Croft, Smart, Stanford and Harwood – with anthems by Mendelssohn, Bach, Mozart and Spohr. In addition he had reintroduced several works by his most distinguished predecessor at Lincoln, William Byrd, including the Short Service, known then as Byrd in D minor. At the time Byrd's music was rarely heard in Anglican cathedrals, though, simultaneously with Bennett's efforts at Lincoln, Sir Richard Terry was reviving the composer's music for the Roman liturgy at Westminster Cathedral.

In October 1912 there came a change in the services at Lincoln that was to have a dramatic effect on the music performed in the cathedral. The new High Church precentor, the Rev. John Wakeford,⁸ abolished the Litany, which had traditionally followed Matins on Sunday mornings, and replaced it with a Choral Eucharist. Bennett introduced settings of the Mass by Schubert and Silas, Dvořák, Gounod and Guilmant – all of them adapted to the words of the English prayer book. Bennett's own favourites included Schubert's Mass in G, Dvořák's in D (sung on both Easter and Christmas days in 1913), and Gounod's *Messe solennelle de Ste Cécile*, all of which were to become staples of Goodall's own repertory when he too became an organist and choirmaster some years later. Not everyone in Lincoln liked the unfamiliar works. Frank Woolley, Bennett's one-time assistant, detected a dangerous whiff of the Continent about them: "The music of these Masses was florid and chromatic, and of great length, and almost inclined to produce an atmosphere of the secular; that

which is so alien to the great tradition of English cathedral music.”⁹ Goodall loved them.

In addition to providing music for the liturgy, Bennett conducted choral concerts in the cathedral. The choir was boosted by an amateur chorus from the city and there was also an amateur orchestra. Thus Goodall sang in performances of *Messiah*, the *St Matthew Passion* and Haydn’s *Creation*. Even more important from the point of view of Goodall’s musical development were the annual choral and orchestral concerts Bennett conducted for the Lincoln Musical Society, which he had founded in 1896. Planned on an extravagant scale, they gave Lincoln the chance to hear works that in some cases were rarely, if ever, heard outside the main cities. Thanks to Bennett, Lincoln probably heard more of Wagner’s music than any other comparably-sized town in England.

The concerts took place in the Corn Exchange, which was normally used as a cinema. The acoustics were not perfect, but the building was large enough to take a choir of 200 and an orchestra drawn mainly from the London Symphony Orchestra. There were distinguished soloists. Goodall and his colleagues from the choir school had specially reserved seats. In November 1911 Bennett conducted Act 3 of Wagner’s *Tannhäuser* and Sullivan’s oratorio, *The Martyr of Antioch*. It is a measure of Bennett’s influence on the musical taste of Lincoln that the Sullivan turned out to be a relative failure with the audience, while the Wagner was judged a triumph.¹⁰

The following year Bennett conducted Act 3 of Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. But it was the concert which took place on 28 November 1913 that Goodall remembered more clearly than any of the others, for he took part in it. It marked the 100th anniversary of Wagner’s birth and was devoted entirely to his works. There were 250 performers in all. Bennett’s programme was typically generous:

Lohengrin

Act 1, omitting Sc.1; prelude and bridal chorus from Act 3

Parsifal

Grail scene from Act 1

Der fliegende Holländer

Senta’s ballad

Die Walküre

Ride of the Valkyries and Wotan’s Farewell

Siegfried

Forging songs

Tannhäuser

March and chorus from Act 2

The soloists in the *Parsifal* extract included the leading British Wagner tenor of the day, Frank Mullings, in the title-role, Frederic Austin as Amfortas, and Charles Woodward, the cathedral lay clerk, as Titurel. The Montsalvat bells “did not produce the deep solemn tones the composer intended,” said the *Lincolnshire Chronicle*, but Goodall and the other Lincoln choristers, who provided the boys’ choir at the end of the scene, came in for particular praise, “their well-trained voices adding much to the charm of the music.”¹¹

In the meantime the Goodall family had been struck by a catastrophe from which it never fully recovered. On 2 April 1911, Albert Goodall was dismissed from his job, and rumours quickly spread through the city that he was connected with irregularities discovered at the solicitor’s office. The following evening he was arrested at home on a charge of “forging the name of Dr Winter to a document at Mr Tweed’s office on February 16th.” After being warned that further charges would be made, he was driven in a cab to the Lindsey police station in the High Street, where he spent the night in the cells. His distraught wife sent a message to her step-daughter Agnes, who rushed round to Monks Road to offer comfort. The following morning Albert appeared before the city magistrates at the Session House, where Mr Tweed, his old employer, “betrayed signs of emotion” as he read out the charge.¹² The *Chronicle’s* headlines were dramatic:

SENSATIONAL ARREST AT LINCOLN

WELL-KNOWN OFFICIAL IN CUSTODY

ON A CHARGE OF FORGERY

A PATHETIC FIGURE

Mr Scorer, the prosecuting solicitor, put his case. Witnesses at magistrate’s courts, he explained, were entitled to certain allowances, but before they could receive the money, the magistrate had to sign an order which could then be presented at a Lincoln bank for payment. To save time, it had become the custom for magistrates to sign blank certificates, leaving Goodall to fill in the details. Dr Winter had been allowed a sum of 10s 6d for attending a case heard by the county justices on 16 February. Goodall had made out the order, not for 10s 6d, but for £2 2s. He had then forged Dr Winter’s signature on the document, collected the money from the bank, sent 10s 6d to Winter by post, and kept the rest for himself. Further examples were cited.

Goodall was remanded for six days and refused bail on the grounds that he might leave the city, though he protested vehemently that he would do no such thing: “I’ll turn up like a man and stand my trial.” When he reappeared in court

the following week, a number of charges were read out. He admitted his guilt and was committed for trial at the June Assizes, where once more he pleaded guilty.¹³ In his summing-up, the judge, Mr Justice Pickford, said he thought it most irregular that the accused should have been allowed to fill in the certificates in the first place, but he should not have fallen to temptation. Goodall was sentenced to eight months' imprisonment. By the time he was released, his marriage had collapsed and he emigrated to Canada to start a new life. It was never fully explained in court why he had resorted to forging the certificates, but it was widely assumed in Lincoln that his frequent visits to the Spread Eagle had contributed to an unbridgeable gap between income and expenditure.

It is not hard to imagine the effect that the trial had on the family. Adelaide became deeply embittered. Beset with financial difficulties, she was forced to take in foreign apprentices from the Ruston engineering works as lodgers. The faithful Agnes helped to pay off the debts and made sure that Reggie could stay at the choir school, but Billie was taken away from his private school and sent instead to the Rosemary Lane Wesleyan elementary school, a few streets away from home.

The letters Reggie wrote to his mother from the choir school betray his feelings of loneliness at this time (the spelling and punctuation have not been altered):

June 1st 1913

My Dear Mother,

Thankyou very much for the letter you sent yesterday morning and also for the 1/- postal order you sent you needn't of bothered of sending me it at all I would a lot rather you had come I was very disappointed you did not come up. I expect you will be very lonely without Billie to keep you company especially today (Sunday) I wish I could have come to keep you company. My garden is getting on alright the radishes which Billie brought me up are coming up ripping.

A school report that has survived from the summer term of 1913 shows Goodall top of his class in the history exam and second in scripture, English and Latin. The headmaster thought this a big improvement on past results, but wrote, "His progress is still slow, as he is very lacking in application." In arithmetic and algebra he still worked "without much intelligence & will not tackle difficulties." Goodall's general conduct was considered "good," though Wakeford, the cathedral precentor, found him "inattentive to orders: he must learn obedience."

Early in 1914, Adelaide Goodall, exhausted by her efforts to struggle on in Lincoln, accepted an invitation to go and live with her married sister, Florence, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Agnes Tetley pleaded with her to allow Reggie to stay on at the choir school, offering to pay all his fees and expenses, but, to Reggie's dismay, her entreaties fell on deaf ears. Mrs Goodall and the two boys sailed for America. Reggie was not to return to England for another eleven years.

CHAPTER 2

Exile

SPRINGFIELD lies in the south-western corner of Massachusetts, about ninety miles from Boston. Its most notable feature is the Springfield Armory. Founded during the American Revolution, it produced America's first military musket and laid the foundations of the city's industrial and commercial prosperity.

Reggie, homesick for Lincoln, found Springfield strange and alien. He and Billie were laughed at by their schoolfellows for their shorts and long socks. Once again it was the outgoing Billie who, musically, fared better than his brother. He was taken up by a group of admiring women, who arranged for him to have piano lessons in Boston; later they sent him to study at the Damrosch and Mannes music schools in New York. Reggie, beside himself with jealousy, reckoned that if music were to play any part in his own life, he would have to join his father in Canada. Albert had settled in Burlington, a small town surrounded by market gardens and apple orchards at the western end of Lake Ontario. Mrs Goodall was sympathetic to the idea, for money was short, and within months of the family's arrival in Massachusetts Reggie, to his great delight, was packed off to Canada. Billie remained in Springfield.

Although Burlington's population has grown from 5,000 to 164,000 since the first world war, and most of its market gardens have fallen prey to property developers, the area round St Luke's Anglican church, with its bosky avenues and stone-and-clapboard summer homes, has changed little since the day the 13-year-old Reggie arrived there. Albert Goodall had fallen on his feet and was making a living as a piano teacher. He was also organist and choirmaster at St Luke's, where he had been rewarded with a \$50 increase in salary for raising the standard of its music.¹ He lodged near the church at 432 Burlington Avenue, home of a Mrs Oliver. Albert's name was linked romantically with that of her daughter, but there was no question of marriage. Albert and Adelaide Goodall never divorced.

Reggie, who stayed with his father at Mrs Oliver's, went to school in Burlington, sang in the church choir, and was taught piano, organ and theory by William Hewlett, co-director and later principal of the conservatory of music at the nearby steel town of Hamilton. Hewlett was no provincial. English by birth, he had studied in Berlin with the composer Hans Pfitzner and the Russian pianist Ernst Jedliczka. A noted organist, he gave regular recitals on the big Casavant

instrument at Hamilton's Centenary Methodist Church, and conducted the city's Elgar Choir in performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and the Verdi Requiem. Hamilton's musical life may not have been extensive, but it was supplemented with visits by leading recitalists and travelling opera companies.

Reggie enjoyed his time in Burlington, but it was not to last. In 1916 his father, to whom he had grown close, volunteered for the army. At first sight it was a surprising move. Conscription was not introduced in Canada until the following year, and it is unlikely that Albert would have been called up even then, for he was already in his early fifties. Goodall believed that his father enlisted firstly out of financial necessity – demand for music lessons had dropped dramatically with the war – and secondly for reasons not unconnected with his continuing fondness for drink. After Ontario introduced prohibition in 1916, many men found that the army offered them better opportunities for obtaining alcohol than did civilian life, particularly if they were serving abroad. As things turned out, Albert remained in Canada for the rest of the war.

Reggie was forced to return to his mother in Massachusetts, where he took a job to help support the family. He was now 15 and had left school for good. At first he was a messenger for the local railway company, which he enjoyed, but the pay was poor and before long he joined an engineering works, "drilling holes in pieces of metal". There was one consolation about life in Springfield. Once a month Billie was taken on the train by his patrons to hear the Boston Symphony Orchestra; sometimes Reggie got the chance to go too. Occasionally the Boston or the Philadelphia Orchestra visited Springfield, the latter under Leopold Stokowski, who had been appointed its chief conductor in 1912. Goodall remembered Stokowski dashing on to the platform at Springfield and, without bothering to acknowledge the applause, plunging straight into the introduction to Act 3 of *Lohengrin*. Such showmanship appealed to Goodall's theatrical sense, though he never tried to emulate it.

Stokowski was to make a vital contribution to Goodall's growing musical awareness, for just as Bennett had opened his ears to the possibilities of the organ, so Stokowski revealed to him the infinite range of colours that could be coaxed from an orchestra. Throughout his years in North America, Goodall was fascinated by the "Philadelphia sound" and the immense care Stokowski took to achieve it. Goodall never lost his love of beautiful tone; it was a crucial element in his own performances. "I know there are other things in music that are more important," he said in his eighties, "but after all, sound is what we're selling. I hate nasty tone. Even the timpani should sing. I remember the cymbals in the Bruckner Seventh when Furtwängler did it with the Berlin Philharmonic – a shower of stars. Not a bang or a clap, which is what you seem to get these days. I don't care what they say about Stokowski. He was good. He could achieve a