Nineteenth-Century Music Review (2026), 1–28
doi:10.1017/S1479409826101207

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Musical Legacies, Memorials and Elegies: Commemorating William Sterndale Bennett

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> he wears a truer crown
> Than any wreath that man can weave him.
> Speak no more of his renown,
> Lay your earthly fancies down,
> And in the vast cathedral leave him,
> God accept him, Christ receive him![1]

As a representation of public grief, the funeral of the British composer William Sterndale Bennett at Westminster Abbey on 6 February 1875 was striking both in its scale and the level of detail reported in the press, testifying to its cultural importance. Readers were provided with published lists of distinguished mourners (as 'almost every professor and amateur of note was present, besides distinguished representatives of art, science, and literature'), vivid descriptions of the funeral procession, and a clear sense of the 'vast crowd of spectators' in attendance.[2] Others were struck by the mood of the event; for Charles Villiers Stanford, despite the suitably 'stately and proud' ceremony, it was 'resolved, by the all-pervading affectionate spirit of the man it honoured, into a close, intimate and family-like gathering of sorrowing friends'.[3] Finding other ways to commemorate Bennett was a more complex issue, however. Obituary writers were somewhat divided over Bennett's status, and there were several debates over how Bennett's death should be suitably marked – not only in terms of his funeral, but in what forms (literary, sculptural, musical) might represent appropriate commemorative objects or events. Two contrasting musical responses to Bennett's death, both written in 1875, are particularly fascinating: Thomas Wingham's *Elegy on the Death of Sir Sterndale Bennett* and George Alexander Macfarren's *Idyll in Memory of Sterndale Bennett*. In highlighting the nature and range of elements that contributed to Bennett's memorialization, this article places them in a wider perspective. Whilst the size

I am grateful to Emma Darbyshire of the Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge, for arranging permission from the Museum to transcribe music examples from George Macfarren's *Idyll in Memory of Sterndale Bennett*, Mu MS 1154. The title page of Thomas Wingham's *Elegy on the Death of Sir Sterndale Bennett* is reproduced with the permission of Cultural Collections and Galleries, University of Leeds Libraries, Brotherton Collection Music (BC Music/BEN), https://explore.library.leeds.ac.uk/special-collections-explore/302280.

[1] Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington', IX, ll.276–81.

[2] 'Musical Gossip', *Athenaeum* 2468 (13 February 1875): 235; 'Sterndale Bennett', *The Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter*, (15 February 1875): 65.

[3] Charles Villiers Stanford, 'William Sterndale Bennett: 1816–1875', *The Musical Quarterly* 2/4 (1916): 657.

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of Bennett's funeral and the level of reportage associated with it can be partly explained and contextualized via cultural shifts in mourning and commemorative practices in Victorian Britain combined with the nature of Bennett's institutional reach and international networks, the musical tributes can be reassessed as a refiguring of conventions from literary models: the poetic elegy and the obituary. This allows us to appreciate the choices made to mark Bennett's passing in relation to ideas of public bereavement, legacy and memorial in Victorian Britain.

Bennett's Funeral in a Victorian Context

The first issue in relation to Bennett's funeral was the potential site of his internment. A requisition to the Dean of Westminster, Arthur Penryhn Stanley, was signed by the leading musicians of the day – composers, performers, critics and publishers that included Julius Benedict, Hans von Bülow, William Cusins, William Davison, Sir George Elvey, Manuel Garcia, Sir John Goss, Charles Hallé, John Hullah, Joseph Joachim, Jenny Lind, Stanley Lucas, George and Walter Macfarren, Sir Frederic Ouseley, Alfredo Piatti and Arthur Sullivan.[4] As John Wolffe has suggested, the criteria that Stanley used for a Westminster Abbey burial were 'related far more to evidence of an individual's acknowledged national standing than to the personal morality of religious views of the deceased', with a range of writers, scientists, explorers and historians being given this honour.[5] The nine internments for which Stanley was responsible between 1864 and 1881, for example, were those of Charles Dickens (1870), Sir John Herschel and the historian George Grote (1871), Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1873), Dr David Livingston (1874), the geologist Sir Charles Lyell, Bishop Connop Thirlwall and Bennett (all 1875), and the statesman Lord Lawrence (Viceroy of India, 1864–69) in 1879.[6] Bennett was therefore in good company; George Macfarren, Bennett's replacement as Principal of the Royal Academy of Music and Professor of Music at Cambridge from 1875, was not accorded that honour in 1887 by Stanley's successor, Dean George Granville Bradley, despite the apparent urging 'thereto by an extensive and influentially-signed requisition'.[7]

If the wealth of detail reported in the press was particularly striking (whether the respective roles of Samuel Hatchard and Chief Inspector Eleazar Denning in overseeing funeral arrangements and supervising security, or the intricacies of the coffin's design),[8] so was the scale of the event. The cortège that drove through the streets from Bennett's home at 66 St John's Wood to the Abbey was made up of four family carriages, a further 21 carriages that underlined Bennett's institutional affiliations and musical networks (representing Cambridge University, the Royal Academy of Music, the Philharmonic Society, the Royal Society of Musicians, and the Verein für Kunst und Wissenschaft – the German

[4] See 'The Late Sir Sterndale Bennett', *The Times* (5 February 1875): 7.

[5] John Wolffe, *Great Deaths: Grieving, Religion, and Nationhood in Victorian and Edwardian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 71–2.

[6] See Rowland E. Prothero, *The Life and Correspondence of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley*, 2 vols, vol. 2 (New York: Scribners, 1893): 320–21.

[7] Walter Macfarren, *Memories: An Autobiography* (London: Walter Scott, 1905): 141. 'Funeral of Sir George A. Macfarren', *Morning Post*, 7 November 1887, 3, suggested that this request was 'abandoned' when Macfarren's 'desire' (outlined in his will) to be buried in West Hampstead Cemetery was known.

[8] See, for example: 'Funeral of Sterndale Bennett', *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 8 February 1875, 3; 'Funeral of Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Daily Telegraph*, 8 February 1875, 3; and 'Funeral of Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Birmingham Post*, 8 February 1875, 8: 'The coffin was of French-polished oak, with projecting lid and plinth, solid silver medallions and handles, and corner clasps; shield-shaped plate, with inscription thereon, as follows: – "Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, Knight. Born 13th April 1816; died February 1, 1875". The sides of the coffin were festooned with white lilac blossoms, and wreaths of choice flowers, sent by friends, partly hid the lid from view'.

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Athenaeum), and additional private carriages of the royal family.[9] 'Long before' the start of the service 'every unreserved nook and corner inside the Abbey were tenanted, and those who held special admission tickets had some difficulty in getting to their places', with a 'dense crowd' remaining outside.[10] Bennett's 'fellow-students' from the RAM (including George Macfarren) made up the 12 pall bearers,[11] the choir consisted of 28 boys and 26 men representative of Westminster Abbey, St Paul's, the Temple, the Chapel Royal, and Lincoln's Inn,[12] and the plethora of organists in the service included John Stainer.[13] There was traditional funeral music by Croft, Purcell and Handel (including the Dead March from *Saul*), but it was Bennett's anthem 'God is a Spirit' from *The Woman of Samaria*, 'delivered by 4 solo voices, then repeated by the entire choir', that was particularly impactful:

> The effect produced by this large body of trained voices singing sotto voce, without any kind of accompaniment, approached sublimity, and was intensified by the reflection that these touching strains of sacred melody – these masterly harmonies – had been penned by the hand that now lay cold and rigid in yonder coffin; never again to labour for the delight of mankind, never again to exchange the grasp of friendship with those who now stood weeping beside the grave of him they loved so well.[14]

The relative scale of the funeral arrangements for the three British composers who preceded Bennett as RAM Principals, and the reporting of these events, was strikingly low-key in comparison. Newspapers provided the same brief account of the death of William Crotch (1775–1847), the first Principal from 1822 and Heather Professor at Oxford from 1797, with no meaningful reporting of his funeral at St Peter and St Paul's Church in Bishop's Hull near Taunton. Cipriani Potter (1792–1871) took over from Crotch in 1832, but his funeral, which took place only four years earlier than Bennett's on 2 October 1871 at All Soul's Cemetery, Kensal Green, merited merely a brief paragraph in the press. Bennett attended, along with others who were later present at his own funeral,[15] but Potter's hearse was followed by only three mourning carriages and one private carriage.[16] Potter's resignation as Principal in 1858 had led to the composer and conductor Charles Lucas (1808–1869) taking the post before Bennett; his funeral in Woking Cemetery (which preceded Potter's) was attended by many of the same RAM staff, and again merited only brief reports.[17] For further context, although the commemoration service at Westminster Abbey for Bennett's

[9] See 'The Funeral of Sir Sterndale Bennett', *The Times*, 8 February 1875, 5; 'Funeral of the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, at Westminster Abbey', *The Musical World* 53/7 (13 February 1875): 107–8; 'Funeral of Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Sheffield Independent*, 8 February 1875, 3; and 'Funeral of Sterndale Bennett', *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 8 February 1875, 3. Bennett had been appointed conductor of the Philharmonic Society in 1855, Professor of Music at Cambridge in 1856, and Principal of the Royal Academy of Music from 1866, where he had taught from 1837 to 1858; a biennial Sterndale Bennett scholarship was established there in 1872. Having performed and conducted at the Leipzig Gewandhaus, he was offered the conductorship in 1853, but he turned the invitation down.

[10] 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett's Funeral', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* 2/51 (13 February 1875): 470.

[11] 'The Funeral of Sir Sterndale Bennett', 5. Royal Academy of Music is abbreviated to RAM in the remainder of this article.

[12] 'Funeral of the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, at Westminster Abbey', 108.

[13] 'Funeral of Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Daily Telegraph*, 8 February 1875, 3; 'Funeral of the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, at Westminster Abbey', 108.

[14] 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett's Funeral', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 470.

[15] 'Funeral of the Late Philip Cipriani Hambly Potter', *Morning Post*, 3 October 1871, 5.

[16] 'Funeral of the Late Philip Cipriani Hambly Potter', *Era*, 8 October 1871, 10.

[17] See 'Mr. Charles Lucas', *The Orchestra* 12/288 (2 April 1869): 26–7.

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successor, George Macfarren, apparently attracted a 'vast congregation', no specific mourners were listed in the meagre reports,[18] and the funeral itself took place at West Hampstead Cemetery. There was an increased level of reportage for the funeral of Sir Arthur Sullivan in 1900, but even here, after the service in the Chapel Royal, St James's, the procession that made its way to the internment at St Paul's Cathedral consisted only of eight carriages, despite the 'crowded streets' providing 'more striking evidence of his popularity than the distinguished gathering of musicians and others'.[19]

The scale of Bennett's funeral may have been partly shaped by previous public events, particularly the 'massive proportions' of the funeral of the Duke of Wellington at St Paul's Cathedral on 18 November 1852 – seen by Cornelia Pearsall as 'constitut[ing] an extension of the Great Exhibition' of the previous year.[20] Here 'a million and a half people beheld and participated in the ceremonial' – a 'mass audience … demonstrat[ing] … national solidarity and unity',[21] and there were detailed press descriptions of the lying in state at Chelsea Hospital (which attracted an estimated 235,000 visitors), the funeral procession that 'combined almost every symbol of military and civil greatness' (with its battalions of infantry and cavalry, deputations from public bodies ranging from the East India Company to the University of Oxford, range of funeral batons from Spain to Hanover, and where the ornate funeral car held the four coffins of pine, lead, English oak and Spanish mahogany), and the ceremony itself, including the music (incorporating Croft, Handel, Purcell, and the chorale 'Sleepers, wake! a voice is calling' from Mendelssohn's *St Paul*).[22] Although the funeral of Prince Albert on 23 December 1861 (with its procession of fifteen mourning coaches that covered the short distance from Windsor Castle to St George's Chapel) was a more private affair, this was keenly felt across the country, with the 'closure of public and private places of business' and special church services.[23] If Queen Victoria's consequent withdrawal from public life has been characterized by Pat Jalland as 'chronic grief' (and not representative of the more common two or three years of grieving endorsed by Victorian 'rules of etiquette'),[24] Victoria's impact upon the nature of formal mourning wear and jewellery (including the rising significance of Whitby jet) was clear, and she was also aware of how her photographic image (in one case incorporating an image of Albert set as a bracelet) offered a message of 'the universal experience of widowhood, and the importance of protecting and promoting the legacy of the dead'.[25] Victoria therefore contributed to the already burgeoning rise in memorial objects – whether the '70,000 *cartes de visite*' bearing Albert's portrait

[18] 'Funeral of Sir George A. Macfarren', *Morning Post*, 7 November 1887, 3. Macfarren's anthem 'The Lord is my shepherd', the 'Obsequial March' from his incidental music to *Ajax*, and the Nunc Dimittis from his Service in E flat were all performed during the service.

[19] 'Sir Arthur Sullivan', *Musical Standard* 14/361 (1 December 1900): 337.

[20] Cornelia D. J. Pearsall, 'Burying the Duke: Victorian Mourning and the Funeral of the Duke of Wellington', *Victorian Literature and Culture* 27/2 (1999): 365, 370.

[21] 'The Funeral of the Duke of Wellington', *The Examiner* 2338 (20 November 1852): 744; Iain Pears, 'The Gentleman and the Hero: Wellington and Napoleon in the Nineteenth Century', in *Myths of the English*, ed. Roy Porter (Cambridge: Polity, 1992): 219.

[22] See Pearsall, 'Burying the Duke', 373; 'The Fine Arts in Connection with the Funeral of Wellington', *The Art-Journal* 5/174 (December 1852): 378–80; 'The Duke of Wellington's Funeral', *The Illustrated London News*, 20 November 1852, 7; 'The Funeral of the Duke of Wellington', *The Times*, 19 November 1852, 5; 'The Duke's Coffins', *The Illustrated London News*, 20 November 1852, 30; 'The Music at the Duke of Wellington's Funeral', *The Musical World* 31/1 (1 January 1853): 1–2.

[23] 'The Funeral of the Prince Consort', *The Times*, 21 December 1861, 9. The 1860s also saw the funeral of the pugilist Tom Sayers (1826–1865), highlighted by Mike Higgins, 'Reading the Funeral Rite: A Cultural Analysis of the Funeral Ceremonials and Burial of Selected Leading Sportsmen in Victorian England, 1864–1888', *Journal of Sport History* 38/3 (2011): 416, as 'creat[ing] an increased enthusiasm for public commemoration of sporting celebrities'.

[24] Pat Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996): 320.

[25] Helen Trompeteler, 'Queen Victoria and the Photographic Expression of Widowhood', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 33 (2022): 17. See also Sonia A. Bedikian, 'The Death of Mourning: From

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ordered from Marion & Co.,[26] or the plethora of memorial busts and statuary commissioned for him, particularly those created by William Theed (1804–1891), in addition to the 1872 Albert Memorial by George Gilbert Scott (1811–1878). Some 'found the outbreak of Albert-adulation difficult to take', such as Charles Dickens – who wrote to his friend John Leech in September 1864 'If you should meet with an inaccessible cave anywhere to which a hermit could retire from the memory of Prince Albert and testimonials to the same, pray let me know of it'.[27] However, this broad growth of memorialization underpinned some of the commemorative events and objects that marked Bennett's death, detailed below.

Obituaries and Memorial Concerts

Inevitably, Bennett's death offered the press an opportunity to comment on his status as a composer and his role in musical life, and a number of tropes can be identified. Transcending mere national significance as 'the greatest composer England has ever produced' (with only Purcell, and 'possibly' Arne as suitable comparators),[28] it was Bennett's international standing (particularly his Germanic connections) that was consistently highlighted.[29] He shared the 'highest honours with the recognised leaders of contemporary art' (Mendelssohn, Schumann, Hiller), and 'after Mendelssohn's demise', there was none 'fitter to support the *prestige* of modern music'.[30] Writers were particularly keen to recount Mendelssohn's awareness of Bennett's talents after the latter's visit to Düsseldorf in May 1836, Bennett's successful performance (aged only 18) of his Third Piano Concerto in the Leipzig Gewandhaus on 9 January 1837, Robert Schumann's enthusiastic championing of Bennett in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and Bennett's successful return to the Gewandhaus to perform his Fourth Piano Concerto on 17 January 1839.[31] In addition to listing his various honours and achievements (including his 1871 knighthood), his important role in promoting the music of J.S. Bach in Britain was noted; writers also highlighted his early 'precocity',[32] his musical memory (knowing 'by heart all Handel and the whole of the operas of Mozart'),[33] and his 'genial nature', expanded upon by Ferdinand Hiller in the *Cologne Gazette* as 'honourable and amiable, simple, unpretending, frank, faithful, good-natured, cheerful, and hospitable'.[34]

Victorian Crepe to the Little Black Dress', *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying* 57/1 (2008): 35–52, and, for an overview of spirit photography that developed from 1861, Jen Cadwallader, 'Spirit Photography and the Victorian Culture of Mourning', *Modern Language Studies* 37/2 (2008): 8–31.

[26] Helen Rappaport, *Magnificent Obsession: Victoria, Albert and the Death that Changed the Monarchy* (Bath: Windsor/Paragon, 2012): 168.

[27] James Stevens Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2000): 237; Stanley Weintraub, *Victoria: An Intimate Biography* (New York: Dutton, 1987): 324.

[28] 'Sterndale Bennett', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 6 February 1875, 11; 'Death of Sir William Sterndale Bennett', *Manchester Guardian*, 2 February 1875, 5. H. H. S., 'The Place of Sterndale Bennett in Music', *Fraser's Magazine* 11/63 (March 1875): 300, found 'no name to interpose between those of Henry Purcell and William Sterndale Bennett'.

[29] According to the Special Correspondent who penned 'The World of Music – Literary Notes', *New York Times*, 1 March 1875, 2, Bennett's death would 'have caused in the best musical circles of New York almost as much grief as in those of London', but his music should 'be looked upon as German'.

[30] 'William Sterndale Bennett', *Sunday Times*, 7 February 1875, 3.

[31] For a useful chronology of Bennett's trips to Germany, and an overview of the Schumann–Bennett relationship, see Nicholas Temperley, 'Schumann and Sterndale Bennett', *19th-Century Music* 12/3 (Spring 1989): 207–20, which includes, 211, a list of all of Bennett's works reviewed by Schumann in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. The dedication of Schumann's *Etudes symphoniques* Op. 13 to Bennett was reciprocated in Bennett's dedication of his *Fantasie* Op. 16 to Schumann.

[32] 'Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Graphic* 11/272 (13 February 1875): 151.

[33] 'The Late Sir William Sterndale Bennett, *Mus. Doc*'., *Morning Post*, 2 February 1875, 6.

[34] Henry C. Lunn, 'William Sterndale Bennett', *Musical Times* 17/385 (March 1875): 7; 'The Late Sterndale Bennett', *The Musical World* 53/10 (6 March 1875): 164.

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Descriptions of his music in general contrasted Bennett's 'pure' models of the overture, concerto, 'chamber song' and cantata with the 'turbid stuff' of the "'music of the future"' – he had 'no need to resort to the wild artifices by which some modern composers seek to hide their deficiency of ideas'.[35] His composing purely 'for the sake of the art' explained his 'comparative unpopularity with the ordinary run of amateurs and concert audiences', as his compositions 'always require and imply a certain degree of cultivation in their admirers'.[36] Of his relatively small output of 46 works (ascribed to his 'natural modesty and diffidence', his shyness and reticence, or his attention to compositional detail),[37] the majority of critics highlighted his overtures (including his 'truly poetical' *Die Waldnymphe, The Naiades*, and *Paradise and the Peri* – 'one of the greatest masterpieces of programme music'),[38] the G minor Symphony and pianoforte concertos, the cantata *The May Queen* (for the *Sunday Times*, 'the culminating point in his career'),[39] his '*chef-d'œuvre* in the sacred style' *The Woman of Samaria*,[40] and selected piano works. The latter, which included the *Three Musical Sketches* Op. 10 ('The Lake', 'The Millstream', 'The Fountain') dedicated to J.W. Davison, and 'The Maid of Orleans' Sonata Op. 46, had 'nothing in common with the "brilliant" show-piece, or flimsy "transcription"' typical of "'family circle" music'.[41]

However, there was also some criticism of Bennett's cultural awareness and contribution to national identity. *Fraser's Magazine* suggested that Bennett 'was not a man of wide literary taste or culture' or 'an enthusiastic man' (hence a perceived lack of passion in his music), and that his opinions might be seen as 'narrow' (in the context of contemporary 'liberal and enlightened' views on music), evidenced by his lack of enjoyment of opera – where he apparently felt that 'the purity of the music must be sacrificed to dramatic exigencies'.[42] His Germanic associations were problematic for the *Examiner*, who, 'deploring the dependence on foreign elements ... imparted to English art by its leading representative', hoped that any compositional successor would be 'an English artist with English feelings and English modes of expression', rather than 'a German composer of a more or less subordinate rank'.[43] However it was Charles Gruneisen in the *Athenaeum* who departed most significantly from some of the more hagiographic accounts. Despite attempts elsewhere to explain any suggestions of Bennett's 'want of productiveness in later years' by his being 'no mercantile musician',[44] for Gruneisen, Bennett's development as a composer was disappointing – he had 'left not a single work ... equal to his juvenile productions', with 'no advance in his invention' and 'nothing to fulfil the promise of his early performances'; consequently a 'kind of lethargy' led to only periodic compositional activity – 'pieces which, despite their perfect workmanship, their refinement and elegance, were singularly destitute of dramatic power'.[45] As 'programme compositions' such as the *Paradise and the Peri* overture and 'The Maid of Orleans' Sonata were only 'a feeble reflex of his youthful inspirations', only the 'works of his youth' would effectively represent his legacy – *The Naiades*

[35] 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett's Funeral', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 470.

[36] H. H. S., 'The Place of Sterndale Bennett in Music', 301; 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett', *The Orchestra* 1/8 (March 1875): 230.

[37] 'William Sterndale Bennett', *Sunday Times*, 7 February 1875, 3; 'Some Recollections of Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Fraser's Magazine* 12/67 (July 1875): 20.

[38] 'Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Graphic*, 151; 'William Sterndale Bennett', *Sunday Times*, 3.

[39] 'William Sterndale Bennett', 3.

[40] 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett', *The Orchestra*, 229.

[41] 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett', *The Orchestra*, 230.

[42] 'Some Recollections of Sterndale Bennett', 21, 23, which drew parallels with the 'pure and simple thoughts' of William Cowper.

[43] 'The Late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett', *Examiner* 3497 (6 February 1875): 164.

[44] Lunn, 'William Sterndale Bennett', 7.

[45] 'Sir W. Sterndale Bennett', *Athenaeum* 2467 (6 February 1875): 199.

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overture, the Fourth Piano Concerto, and the Capriccio in E.[46] Although Gruneisen cited Bennett's teaching duties, along with the loss of his wife (leading to 'loneliness in his latter years') as an explanation for this 'cessation of creative power', ultimately Bennett's demise left 'no void ... in the annals of Art'.[47]

Reflecting some of the core works highlighted in obituaries, following Bennett's funeral there were several memorial concerts, even if, as Gruneisen acidly remarked, this 'fancy' represented a 'curious contrast to the neglect with which his compositions were treated during his lifetime'.[48] These began on 15 February 1875 with a Monday Popular Concert, where the first half of the programme was devoted to Bennett's music: the Piano Trio in A major Op. 26, 'God is a Spirit' from *The Woman of Samaria* (which was encored), and the Piano Sonata Op. 46 ('The Maid of Orleans') performed by Marie Krebs.[49] The concert at the Crystal Palace on 6 March was more expansive. After Wingham's unannounced *Elegy*, the *Die Waldnymphe* and *Paradise and the Peri* overtures framed a primarily orchestral-driven programme of the *Parisina* overture (which had 'rarely been heard') and the Third Piano Concerto (performed by Agnes Zimmermann, with the *Rondo piacevole* Op. 37 as an encore). However, 'God is a spirit' was again included (performed, fittingly, by four RAM students), along with additional vocal numbers: the part-songs 'Sweet Stream' and 'Come, live with me', extracts from *The May Queen* ('The Hawthorn in the Glade' and 'O Meadow Clad in Early Green'), and solo songs 'To Chloë (in Sickness)' Op. 23, No. 4 (sung by Vernon Rigby), and 'The Better Land' WoO 41, 'Castle Gordon' Op. 35, No. 4 and 'Gentle Zephyr' Op. 23, No. 6 (sung by Antoinette Sterling).[50] If the British Orchestral Society concert on 10 March drew on other examples from Bennett's orchestral catalogue (the G minor Symphony Op. 43, *The Naiades* overture, the Fourth Piano Concerto, performed by Florence May), the *Paradise and the Peri* overture, the ubiquitous 'God is a Spirit', 'The Hawthorn in the Glade', 'O Meadow Clad in Early Green', and 'To Chloë (in Sickness)' were all revisited, with the addition of 'May-Dew' Op. 23, No. 2.[51]

More distinctive was the first half of the Philharmonic Society's programme on 18 March, where, to underline the sense of memorial, 'a bust of the deceased master, modelled by Signor Trentanove, from a cast taken after death, faced the audience, and in front of the gallery was hung Millais's fine portrait'.[52] Rather than offering examples of 'the limited repertory from which other memorial performances have had their materials drawn', this concert included the Prelude and Funeral March from Bennett's incidental music to Sophocles' *Ajax* and the 'strangely neglected' cantata *The Woman of Samaria* in full. The march allowed obvious parallels to be drawn with Bennett's funeral (with quotation of

[46] 'Sir W. Sterndale Bennett', *Athenaeum* 2467, 200. This reflected Gruneisen's general position of being 'dismissive of native talent and [treating] much new English music with disdain' (see also note 99), and simply perpetuated Bennett's negative treatment in this journal in the context of Henry Chorley's opposition to the music of Robert Schumann; see Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press 1850–1914: Watchmen of Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002): 74–6 and 70.

[47] 'Sir W. Sterndale Bennett', 200, 199. Peter Horton, 'An Obsession with Perfection: William Sterndale Bennett and Composer's Block', *19th-Century Music Review* 13/2 (2016): 286–7, suggests that the 'outright opposition' that Bennett faced from critics such as Gruneisen added to a combination of Bennett's 'obsession with perfection', 'attack of "composers' block"' and 'insecurity as a conductor' that impacted upon the development of his musical career.

[48] 'Bennett's Compositions', *Athenaeum* 2472 (13 March 1875): 366–7.

[49] See the advertisement in *The Musical World* 53/7 (13 February 1875): 116.

[50] 'Crystal Palace Concerts', *The Times*, 8 March 1875, 8.

[51] 'British Orchestral Society', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* 2/56 (20 March 1875): 590–91.

[52] 'Philharmonic Society', *Daily Telegraph* (20 March 1872): 2. The Italian sculptor Gaetano Trentanove (1858–1937) was born in Florence, but spent much of his time in America. Millais's portrait of Bennett was made in 1873; see Thomas Oldham Barlow's 1876 mezzotint after Millais in the National Portrait Gallery, available at www.npg.org.uk (accessed 11 April 2025).

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Sophocles' lines 'But come all ye who would attend/The last departure of a friend,/Hither in solemn procession strong,/Bearing the solemn bier along,/Following the dead for a little way,/Out of the light of the glaring day').[53] Ultimately, whilst some of these repertoire choices cemented the nature of Bennett's musical legacy for his admirers, Gruneisen remained unconvinced, concluding: 'However praiseworthy the intentions of the projectors of all these programmes, we fear they will not immortalize the memory of the gifted composer by supplying a surplusage of his compositions, when his masterpieces can be counted on the fingers of one hand'.[54]

Again, comparison with memorial concerts for other British composers of the period is revealing. Examples often encompassed fewer events, or paired the dead composer's works with those of others – whether the Philharmonic Society's performance of Cipriani Potter's Second Symphony (programmed with Beethoven's *Leonora* Overture No. 1, the overture to Weber's *Der Freischütz* and Mendelssohn's 'Scottish' Symphony) on 3 April 1872 as a 'graceful act *in memoriam*', or the 'prompt and practical' Sullivan Memorial Concert at the Crystal Palace on 8 December 1900.[55] In terms of Irish composers who eventually settled in England, there was a planned series of memorial benefit concerts for the family of William Vincent Wallace (1812–1865), but the first was 'not so successful as might have been desired',[56] and the one-day Memorial Festival for Michael Balfe at the Alexandra Palace on 29 July 1876 was some six years after his death.[57] Even musical commemorations for other prominent international figures often paled in comparison. The only 1883 'memorial concert' in London devoted solely to Wagner's works, for example, was that on 3 March at the Crystal Palace, as Wagner had 'written few things fit for concert purposes', and there were only two formal concerts to commemorate Grieg at the Queen's Hall on 16 and 23 October 1907.[58] And although the frequency of performances of Mendelssohn's music in Britain undoubtedly contributed to the marking of the composer's passing, relatively few – such as the Sacred Harmonic Society's performance of *Elijah* on 17 November 1847 (preceded by Handel's Dead March from *Saul* as an 'especial mark of respect') – were repurposed, marketed or reported overtly as memorial events.[59]

[53] 'Philharmonic Society', *Daily Telegraph*, 2.

[54] 'Bennett's Compositions', *Athenaeum* 2472, 367.

[55] 'Our Contemporaries', *The Musical World* 50/14 (6 April 1872): 223; 'Sullivan Memorial Concert', *Musical News* 19/511 (15 December 1900): 517, which suggested that even this 'long' all-Sullivan programme 'did not suffice to display every phase of Sullivan's powers'.

[56] 'Wallace Memorial Fund', *The Musical World* 44/1 (6 January 1866): 12. An additional 'Penny Concert' was given by Samuel Aitken on 22 January 1866; see 'The Wallace Fund', *The Orchestra* 5/123 (3 February 1866): 295. There were also memorial concerts for Wallace in New York.

[57] See 'Balfe Memorial Festival', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* 5/129 (5 August 1876): 447.

[58] 'Crystal Palace Wagner Concert', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* 18/480 (10 March 1883): 642; 'Key-Notes', *The Sketch* 60/769 (23 October 1907): 58; H. H., 'Grieg Orchestral Concert', *Musical Standard* 28/721 (26 October 1907): 256; A. M., 'The Grieg Memorial Concert', *Musical Standard* 28/722 (2 November 1907): 278–9. At Hans Richter's 'In Memoriam' concert for Wagner on 7 May 1883 the composer's music was paired with Beethoven's Fifth Symphony; see 'Programmes and Concerts', *Saturday Review* 55/1436 (5 May 1883): 565. The *Siegfried Idyll* was, however, included in a number of contemporary programmes as a tribute to the composer.

[59] 'Exeter-Hall', *The Times*, 18 November 1847, 5. See also the abridged performance of Mendelssohn's *Antigone* on New Year's Day, 1848, at Windsor Castle, reported in 'New Year's Day at Windsor Castle', *Caledonian Mercury*, 6 January 1848, 2. The full production of *Antigone* at London's St James's Theatre on 5 January 1848 (prefaced by Mendelssohn's 'Scottish' Symphony), would also have been a poignant event (see 'French Plays. – St. James's Theatre', *The Times*, 5 January 1848, 4), as would the 'Mendelssohn Night' on 12 January at Exeter Hall, consisting of selections from Mendelssohn's works, and advertised in the *Morning Post*, 10 January 1848, 1. *Elijah* was later used at a concert to launch the Mendelssohn scholarships (allowing British students free tuition at the Leipzig Conservatoire) on 15 December 1848; see 'The Mendelssohn Scholarships', *The Times*, 16 December 1848, 5.

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Sculptural and Literary Commemorations

If there was some debate over Bennett's musical legacy, there were also several suggestions as to what types of objects might best represent suitable memorials for the composer. *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* hoped that 'a biography' might 'be produced by some competent hand'.[60] Bennett's son, James Robert Sterndale Bennett (1847–1928) eventually published such a volume, but not until 1907, after he had retired from being headmaster at Derby School;[61] reviews highlighted this lack of 'undue haste' and James's suitability for the task (combining 'filial affection' and 'unswerving fidelity'), resulting in 'one of the most careful and exact biographies ... seen for a long time'.[62] In terms of the visual arts, the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* had already reported the unveiling of a marble bust of the composer by the Belgian sculptor Louis Auguste Malampré (c. 1820–1888) in Sheffield's Cutlers' Hall in December 1875 (followed by yet another performance of 'God is a Spirit').[63] In 1885, however, Stanford wrote to *The Times* proposing that a statue of Orlando Gibbons by Hamo Thornycroft (1850–1925) should be erected in Cambridge 'on a site facing King's-parade', with a '*basso-rilievo* portrait' of Bennett on its pedestal; this was thought to be particularly fitting, given that Gibbons and Bennett were both former choristers in King's College Chapel, and that Bennett suggested a Gibbons commemoration 'on the last occasion when he spoke in public at Cambridge'.[64] A Patron's Fund that included Princes Albert and Edward (later Edward VII), the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Duke of Devonshire, was set up, and George Macfarren and Frederick Gore Ouseley were made chairmen of a general committee with the goal of raising the required £1,100. However, the potential scheme was criticized by William Cusins in the same newspaper the following day – 'tack[ing] on' Bennett's portrait was 'inappropriate', as he was 'second to only one English musician ... Purcell'.[65] Cusins therefore suggested alternatives – either creating a memorial tablet for Bennett in King's College Chapel, or erecting a monument in Sheffield, 'where he was born, and where his father was organist of the parish church' – a more fitting tribute given that Bennett 'was one of the most gifted men that town has produced'.[66] *The Musical World* agreed, suggesting that Bennett 'had little affinity of the grand English

[60] 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett's Funeral', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* 2/51 (13 February 1875): 470.

[61] J. R. Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907). The preface, vii, confirms that materials for the biography began to be collected from 1881.

[62] 'Two Musical Knights: Sir George Smart and Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Musical Times* 49/780 (February 1908): 97; 'Life of Sterndale Bennett', *Musical Herald* 718 (1 January 1908): 8. Arthur O'Leary, 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett: A Brief Review of his Life and Works', *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 8th Session (1881–82): 141, also highlighted a 'proposal to issue a complete and uniform edition of his works', but this was not ultimately pursued.

[63] See 'Unveiling the Bust of Sterndale Bennett', *The Musical World* 53/52 (25 December 1875): 875, quoting from the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, where the sculptor 'laboured under the disadvantage of never having seen' the composer. According to 'Memorial to Sir Sterndale Bennett in Sheffield', *Sheffield Independent*, 9 March 1875, 3, the cost was likely to be £160 (over £15,000 in today's money). Correspondence in this journal had also discussed the possibility of having a marble monument to Bennett in the Parish Church (later the Cathedral) or the park; see F. Hume, 'Proposed Memorial of Sir Sterndale Bennett', *Sheffield Independent*, 10 February 1875, 4.

[64] C. V. Stanford, 'Orlando Gibbons Memorial Fund', *The Times*, 30 December 1885, 4. In his lecture at the London Institution in 1858 ('On the Vocal Music of England') Bennett also highlighted Gibbons's madrigals (including a performance of 'The Silver Swan'), regretting that the lecture prevented him 'from giving specimens of that style [church music] in which he stands so preeminent'; see William Sterndale Bennett, *Lectures on Musical Life*, ed. Nicholas Temperley, with the assistance of Yunchung Yang (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006): 61–2.

[65] W. G. Cusins, 'Orlando Gibbons Memorial Fund', *The Times*, 31 December 1885, 10.

[66] Cusins, 'Orlando Gibbons Memorial Fund'. For Bennett's two lectures to the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society in 1859, see *Lectures on Musical Life*, 31–57 and 'Appendix', 163–7.

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school' of which Gibbons was 'so illustrious an example', being 'in sentiment and style … much more nearly akin to Mendelssohn'.[67]

The idea of a Sheffield memorial resurfaced in 1899, when at a meeting of the local branch of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, Henry Coward proposed a statue for the city, in addition to 'the establishment of competitions in the form of the Mrs. Sunderland competitions in Huddersfield', perhaps a series of lectures associated with the University College, or the foundation of a chair or scholarship (with the statue or chair both costing around £3000).[68] Again a committee was created to 'carry the scheme forward'; although it was suggested that 'Sheffield was not a suitable town in which to erect monuments', at least one correspondent was persuaded that 'a statue or some visible reminder of the man whom we ought to be proud to claim as a citizen' was needed, rather than a scholarship that might be 'disassociated from his native town'.[69] These issues were finally resolved in 1920 when a memorial tablet was erected to Bennett in Sheffield Cathedral by 'Sheffield Musicians who co-operated in a Festival Commemorative of the Sterndale Bennett Centenary, April 13 & 14, 1916',[70] created by the Sheffield stonemasons Frank Tory and Sons, and incorporating a copy of a medallion of the composer made by T. Smith in 1875.[71]

Inevitably, responses to Bennett's death incorporated suitable quotations from poetry and drama to reflect the mood of the nation, including the lines from Tennyson's 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington' quoted at the beginning of this article. Whereas *The Globe* invoked Milton's 'To Shakespeare. 1630' ('So sepulchred, in such pomp doth lie,/That kings, for such a death, might wish to die'.) on hearing that Westminster Abbey had 'refused space for a monumental tablet above his tomb',[72] others referred to Shakespeare's *Richard II* ('Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes/Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth'),[73] and Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (quoting Milton at 'A livelong monument;/And, so sepulchred, in such pomp doth lie,/That kings for such a death might wish to die', or, in relation to potential 'future recognition', 'The high and tender Muses may accept/With gracious smile, deliberately pleased').[74] Fittingly, there were also references to Thomas Moore's 'Paradise and the Peri' (from the oriental romance *Lalla Rookh*) that formed the basis of Bennett's Op. 42 overture of 1862,[75] whether the lines 'One who, in life, where're he moved,/Drew after him the hearts of many', "'Joy, joy for ever! My task is done;/The gates are pass'd, and heaven is won!'", or this more extended passage:

[67] 'Occasional Notes', *The Musical World* 64/1 (2 January 1886): 7.

[68] 'Proposed Memorial to Sterndale Bennett', *Musical Standard* 12/289 (15 July 1899): 47.

[69] 'Proposed Memorial to Sterndale Bennett'; W. C. A., 'The Sterndale Bennett Memorial', *Musical Standard* 12/306 (11 November 1899): 315.

[70] The tablet was unveiled on 29 April 1920, where *The Woman of Samaria* was also sung by the Cathedral Oratorio Choir; see 'Tablet to Composer', *Sheffield Independent*, 30 April 1920, 5. For a description of the Bennett Centenary celebrations in Sheffield, see 'Sheffield and District', *Musical Times* 57/879 (May 1916): 256. In Centenary celebrations elsewhere, Dan Godfrey oversaw performances of Bennett's music in Bournemouth, there was a students' concert by pupils at the RAM, and the Easter Term Gresham College lectures were devoted to Bennett (see 'The Sterndale Bennett Centenary', *Musical Herald* 818 (1 May 1916): 181). Reassessments of the composer included Harvey Grace, 'William Sterndale Bennett', *The School Music Review* 24/288 (May 1916): 238–40, and F[rederick] Corder, 'W. Sterndale Bennett and his Music', *Musical Times* 57/879 (May 1916): 233–35.

[71] See Rosemary Firman, 'Bennett, Sir William Sterndale', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, www.oxforddnb.com (accessed 25 June 2024). Some of Bennett's contemporaries were not so lucky – a planned monument for William Vincent Wallace in Kensal Green was never built, for example; see 'The Vincent Wallace Fund', *The Orchestra* 5/116 (16 December 1865): 187–8.

[72] 'Crystal Palace Concerts', *The Globe* (11 December 1876): 2.

[73] 'William Sterndale Bennett', *The Musical World* 53/7 (13 February 1875): 113, quoting from Arion in *Society, at Home and Abroad*.

[74] 'Sir William Sterndale Bennett's Funeral', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* 2/51 (13 February 1875): 470; H. H. S., 'The Place of Sterndale Bennett in Music', 305.

[75] For a brief discussion of this overture, see Horton, 'An Obsession with Perfection', 284–5.

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'Sleep', said the Peri, as softly she stole
The farewell sigh of that vanishing soul
As true as e're warmed the human breast;
'Sleep on, in visions of odour rest!
In balmier airs that ever yet stirr'd
The enchanted pile of that holy bird,
Who sings at the last his own death lay,
And in music and perfume dies away'.[76]

However, more significant in relation to Bennett are five elegiac poems of varying quality written in response to the composer's death, all published in *The Musical World* (see the Appendix). The elegiac poem for an identified public figure was a familiar feature of nineteenth-century Britain – whether Tennyson's 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington' (1852), or, in terms of literary or artistic figures, Letitia Elizabeth Landon's 'Stanzas on the Death of Mrs. Hemans' (1835),[77] or Mowbray Morris's 'Elegy for Anthony Trollope' (1882). However, examples relating to British composers of the period were rare – such as the eight-line tribute to Sullivan in *Punch* magazine;[78] of international composers, even the poetic tributes to Mendelssohn could not rival the number of Bennett elegies.[79]

If the poetic elegy is broadly understood as 'a poem of loss or mourning written after a death in order to express grief, commemorate the dead, and seek consolation, and which often employs conventions from classical pastoral',[80] literary studies of the genre have tended to either explore Harold Bloom's idea of the 'anxiety of influence' (which 'conceives elegy as a rivalrous attack on a dead but still overwhelming precursor figure') or Freud's 'Mourning and Melancholia' model, seeing elegy as 'a translation into literature of the grieving process following a death, leading to resignation or consolation'.[81] Working broadly within this second interpretative frame, Peter Sacks's 1985 study highlights the main conventions of the poetic elegy, several of which are exhibited in the elegies for Bennett. These include processions (one of several strategies designed 'to place the dead, and death itself, at some cleared distance from the living'); repetition (creating 'a ... rhythm of lament ... controlling the expression of grief'); elegiac questioning (designed 'to set free the energy locked in grief or rage and to organize its movement in the form of a question that is not merely an expression of ignorance but a voicing of protest'); and anger and cursing.[82] An elegy written to commemorate the death of a literary or artistic figure (such as

[76] 'Sir Sterndale Bennett', *The Musical World* 53/6 (6 February 1875): 89 and 90, quoting the critic Cherubino from *Le Figaro*.

[77] For more on elegies 'by women poets for women poets', see Erik Gray, 'Victoria Dressed in Black: Poetry in an Elegiac Age', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Elegy*, ed. Karen Weisman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 284–5.

[78] 'In the immortal music rolled from earth / He was content to claim a lowly part, / Yet leaves us purer by the grace and mirth, / Human, that cling about the common heart. / Now on the bound of Music's native sphere, / Whereof he faintly caught some earthward strain, / At length he reads the "Golden Legend" clear, / At length the "Lost Chord" finds itself again'. See 'In Memoriam', *Musical News* 19/510 (8 December 1900): 503.

[79] See Anna Maria Piper, 'Lines on the Death of Mendelssohn', *The Musical World* 22/51 (18 December 1847): 808; 'On the Anniversary of the Death of Mendelssohn', *The Musical World* 23/45 (4 November 1848): 717–18; and a monody by Mr. Bartholomew ('Come, music-making Pan from thine Arcadian meads') delivered at the January 1848 Windsor Castle event reported in 'New Year's Day at Windsor Castle', 2.

[80] Samantha Matthews, 'Elegy', in *The Encyclopedia of Victorian Literature*, ed. Dino Franco Felluga, Pamela K. Gilbert, and Linda K. Hughes, 4 vols, vol. 2 (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015): 405.

[81] See Melissa F. Zeiger, *Beyond Consolation: Death, Sexuality, and the Changing Shapes of Elegy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997): 3. However, as Judith Harris notes, *The Poetry of Loss: Romantic and Contemporary Elegies* (New York: Routledge, 2023): 1, 'more turbulent modern and contemporary elegies' often 'eschew consolation in favor of continuing bonds with the deceased while accepting the sporadic, interminable disposition of mourning'.

[82] Peter M. Sacks, *The English Elegy: Studies in the Genre from Spenser to Yeats* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985): 19, 23–6, 21–2.

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Bennett) also offered the additional opportunity to allude to their creative output in some way – just as Shelley's poem *Adonais*, as Kelvin Everest has demonstrated, incorporates several references to the poetry of John Keats, ranging 'from almost direct quotation, through complimentary references by word, phrasing or pun, to the implicit celebrations of major passages'.[83]

There is some minor repetition and questioning ('full oft –/Full oft?', 'still –/Still') in the Italian sonnet penned by the writer, translator and *Times* journalist Charles Lamb Kenney (1821–1851),[84] and in van Landeghem's 'Sterndale Bennett' (asserting Bennett's artistic presence after death with repetitions of 'dead'/'die' and the interrogative 'Is not such charm immortal?').[85] However, the series of questions marking the opening of Frederick Sanders's 'Tribute' is more striking ('What can we say of him who now has gone?/Or how describe the beauty of that mind/Which now lies cold and mute? What *can* we say/Of one whose strains have waken'd in our hearts/A brighter, better, holier feeling?'); repetition also highlights the inadequacies of any attempts to summarize Bennett's 'worth' ('What can we say', 'What *can* we say', 'If we but say', 'how little have we said'). The fourth poem by W. C. M. – likely to be George Macfarren's brother Walter Cecil Macfarren (1826–1905),[86] given the writer's designation as a 'friend' – develops the idea of repetition by reiterating the name of the dead ('Sleep, Sterndale Bennett', 'Farewell, Sterndale Bennett!') and the composer's passing ('thou art gone', and the multiple farewells); the final poem by Viola echoes the 'Thou art gone' repetitions further, as well as using questioning to underline the tragedy of Bennett's orphanhood and the impact of the deaths of Mendelssohn and Schumann. All but Kenney highlight Bennett's humility in the context of his earthly fame and success ('renown/Circled his modest brows'; 'he loved his Art for Art/Itself, and not for honours or reward'; 'From pride and ambition thy pure mind was free'; 'Retiring thou wert, thy only fault/Was thine effort to bloom unseen'), and whilst Kenney's, Van Landeghem's and Sanders's texts include only oblique references to Bennett's 'music rare as ever breathed in song', 'noble works', 'great creations of a heaven-dower'd mind', and musical 'strains', both Macfarren and Viola cite *The May Queen* (sung 'by thousands') as a particular example of his 'eloquent music', with the former confirming the composer's resting place alongside significant contributors to British musical life: Handel, Purcell and Gibbons.

As I have suggested elsewhere, however, the poetic conventions identified in Sacks's listing can also be applied to musical elegies.[87] Hubert Parry's *Elegy for Brahms* (1897) can be read as a '"working through" of the mourning experience', with its opening 'incantatory rhetoric' mirroring the 'reiterated statements of death' in poetic models, the 'angry climax' in bar 32, a sense of competition between mourning voices, the hanging dissonance in bars 98–103 that suggests the idea of elegiac questioning, and the processional tread in the final *Largamente*. Not only does Parry's secondary theme contain an allusion to the third movement of Brahms's Second Symphony, but the coda references Brahms's First

[83] Kelvin Everest, 'Shelley's *Adonais* and John Keats', *Essays in Criticism* 57 (2007): 243.

[84] Kenney published *A Memoir of Michael William Balfe* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1875), along with several popular songs, and translations of opera libretti and Balzac's correspondence.

[85] The composer Hippolyte van Landeghem, who collaborated with his blind wife on sentimental or sacred ballads such as 'Dreaming Again', 'The Fairest Flower will perish', 'Think of me and pray', and 'The Fountain of Tears'; see, for example, *The Musical World* 53/21 (22 May 1875): 352, and 'New Music', *The Graphic* 13/336 (6 May 1876): 439. His wife published a poetic testimonial to Sir Julius Benedict in *The Musical World* 53/21 (22 May 1875): 349. For a discussion of his wife's 1864 treatise on disability in the education system, see Heather Tilly, *Blindness and Writing: From Wordsworth to Gissing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018): 113–15.

[86] Walter Macfarren edited Bennett's piano and vocal works and revised Bennett's editions of Beethoven's Piano Sonatas.

[87] Michael Allis, 'Refiguring the Poetic Elegy in Music: The Rhetoric of Mourning in Parry's *Elegy for Brahms*', *Music & Letters* 103/3 (2022): 430–63.

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Symphony finale – a thematic idea that generates Parry's musico-rhetorical structure as an elegy 'on' Brahms, rather than simply 'for' Brahms.[88] In underlining the potential of musical tributes to be understood as effective refigurings of literary models, Wingham's *Elegy* and Macfarren's *Idyll* offer similar opportunities for meaningful reassessment.

Thomas Wingham: *Elegy on the Death of Sir Sterndale Bennett*

Thomas Wingham (1846–1893) began his musical career as an organist, but studied with Bennett at the RAM from 1867, and was appointed Professor of piano there in 1871.[89] A Catholic convert, he became musical director at the Brompton Oratory in 1881 but was passed over for the post of Principal of the Guildhall School of Music in 1892 in favour of Joseph Barnby. Apart from his Mass (*Regina Cœli*) in D and *Te Deum*,[90] Wingham was best known for his orchestral music, which included six concert overtures (1872–1880),[91] four symphonies (D, 1870; B flat, 1872; E minor, choral symphony, 1873; D, 1883) – and a Serenade in E flat premiered by the Philharmonic Society on 26 March 1885, described as 'full of fancy and freshness' and 'admirably scored'.[92] Many of his works remained unpublished; of Wingham's 'mountain of manuscripts', Louis Parker highlighted not only the choral symphony but the unfinished opera *Nala and Damayanti* (libretto by Mrs Oscar Beringer, based on the *Mahabharata*).[93]

Writers frequently juxtaposed Wingham with Bennett in biographical terms. According to Parker, Wingham was Bennett's 'favourite pupil', and 'their conferences were not like a lesson between teacher and learner, but like an interchange of thought between kindred minds', where they 'discussed the masterpieces of dead and living composers'.[94] Of Bennett's later pupils, 'none showed him greater devotion or remembered him with more reverent affection',[95] and Wingham's own obituary suggested parallels with how Bennett's teaching duties had preventing his compositional activity: 'If asked when he was going to write something new, he [Wingham] would repeat an answer of Bennett's (for Bennett suffered greatly in the same way), "Write, how can I write when I am tied to the leg of a grand piano all my life?"'.[96] If these factors strengthened Wingham's candidacy as the composer of a commemorative work, so did perceptions of musical connections between the two composers. Whilst in general Wingham's 'grace and refinement of feeling' and 'easy flow of melody' was felt to reflect Bennett's style,[97] his fifth concert overture was said to display 'considerable affinity' with Bennett in terms of its 'grace and elegance in the melodic ideas … clearness in form and development … [and] satisfactory balance in the various sections' (but also its 'want of energy'); similarly the Serenade '[abounded] with those happy touches which are characteristic of Sterndale Bennett's pupil and disciple'.[98] Moreover,

[88] Sacks, *The English Elegy*, 1, 25; Allis, 'Refiguring the Poetic Elegy in Music', 445–61.

[89] Wingham was one of the representatives of the RAM professors as part of Bennett's funeral cortège.

[90] See 'Weekly Musical Review', *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* 8/209 (2 February 1878): 479.

[91] These are *Festal Overture* in C (1872); *Eros*, with the motto 'Monarch love! Resistless boy!' from Thomas Moore's translation of one of the *Odes of Anacreon* (1875); the choral *Ode* in D (1877); *Fair Laughs the Morn (Thomas Gray)* in F (1878); *Love Took Up the Glass of Time (Tennyson)* in A (1879), referencing Tennyson's poem *Locksley Hall*; and *Mors Janua Vitae* in D (1880).

[92] T. L. Southgate, 'Philharmonic Society', *Musical Standard* 28/1079 (4 April 1885): 208.

[93] Louis N. Parker, 'Thomas Wingham', *Musical Times* 34/603 (May 1893): 271.

[94] Parker, 'Thomas Wingham'.

[95] J. R. Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, 402.

[96] E. H. Turpin, '"In Memoriam" – Thomas Wingham', *Musical News* 4/110 (8 April 1893): 317.

[97] 'Crystal Palace Concerts', *Musical Standard* 24/979 (5 May 1883): 270; 'Mr. Thomas Wingham', *Athenaeum* 3414 (1 April 1893): 418.

[98] 'Music: The Week', *Athenaeum* 2994 (14 March 1885): 353; 'Concerts', *The Musical World* 63/14 (4 April 1885): 217.

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Wingham had already dedicated his Second Symphony in B flat major Op. 6, premiered on 23 March 1872, to 'his revered master' Bennett. Typically, Gruneisen in the *Athenaeum* was not convinced by Wingham's symphonic acumen – there was 'nothing in his work to distinguish him from the ordinary run of symphonists who, possessing ideas and form, are not creators'. Being 'thoroughly versed in the grammar of musical composition, and to comprehend the tone and scope of instruments' was not enough – 'higher faculties' were needed for genres such as the symphony and oratorio, and the encoring of the scherzo was explained by an 'indulgent' audience.[99]

Although more work needs to be done in this area, of the nineteenth-century elegiac musical works written soon after the death of a composer or performer, only a few – such as the 1847 *Elegy on the Death of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy* (where words by Bishop Heber were added to the slow movement of Beethoven's 'Moonlight' Sonata), Sigismund Neukomm's *A la mémoire de notre ami Fr. Chopin* (1850) for organ or piano, or the *Descriptive Fantasia* for organ ('*in memoriam* Sir George Macfarren') – signalled a specific mourning process by highlighting the name of the departed overtly in their titles.[100] Wingham's *Elegy on the Death of Sir Sterndale Bennett* obviously offered such specificity, but seems to have been performed only once in orchestral guise, 'unexpectedly' opening the commemorative concert for Bennett at the Crystal Palace on 6 March 1875.[101] Responses in the musical press were muted, describing a work that was 'well put together' and 'warmly received'; containing 'all the sentiment appropriate to such an offering', it was 'listened to with an interest not to be misconstrued'.[102] Typically, Gruneisen in the *Athenaeum* was less generous, suggesting that it '[reflected] more credit on Mr. Wingham's heart than on his head', owing to its 'Schumann tone'.[103]

The title page of the piano reduction is striking (Figure 1) – illustrating the door of a country church (where details of the background to the work, written 'in reverence', and its premiere are provided), suggestive of religious consolation offered in elegies such as Milton's *Lycidas* or Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. The sketchy quality of the outer perspective, combined with the overgrown foliage at the door's base, suggests a hidden, spiritual treasure. Although only 122 bars long, the *Elegy* incorporates some of the features of the poetic elegy highlighted by Sacks (see the structural overview in Table 1). The work begins by establishing a funereal march rhythm on the tympani (Example 1a); if its striking punctuation by silence reflects how Bennett 'impressed upon [Wingham] the importance of the opening of a composition',[104] the frequent interpolation of this music (at bars 29, 73, and in the coda) ensures that a sense of processional is at the heart of the *Elegy*, underpinned by the scalic patterns at bars 27–9 and 45–50 (in bassoons, with either cello or bass *pizzicato*) that augment the music's funereal pacing (Example 1b).

The thematic material of the A and B sections has a different function. The slow scalic progress of the primary theme (Example 2a) is increasingly dominated by repetitive sighing figures that are suitably redolent of mourning. Combined with a string tone, this almost suggests a slower-paced allusion to some of Bennett's own musical shapes in the same key, such as the string-focused opening of *The Naiades* overture (Example 2b). Given that major tonalities are unusual in a musical elegy, the use of D major not only underlines this potential reference to the overture, but also strengthens the sense of consolation suggested by

[99] 'Lenten Concerts', *Athenaeum* 2318 (30 March 1872): 410.

[100] According to 'New Music', *The Graphic* 37/964 (19 May 1888): 538, the 'title and the descriptive phrases' of the Macfarren tribute were 'in questionable taste'.

[101] 'Sterndale Bennett Commemoration at the Crystal Palace', *The Musical World* 53/11 (13 March 1875): 186.

[102] Ebenezer Prout, 'Crystal Palace – Bennett Concert', *Academy* 149 (13 March 1875): 282; 'Sterndale Bennett Commemoration at the Crystal Palace', 186.

[103] 'Bennett's Compositions', *Athenaeum* 2472, 367.

[104] J. R. Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, 403.

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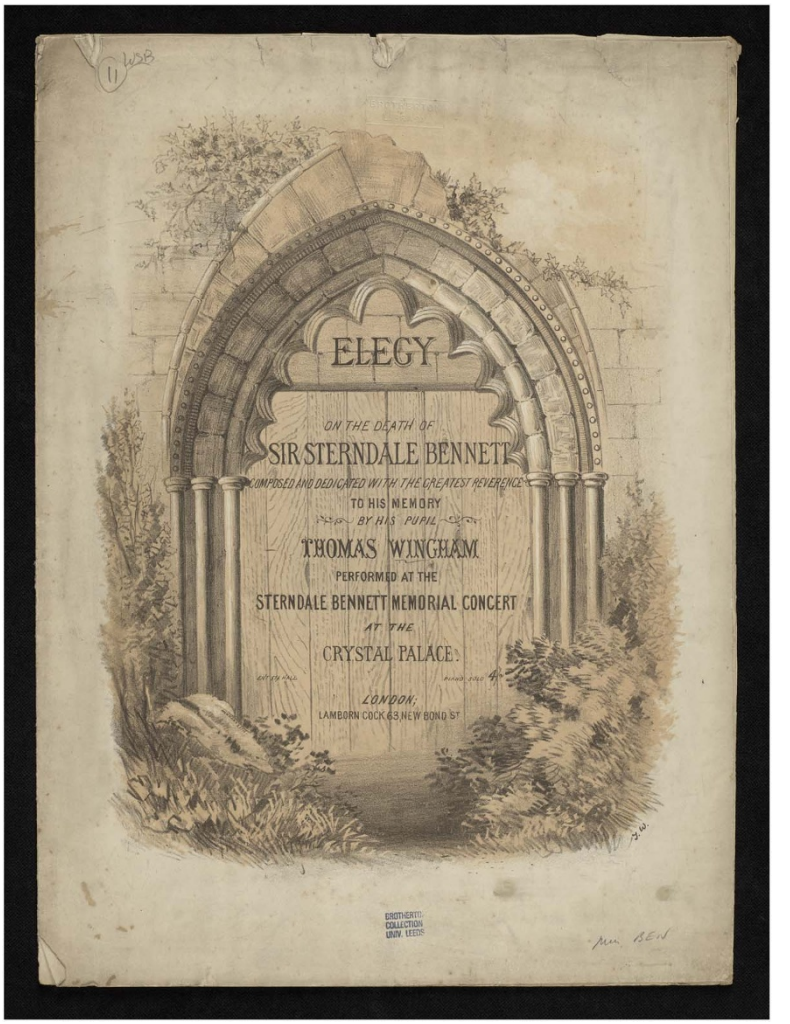


Figure 1. Thomas Wingham, *Elegy on the Death of Sir Sterndale Bennett*, piano score, title page.

the title page image. Rather than solace being typically the end goal of an elegiac progress from a state of grief, therefore, in Wingham's musical refiguring it is temporarily established from the start. However, although the reiteration of D major in Wingham's opening paragraph seems to offer tonal reassurance (beginning with the tonic chord, and ending with a clear perfect cadence), any sense of easy consolation is subsequently undermined at the upbeat to bar 33. Here the sudden interpolation by the wind ushers in the contrasting *Agitato* B section that presents a division in the mourning voices,[105] as the wind semiquaver flutters are answered by the more stately octave reiterations in the horns; the dissonance of the initial wind chord – a third inversion of a B minor seventh chord – is suggestive of Sacks's idea of questioning, particularly as it only resolves to a half-diminished seventh

[105] See Sacks, *The English Elegy*, 34–6, who views such division as part of a 'confrontational ... dialogue' where 'the bereaved is forced to accept a reality that he might otherwise refuse'.

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Table 1. Thomas Wingham, *Elegy on the Death of Sir Sterndale Bennett*, structural overview

Bar	Event	Key
	Section A	
1	processional, *Adagio non troppo*, 4/4	D
7	primary theme (strings)	D
29	processional	D
	Section B	
33	questioning/division of mourning voices, *Agitato*	b →
45	scalic processional	D (V)
	Section A′	
51	primary theme with counterpoint	D
73	processional	D
77	**interruptive musical memory**	F
	barcarole, *Andante cantabile*, 6/8	
84	link, *Moderato*, 4/4	D (V)
	Section A′′	
92	primary theme (full orchestra), *Tempo I^mo*	D
114–22	coda (incorporating processional)	D

(a) Thomas Wingham, *Elegy on the death of Sterndale Bennett*, opening



(b) bars 45-50



Example 1. (a) Thomas Wingham, *Elegy on the death of Sterndale Bennett*, opening and (b) bars 45–50.

chord on G sharp in bar 43 that is left hanging (Example 3). Although the extended descending scalic sigh in the violins (Example 1b) offers some resolution of this local conflict, the move to a dominant pedal serves to set up a more convincing response – a return of the primary theme in the cellos in bar 51, now incorporating a violin counterpoint, suggestive of two mourning voices working in tandem; the tympani beats round off this reorchestrated A section.

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(a) Wingham, *Elegy*, primary theme, bars 7-14



Example 2a. Wingham, *Elegy*, primary theme, bars 7–14.

(b) Sterndale Bennett, *The Naiades* overture, bars 5-11



Example 2b. Sterndale Bennett, *The Naiades* overture, bars 5–11.



Example 3. Wingham, *Elegy*, bars 32–43, division of voices and elegiac questioning.

A sudden change of mood follows, with Wingham's seven-bar quotation from the opening of Bennett's second-movement barcarole from his Fourth Piano Concerto Op. 19 in F minor (Example 4), a strategy commented on approvingly by critics.[106] This barcarole was one of Bennett's most popular movements, spawning a plethora of arrangements for solo

[106] See Prout, 'Crystal Palace – Bennett Concert', 282; 'Bennett's Compositions', *Athenaeum* 2472, 367, and 'Thomas Wingham', *Musical Opinion* 16/188 (May 1893): 466. The tradition of using a dead composer's music in an elegiac work requires further exploration; apart from the works by Parry, Wingham and Macfarren highlighted here, other nineteenth-century examples include John Braham's 'The Death of Weber' (1826) where words by J.R. Planché were fitted to themes from *Der Freischütz*.

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Example 4. Wingham, *Elegy*, bars 77–83, musical memory of Bennett's barcarole.

piano, piano duet, organ, violin and piano, and vocal trio and piano.[107] For *The Musical World* it '[appeared] to soothe and console; it is as balm to the wound, as fresh water to the burning thirst', and the *Morning Post* described a 'movement … of such exquisite melodious loveliness that it can have been nothing else than an inspiration'.[108] The quotation's appearance in its original key of F major (also adopting its original orchestration) creates an arresting tonal contrast in the context of the *Elegy*'s D major;[109] its impact is heightened by the performance direction 'Tenderly, as if in contemplation' and the thematic disintegration and pauses in the seventh bar ('dying away') that create the impression of a fading musical memory. Eight bars of a dominant pedal *Moderato* subsequently re-establish the 4/4 metre, and after a *con passione* replaying of the primary theme by the full orchestra, the descending scale in the bass line and final tympani funeral rhythms bring the work to a close.

Despite the initial lacklustre responses to the *Elegy*, it was reassessed in Wingham's obituary as 'containing some of his most earnest and beautiful musical ideas'.[110] He also went on to compose another elegiac work – his sixth concert overture (also in D major), *Mors Janua Vitae*; written in memory of his father, this was premiered in Leeds on 15 October 1880, and described as a 'clever piece of orchestral writing'.[111] More poignantly, Stanford's Mass in G, Op. 46 (1892), commissioned by and dedicated to Wingham 'in sincere regard', attained the status of a musical memorial to its dedicatee at the Brompton Oratory premiere, just two months after Wingham's death.[112]

[107] As Therese Ellsworth notes, 'The British Isles and Beyond: The Performance of Instrumental Music by William Sterndale Bennett during the Long Nineteenth Century', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 13 (2016): 246 and 252, the organ arrangement had the most performances of all Bennett's instrumental music in Australia and New Zealand up to 1914, and it was also popular in the United States.

[108] 'Mr. Sterndale Bennett's Concert', *The Musical World* 22/27 (3 July 1847): 424; 'Philharmonic Concerts', *Morning Post*, 23 June 1868, 6. Jeremy Dibble, 'Context, Form and Style in Sterndale Bennett's Piano Concertos', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 13 (2016): 211, suggests that Bennett 'very probably derived the idea of the movement's aura from the examples of the "Venetianisches Gondollied" in Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*' (Op. 19b, No. 6 and Op. 30, No. 6). The barcarole had replaced the original slow movement ('A Stroll through the Meadows') of the unpublished Concerto in F minor at its first performance on 1 July 1836; 'A Stroll through the Meadows' appeared in revised form as the slow movement of the Fourth Piano Concerto at its premiere (26 September 1838), before again being replaced by the barcarole at its second performance and in the published score. See Rosemary Williamson, 'Sterndale Bennett's Lost Piano Concerto Found', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 119/1 (1994): 116–17.

[109] In its concerto context, the barcarole tempers the dramatic F minor virtuosity of the first movement.

[110] W. H. Cummings, 'Obituary. The Late Thomas Wingham', *Musical News* 4/109 (1 April 1893): 295.

[111] Desmond L. Ryan, 'Leeds Festival and its Fruits', *Examiner* 3795 (23 October 1880): 1212. 'Crystal Palace', *Musical Times* 21/454 (December 1880): 602, responding to a subsequent performance in London on 30 October, described the work as 'mostly sombre' in colouring, and suggested that it should be rescored.

[112] See Jeremy Dibble, *Charles Villiers Stanford: Man and Musician*, rev. and expanded edn (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2024): 279–80.

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Macfarren's *Idyll in Memory of Sterndale Bennett*

Wingham's *Elegy* was not the only musical tribute to Bennett.[113] George Macfarren (1813–1887) has already been highlighted as Bennett's successor as Principal of the RAM and Professor of Music at Cambridge, one of Bennett's pall-bearers, and one of those who petitioned the Dean of Westminster to allow a Westminster Abbey burial. He had a close relationship with Bennett. As students at the Academy (Bennett entered in 1826, Macfarren in 1829) they collaborated on the first movement of a Concerto for Two Pianos in C,[114] they later became colleagues at the same institution, and Macfarren wrote the Preface to Bennett's 1862 edition of J. S. Bach's *St Matthew Passion*; along with his brother Walter he was a member of Bennett's Testimonial Committee in 1872, helping to inaugurate the Academy's Sterndale Bennett Scholarship and 'an annual prize to a female student of the institution'.[115] Macfarren's RAM addresses also made frequent reference to Bennett, whether in relation to his symphonic legacy alongside Spohr, Mendelssohn and Schumann, or the impact of his funeral; Bennett's tombstone was 'a memorial upon which we will not drop tears of regret, but of heartfelt thanks for the love he engendered, the good he did, and for the emulation he inspired'.[116] Like Wingham, therefore, Macfarren was an ideal candidate to memorialize Bennett via a musical composition – hence the commission from the Philharmonic Society.[117]

Macfarren's *Idyll* was premiered at the end of the first half of a Philharmonic Society concert on 5 July 1875 that included Haydn's Symphony No. 99 in E flat, Vieuxtemps's Fifth Violin Concerto in A minor with Henryk Wieniawski as soloist, and extracts from *Fidelio* and *Euryanthe* (with Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Schumann lieder and Weber's Jubilee Overture in the second half).[118] The choice of title is striking. In drawing on Theocritean poetic models that were associated with the simplicity of rural life and the 'foreground[ing] of "ordinary" people', the Victorian idyll has often been undervalued as being 'excessively and falsely sweet, something incapable of giving a trenchant account of modern experience'.[119] However, as Thomas Hughes and Emma Merkling argue, despite surface 'experiences of calm and pleasure', the idyll had the capacity to contain 'ambivalent and frequently unresolved undercurrents relating to contestations over gender and sexuality, temporality, the urban, and the colonial', creating 'a consciousness that it [the idyll] is never a perfect escape from a social reality'.[120] Hence the way that 'small and enclosed spaces are precariously braced against a vast edgeless openness' in Tennyson's poem 'Enoch Arden' (1864), or how John Millais's painting *An Idyll: 1745* (1884) contains an 'uncomfortable … juxtaposition' of three lower-class Scottish girls and two English soldiers.[121]

[113] One posthumous revision of Bennett's works in 1875 is notable: F. E. Penna composed additional words to Bennett's song 'Forget-me-not', as the song was normally 'too short for public performance'; see Penna's letter in *The Musical World* 53/7 (13 February 1875): 117.

[114] J. R. Sterndale Bennett, *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, 39.

[115] 'Presentation of the Sterndale Bennett Testimonial', *Musical Times* 15/351 (May 1872): 467.

[116] George Alexander Macfarren, *Addresses and Lectures* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1888): 88, 175–6.

[117] See Henry C. Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren: His Life, Works, and Influence* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1891): 317. In turn, Wingham directed the music at Macfarren's Memorial Service at the Brompton Oratory on 29 January 1888; see ibid., 404.

[118] See 'Philharmonic Society', *Musical Standard* 9/571 (10 July 1875): 18.

[119] Thomas Hughes and Emma Merkling, 'Introduction', in *The Victorian Idyll in Art and Literature: Subject, Ecology, Form*, ed. Hughes and Merkling (New York: Routledge, 2023): 4, 5.

[120] Hughes and Merkling, 'Introduction', 5–6, 7.

[121] Caroline Arscott and Clare Pettitt, 'Multicolour as Disavowal: The Racial Politics of the Nineteenth-Century Idyll', and Kate Flint, 'Ancient and Modern: Attention and Environmental Change in the Victorian Pictorial Idyll', in *The Victorian Idyll in Art and Literature*, ed. Hughes and Merkling, 61 and 116 respectively. As Arscott and Pettitt note, 60, the published volume containing 'Enoch Arden' was 'originally to be called *Idylls of the Hearth*'.

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Macfarren's musical refiguring of the idyll might simply have been an invocation of the heroic associations of Tennyson's Arthurian *Idylls of the King*, given the music's lack of overt connection with Arcadian pastoral.[122] However, we might use Kate Flint's identification of 'time suspended' as an important feature of the idyllic mode – and particularly her suggestion that this encourages 'a reflective attentiveness' – to understand the idea behind Macfarren's *Idyll*.[123] As Henry Banister noted (mirrored in accounts in the *Monthly Musical Record* and *Sunday Times*), Macfarren's programme note explained that the composition contained 'the points in [Bennett's] character and career that have been foremost in the recollection of his friend', akin to an obituary:

> [Bennett's] inborn genius; his early orphanhood; the expansion of his powers under kindly nurture; his entry on the active life of the metropolis; his transplantation to a foreign land, where the musical uses and the social surroundings were a new soil and climate for the cultivation of his artistry; the ripening of his strength under these influences; his scholastic offices in England, with their duties; the resumed exercise of his productive ability; his later visit to Germany, when some of his artist friends were no more; his gently falling into the everlasting sleep; the triumphant homage to his manes, when the heart of England beat with pride in her honoured son; the feeling of the mourners that himself was present among them, when his own strain was sung; and the glorification of art in men's acknowledgement of her representation.[124]

In distilling Bennett's 58 years into a relatively short musical work, Macfarren's musical obituary certainly recalibrates temporality (if not necessarily 'suspending' it), and obviously offers listeners the opportunity for the 'reflective attentiveness' as part of the idyllic mode. And despite the primarily positive, consolatory and idealized nature of the paratext,[125] there are moments of personal crisis or deflection ('his early orphanhood'; 'his scholastic offices') that undercut this mood – paralleling the tension-ridden undercurrents of literary and pictorial models of the idyll.[126]

The structure of Macfarren's *Idyll* (see Table 2) can be understood broadly as a sonata design – an expository space outlining a move from B flat major to D major, a central episode

[122] Hughes and Merkling, 'Introduction', 4, suggest the 'smaller-scale' associations of the idyllic with Tennyson's saga, given that it was 'hived off … into smaller, interchangeable units centred on specific characters'. See also Angela G. O'Donnell, 'Tennyson's "English Idylls": Studies in Poetic Decorum', *Studies in Philology* 85/1 (1988): 125–44, particularly 131–3, and Andrea Krauß, '"A Kind of Idyll": Epistemologies of Citation in Jean Paul', *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 89 (2014): 76–93.

[123] Flint, 'Ancient and Modern', 105.

[124] Banister, *George Alexander Macfarren*, 317. See also 'Philharmonic Society', *Sunday Times*, 11 July 1875, 3, and 'Philharmonic Society', *Monthly Musical Record* 5 (1875): 117.

[125] 'Paratext' is a term coined by the literary scholar Gérard Genette in relation to additional elements surrounding a published text that contribute to its interpretation: 'a title, a subtitle, intertitles; prefaces, postfaces, notices, forewords, etc.; marginal, infrapaginal, terminal notes; epigraphs; illustrations; blurbs, book covers, dust jackets, and many other kinds of secondary signals, whether allographic or autographic'; see Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997): 3 (originally published as *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris: Seuil, 1982)). In viewing Banister's description as a paratext, I draw upon James Hepokoski's 'Fiery-Pulsed Libertine or Domestic Hero? Strauss's *Don Juan* Reinvestigated', in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992): 136–7; in applying Genette's terminology to programme music, Hepokoski notes how paratextual materials 'set up the framing conditions of a text's reception; they condition the way in which the text proper is to be perceived'.

[126] This might encourage us to identify undercurrents in other musical idylls that disrupt (however briefly) the predominant mood. See, for example, the unexpected dominant and diminished seventh chords in bars 41–43 of the first of Edward MacDowell's *6 Idylls after Goethe*, Op. 28 (1887).

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Example 5. George Macfarren, *Idyll in Memory of Sterndale Bennett*, bars 291–294, quotation of 'God is a Spirit'.

in G minor, a recapitulatory space where some of the expository material returns primarily in the tonic, and, after an interruptive passage in E flat major, a closing tonic coda. However, in attempting to represent the challenging paratext, Macfarren's *Idyll* relied on the symbolic use of theme and tonality, and the replaying of selected materials, as well as musical quotation.[127] The tonal deflections from B flat major (the same key as Macfarren's own Sixth Symphony) are significant: the 'foreign' tonal region of D major reflects the 'new soil and climate' of Bennett's studies abroad, and G minor symbolizes both his orphanhood and death as well as his 'scholastic offices' – although *The Examiner* could not see 'what inspirations the heaven-born muse can have derived from the miserable and in this particular case self-chosen drudgery which moreover proved fatal to the late composer's creative power'.[128] The tonal deflection to E flat major in the recapitulatory space is particularly striking, given that this is combined with a change of metre at bar 291 with a quotation from Bennett's 'God is a Spirit' in its original key (Example 5) – one of the 'strains' that 'was sung' at Bennett's funeral, reliving the feeling that Bennett was among the mourners. Macfarren uses muted strings to suggest a musical memory of the solo vocal quartet, but rather than Wingham's thematic disintegration, he extends the thirteenth bar of Bennett's original music and provides a three-bar link to prepare for the coda.

The thematic connections and representations are also thoughtfully conceived. The opening theme in B flat major (Bennett's 'inborn genius'), for example, returns several times in a modified form (see Example 6) to represent the 'ripening of his strength' under D major foreign influences at the end of the expository space, and, in the tonic in the recapitulatory space, his 'resumed ... productive ability' (prefacing his re-admission to the 'life of the metropolis') and the 'triumphant homage to his manes' after his death. Of the remaining thematic materials (Example 7), the reuse of Bennett's 'early orphanhood' at bar 260 to mark his own demise highlights the death trope effectively, and the incorporation of the 'new soil and climate' material to represent Bennett's descent into 'everlasting sleep' marks his progression towards an 'other' world. If the sense of growth from bar 25 ('the expansion of his powers') creates a suitable preparation for Bennett's 'entry on the active life of the metropolis', and the four-square repetitions of the 'scholastic offices' are effective in suggesting the weariness of Bennett's administrative burdens, the final B flat *Maestoso* (bar 307) offers a clear representation of the 'glorification of art' with which the work ends. The only unresolved issue is the place of 'his later visit to Germany, when some of his artist friends were no more' in the design; although this could relate to bars 216–25, this material simply replays bars 47–56 in a transposed form – precluding any firm conclusions concerning its musical representation in contrast to the clear connections between musical text and paratext elsewhere in the work.

Macfarren's musical tribute was received more positively in general than Wingham's. Highlighting its 'artistic worth', critics noted the 'triumphant' reception of a work 'not lacking in the tenderness and pathos requisite for the illustration of such a subject' with

[127] The manuscript of this unpublished work is housed as Mu MS 1154 in the Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge.

[128] 'The Last Philharmonic Concert', *Examiner* 3519 (10 July 1875): 783.

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Table 2. George Macfarren, *Idyll in Memory of Sterndale Bennett*, simplified structure

Bar	Event	Key
	Expository Space	
1	Bennett's 'inborn genius'; *Allegro tranquillo*, 4/4	B♭
16	Narrative interruption: 'his early orphanhood'	g
21	'inborn genius' cont/	B♭
25	'the expansion of his powers'	B♭
32	'his entry on the active life of the metropolis'	B♭ – D (V)
57	'a new soil and climate'	D
97	'the ripening of his strength' ['inborn genius' replayed]	D
	Central Episode	
122	'his scholastic offices'	g
	Recapitulatory Space	
185	'the resumed exercise of his productive ability' [replays 'inborn genius' and 'his entry on the active life of the metropolis']	B♭ – E♭ – g (V)
226	'his gently falling into the everlasting sleep' [replaying of 'a new soil and climate']	g – B♭
260	Bennett's death [replays 'his early orphanhood']	g
269	'the triumphant homage to his manes' [replays 'inborn genius']	B♭ – E♭
291	**Interruptive musical memory** mourners' feelings 'when his own strain was sung'; *Andante*, 3/4	E♭
	Coda	
307-16	'the glorification of art'; *Maestoso*, 4/4	B♭

a 'treatment of the theme ... as completely individual as it is artistic', 'replete with genuine feeling', and 'remarkable for the brightness and clearness of its orchestration'; the *Sunday Times* was relieved that it was not repeated, however, as this would have transported the audience 'painfully close' to Bennett's funeral – 'a most painful though glorious occasion'.[129] As with Wingham's *Elegy*, it was the use of musical quotation that was highlighted – whether the way that 'God is a Spirit' was 'brought in, almost as a whisper, by the instruments', or in paralleling Wingham's general strategy.[130] However, there was some comment on the nature of the musical representation. The *Monthly Musical Record* suggested that 'defined as a short and highly-wrought descriptive poem', 'Idyll' explained the

[129] 'Philharmonic Society', *Musical Times* 17/390 (August 1875): 170; 'Philharmonic Society', *Sunday Times*, 11 July 1875, 3; 'Occasional Note', *The Musical World* 53/29 (17 July 1875): 482; 'Philharmonic Society', *Monthly Musical Record* 5 (1875): 117.

[130] 'Philharmonic Society', *Sunday Times*, 3; 'Philharmonic Society', *Musical Standard* 9/571 (10 July 1875): 18.

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(a) bars 1-8, 'inborn genius'



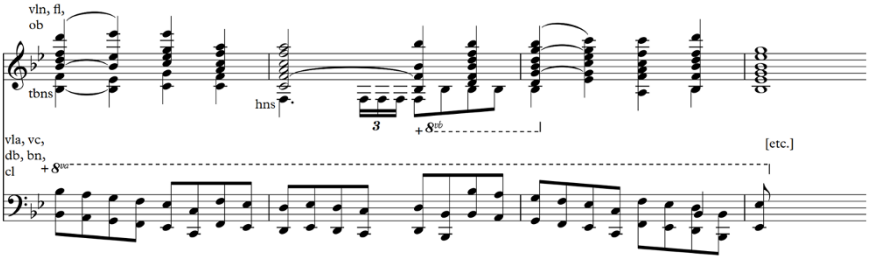
(b) bars 97-100, 'the ripening of his strength'



(c) bars 185-188, 'the resumed exercise of his productive ability'



(d) bars 269-272, 'the triumphant homage to his manes'



Example 6. Macfarren, *Idyll*, thematic repurposing of the opening theme.
a. bars 1–8, 'inborn genius'
b. bars 97–100, 'the ripening of his strength'
c. bars 185–188, 'the resumed exercise of his productive ability'
d. bars 269–272, 'the triumphant homage to his manes'

connection between the musical text and its paratext, although the designation of 'symphonic poem' might have been more appropriate.[131] The *Musical Standard* agreed with this suggestion, but despite the 'key of B flat' being suitable as 'the tonality of distance' and

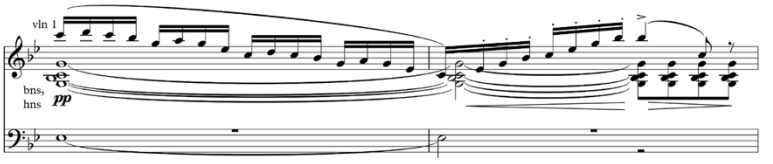
[131] 'Philharmonic Society', *Monthly Musical Record*.

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(a) bars 16-20, 'his early orphanhood'



(b) bars 25-26, 'the expansion of his powers'



(c) bars 32-34, 'his entry on the active life of the metropolis'



(d) bars 57-60, 'a new soil and climate'



(e) bars 122-125, 'his scholastic offices'



(f) bars 307-309, 'the glorification of art'



Example 7. Macfarren, *Idyll*, additional thematic materials.
a. bars 16–20, 'his early orphanhood'
b. bars 25–26, 'the expansion of his powers'
c. bars 32–34, 'his entry on the active life of the metropolis'
d. bars 57–60, 'a new soil and climate'
e. bars 122–125, 'his scholastic offices'
f. bars 307–309, 'the glorification of art'

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the effective 'plaintive utterances' of the oboe, found the complex design and programme problematic:

> The Idyll might be called a 'Symphonic Poem'; it is splendidly scored; but how express in musical tones … the Professor's 'later visit to Germany?' Perhaps, however, Mr. Macfarren intends to depict the episode by the deep note of the bassoon! The only idea conveyed to our mind by this rather vague rhapsody is an active and energetic life.[132]

The *Sunday Times* (who had missed the reference to the 'later visit to Germany' in their report) appreciated the clarity of the distinctive paratext associated with Macfarren's compositional tribute, however; it was 'not often that a tone-poet gives such an index of his intention as this', having the 'manifest advantages' of 'preventing gratuitous supposition' as well as 'afford[ing] a clue to the *animus* of the work'.[133]

Conclusion

Although the scale of Bennett's funeral, the detailed nature of the reportage and wider responses to his death can therefore be explained in part by developing models and conventions of public mourning during the Victorian period, combined with his significant institutional reach and international networks, aspects of his commemoration (whether the sheer number of funeral carriages in his cortège, or the nature and scope of the memorial concerts) were clearly exceptional – especially when compared to contemporary British composers. Particularly striking is the plethora of elegiac poetry for Bennett – a feature of his memorialization apparently unmatched by British responses to both native and international composers of the period, and reflective of the esteem in which he was held (despite some dissenting views in his obituaries). In this context, the orchestral sonorities of Wingham's and Macfarren's musical memorials (rare examples of highlighting a deceased composer overtly in their titles) conveyed effectively a suitable sense of the significance of Bennett's passing. Wingham's attempt can be reassessed as a musical refiguring of the conventions of the poetic elegy, incorporating the strategies of processional, repetition, elegiac questioning and the division of mourning voices. Whilst the more ambitious sonata-based musico-rhetorical design of Macfarren's *Idyll* encouraged the 'reflective attentiveness' of the idyllic mode,[134] its representation of selected details of Bennett's life and career demonstrates how the model of the literary obituary (rather than Wingham's poetic stimulus) might be refigured in a musical context. If the potential for the reworking of different literary models as part of an elegiac mode might be explored more widely in nineteenth-century musical repertoire, so might the idea of an elegiac intertextuality. Wingham's quotation of Bennett's barcarole was not only fitting as a mirroring of the elegiac tradition of referencing the works of a deceased artist, but its disintegrating texture (a fading memory not only of Bennett's composition, but perhaps also of his performances, given his associations with the work in the concert hall from the late 1830s to the early 1850s) also represented a striking metaphor for the composer's death.[135] Macfarren's *Idyll* also explored musical memory – this time invoking the ubiquitous 'God is a Spirit' that featured in all of Bennett's memorial concerts, and which was one of the most moving features of the funeral service itself. Ultimately, Wingham's *Elegy* and Macfarren's *Idyll* can be understood not only as personal

[132] 'Philharmonic Society', *Musical Standard*.
[133] 'Philharmonic Society', *Sunday Times*, 3.
[134] Flint, 'Ancient and Modern', 105.
[135] See Dibble, 'Context, Form and Style', 217.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479409826101207 Published online by Cambridge University Press

commemorations by former pupils and friends. More widely, they can be seen in the complex, multi-layered context of attempts to memorialize Bennett via concert events, artistic objects (sculpture, memorial tablets, paintings), educational and financial legacies, journalistic, poetic and musical texts that characterized meaningful commemorative strategies as part of the processes of public mourning in Victorian Britain.

Appendix: Elegiac poetry for Sterndale Bennett[136]

Charles Lamb Kenney: 'William Sterndale Bennett'

Snapt is the chord that vibrated full oft –
Full oft? Alas, that we might say full long! –
With music rare as ever breathed in song,
Weaving bright thought with passion wild or soft!
Our Sterndale's spirit hath its earth-crust doff'd,
Mounting on high with pinions wide and strong,
Well fit to join the everlasting throng
Who sing and harp before the throne aloft.
The master's hand is useless now and still –
Still the friend's hand, and cold, once true and warm –
Yet lives in many a scroll the master's skill,
And glows in many a breast the friend's fond charm.
Upon the rest, Death work thy wasting will!
These and their spirit-fount thou canst not harm.

M. Van Landeghem: 'Sterndale Bennett'

He is not dead – oh, such as he die not!
Speak not of him who held those mighty powers
As of the crowd, who go through life's brief hours,
Then die, and are forgot.

No, the grand sons of music do not die!
Oh, not for them death's all-dividing gloom,
And not for them the silence of the tomb –
We hear their voices nigh:

When, in his noble works, the master's skill
Makes passion rage through his resounding chords,
Or grieve, in tender plaints, like sob'rest words
Which thousand list'ners thrill;

When softly steals, on the ear-open soul,
Those great creations of a heaven-dower'd mind,
Whose lovely thoughts their seedling time will find
Through years which here-ward roll.

Is not such charm immortal? we know well
Our babes will feel it with as fine a glow.
Music is part of heavenly bliss, and so
O'er death must hold a spell.

Thus Bennett lives; and thus his name shall be
A living gift to grace the unborn years,

[136] Kenney's and Van Landeghem's poems were published in *The Musical World* 53/6 (6 February 1875): 94 and 95, Sanders's and Macfarren's in *The Musical World* 53/7 (13 February 1875): 113, and Viola's in *The Musical World* 53/8 (20 February 1875): 133.

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In every land where humankind hath ears
For all-tongued melody.

'Tis well for England's honour that renown
Circled his modest brows, ere they were dust.
Now he may rest – since rest, alas! he must –
Wearing a well-earn'd crown.

But raise his frame revered, which was the shrine
Of kindly heart, as well as gifted brain,
(Oh, rarely sweet, in this world poor and vain,
Such simple souls do shine!)

Lay him with our most honoured dead to sleep,
While his own notes, like mourning children, rave
Around his tomb: Earth but the dross can have;
The precious gold we keep.

Frederick Sanders: 'A Tribute to Sir William Sterndale Bennett'

What can we say of him who now has gone?
Or how describe the beauty of that mind
Which now lies cold and mute? What *can* we say
Of one whose strains have waken'd in our hearts
A brighter, better, holier feeling?
If we but say he loved his Art for Art
Itself, and not for honours or reward;
Or that his title lent no lustre to
His name, which he did not repay
A hundred-fold; how little have we said
To mark the worth of him who hath endear'd
Himself alike by virtue as by genius. –
Language fails. Art itself doth mourn the loss
Of her bright champion, whose spirit now
Has fled to swell that harmony divine
Which gave birth to his own.
We have done well to let him sleep among
The sculptur'd and escutcheon'd of the land.
(No nobler dust sleeps there.) And while the love
Of all that's beautiful exists, his name
Will be remembered, and his music live,
For ages yet to come, to soothe and bless
And elevate mankind.

W[alter] C[ecil] M[acfarren]: 'Sterndale Bennett'

Sleep, Sterndale Bennett, thou art gone to thy rest!
Of English musicians the greatest and best.
The hand that discoursed at thy magical will
Such eloquent music is silent and still.
Thou art gone to thy bride who has waited so long –
The wife whom thou lovedst with a love so strong.
But, ah! the deep grief will ne'er have an end,
In those who could boast the title of friend.

Mourn, England, mourn! for set is the star
That carried thy name in honour afar:
The land that for music now stands first in fame
Acknowledged thy genius and honoured thy name.
In nations that speak the old English tongue,

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By thousands thy beautiful *May Queen* is sung.
Tho' fame and tho' honours were showered on thee,
From pride and ambition thy pure mind was free.
Farewell, Sterndale Bennett! Thou hast run thy brief span,
Farewell, great musician! farewell, blameless man!
In the grand old Abbey they have pillowed his head,
And calmly he sleeps midst the mighty dead, –
With Handel, and Purcell, and Gibbons he lies,
'Till the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall arise.

Viola: 'Sterndale Bennett. In Memoriam'.

Thou art gone! thou bright and beautiful star,
  Thou art gone to thy heavenly rest,
To join in the music of saints above,
  And lean on thy Saviour's breast.

No more shall we see thy welcoming smile,
  Nor list to thy gentle voice;
Thy work on earth is but too soon o'er,
  And now the angels rejoice.

But thy memory never shall fade from earth,
  For the works thou hast left behind
Are gems, such as Britain is proud to own,
  Bespeaking the master-mind.

They are tinged with sadness – can it be
  That in youth thou wert called to part
With thy nearest on earth, thy parents dear,
  Then – with two bosom friends of thine art?

Retiring thou wert, thy only fault
  Was thine effort to bloom unseen,
But thy talents burst forth, and would not be hid,
  Fit king to thine own "May Queen".

We mourn thee deeply, our hearts are sad,
  That thy short course on earth is run;
But may He who hath called thee teach us to say,
  "Not *our* will, but *Thine* be done".

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Cite this article: Allis Michael, 'Musical Legacies, Memorials and Elegies: Commemorating William Sterndale Bennett', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* (2026): 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479409826101207

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