

G&T GAZETTE

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I can't recall how I acquired this recording. I know I've had it a long time with my acquisition date of 1961 pencilled on the cover. The label itself has a cream base with the portrait of King George lithographed in full colour. The 12inch recording begins with a trumpet and drum roll voluntary. Dame Clara then sings two verses of the anthem with the band repeating the anthem a third and final time to end the recording. *Bill Main.*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Esteemed Sir,

As Presenter of Radio NZ's "Saturday Night Nostalgia" I often receive comment (only occasionally rude) from listeners about what I say on air. One night not so long ago I happened to mention that I'd been brought up in the Brixton area of London. That prompted an elderly Kapiti gentleman to send me an Edwardian postcard depicting the Music Hall actor and comedian Dan Leno, who had also had his beginnings in that once prosperous suburb. With the card came a request for a piece of music the old chap wanted to hear. I replied enthusiastically, and told him to listen in the following weekend. Then Libby and I took a holiday in the islands and forgot all about him. I returned to my desk to find a pithy letter from 'Disgruntled of Kapiti' to the effect that he had listened, in vain, right through the request session on two consecutive Saturday evenings and wondered if he was going deaf, or daft.

Amid pangs of genuine remorse I promptly ate humble pie and said we would 'lead' with his requested music the following Saturday, which we did. A few days later, a package arrived, marked 'personal': in it was a letter of appreciation from 'No longer disgruntled of Kapiti' and 90 more stamped, addressed Edwardian postcards depicting, mostly, actors and music hall artistes of the period. For good measure a handful of politicians had been thrown in, including two of our own Prime Ministers (Richard John Seddon). The correspondence was between family members in UK, Canada, Australia and within New Zealand. The cards had been acquired many years ago by the gentleman's (he's 80) grandfather.

Knowing your appreciation of postcards and prowess as a historian I look forward to showing you the whole of this fascinating little collection. In the meantime you may like to include a sample in the current edition of The G & T Gazette.

Warm regards,

Peter (Fry)

Opposite page: This is the Dan Leno postcard that Peter refers to in his letter. Ed.

DAN LENO

Dan Leno (20 December 1860 - 31 October 1904), born George Wild Galvin, was an English comedian and actor, famous for appearing in music hall and dozens of comic plays, pantomimes, Victorian burlesques and musical comedies during the Victorian era. He was one of the first members (and later leader) of the Grand Order of Water Rats.

Born in Marylebone, London, he began to entertain as a child. In 1864, he joined his parents on stage at the Cosmothea Music Hall, Paddington, and he made his first solo appearance, aged nine, at the Britannia Music Hall, Glasgow. He adopted the stage name Dan Leno in 1884 and made his first performance under that name at the Foresters' Music Hall in Mile End, London the same year. He became increasingly popular during the 1890s and developed his act of talking

about life's mundane subjects, mixed with surreal observations, and created a host of characters which he used to illustrate his stories. In 1901 and much in demand, he performed his "Huntsman" sketch for Edward VII at Sandringham. The monarch was so impressed that Leno became publicly known as "the king's jester".

Leno appeared in burlesque and many pantomimes, starring in the Drury Lane's famous annual Christmas pantomimes, where he became known in the dame roles. Later in his career, he appeared in Edwardian musical comedies until 1903, although he suffered from alcoholism. This, together with his long association with dame and low comedy roles, prevented him from being taken seriously as an actor, and he was often turned down for Shakespearian roles. Leno began to behave in an erratic and furious manner, and he was finally committed to a mental asylum in 1903. He died soon after his discharge, aged 43



DAME CLARA BUTT

by Dennis Foreman

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The late Victorian and Edwardian period up to the First World war was a most important time for British music. In composition and performance great strides were being made, the three names that spring to mind being Elgar, Wood and Butt. Edward Elgar was the man who propelled British music into an international position, Henry Wood developed the orchestras of his day and set them towards the high standards to which we are now accustomed, and Clara Butt? No pioneer she, no breaker of new ground, no presenter of contemporary song or performer of modern music, but she is remembered by the general public when all the fine musical singers who should be recalled are all but forgotten. For she was popular! Indeed, very popular! She sang all over the United Kingdom for years with her concert parties, usually making one or two tours a year from one end of the country to another, and to the Colonies too. Singing songs that her audiences could enjoy and try themselves, a few operatic arias that suited her, some oratorio selections and, in the company of three or four excellent fellow artists, she provided enjoyable entertainment.

The early years of Clara Butt's life read more like something out of a *Girls' Own* story in Winifred Ponder's book *Clara Butt, her life story*. However, I have to begin with that uncritical volume for her early years, starting on 1 February 1873 with her birth, the same month that saw the birth of Enrico Caruso and Feodor Chaliapin.

Henry Albert Butt, a seventeen-year-old working at a shipbuilding yard in Shoreham, Sussex, met, courted and eloped with the sixteen-year-old Clara Hook, daughter of the owner of the shipbuilders. They went to Jersey in the Channel Islands, from whence he came. They married and he became a seafarer; after the birth of their first son, who died young. Clara Ellen Butt, their second child, was born at Southwick, a small fishing village near Brighton, Sussex. At this time Butt was captain of a small sailing-ship and they had hastily to call in at port for Clara to be born ashore. As soon as possible after the birth the parents returned to Jersey, which was their home for the next seven years. So runs the fairy tale of Ponder's book. However, the truth is somewhat different, thanks to research by Martin Carrington (who is planning a biography of Clara), to which I have, generously, been granted access. The Butts, in the 1871 census, are shown to be living at 27 Adur Terrace, Southwick (not no. 4 as Ponder has it). Clara Ellen was born on 1 February 1872, not 1873, at their home. Her father's occupation is described as "oyster dredgerman". She was baptised on 3 April 1872 at the Wesleyan-Methodist Chapel at Southwick. That census has her father as 23 years old and her mother as 20 (not a one-year gap as Ponder tells us).

These errors are rather strange. I can understand elevating Henry Butt's job to a more important-sounding one, but the difference in the year of birth is more difficult

to comprehend (it is, incidentally, repeated on her tombstone). Surely one year is neither here nor there for artistic purposes. Possibly Mr. Carrington's further research will provide some clues. These facts do make the tale of Clara's almost being born at sea seem most unlikely.

The Butt family moved to Bristol in 1879, Henry continuing in the Mercantile Service. The family grew: Clara had two more brothers, Bertie, who also died young, and Fred, together with three sisters, Pauline, Hazel and Ethel. Henry Butt left the seas and went into partnership as a shipbuilder and broker. Things did not go too well, as one ship was lost at sea and another went aground. Although he spent all his capital in the first loss, Butt seems to have struggled on to good avail, as there appears to have been no financial hindrance in young Clara's early life.

At school Clara took piano lessons and, as her father was of a religious bent, hymns came into her repertoire. After hearing the child sing, her mother and music teacher decided that singing lessons should follow. Her mother had a beautiful voice of similar quality to the teenage Clara, but not the range, and her father had a pleasing baritone. It was of course the time when home entertainment was popular. Aged twelve, Clara changed schools and continued with her music. Her new headmistress, hearing her sing, thought it was one of the boys. The headmistress persuaded Mrs. Butt that Clara should go to Dan Rootham, conductor of the Bristol Madrigal Society and the leading teacher of singing in the West of England.

Rootham recognised her potential and she worked with him a further three years, becoming a member of the Festival Choir in 1887 and singing in Brahms's *Requiem* Gounod's *Mors de Vita*, as well as *Messiah* and *Elijah*. Here she heard soloists like Margaret MacIntyre, Lillian Nordica and George Henschel.

The young girl progressed, singing at her mother's parties and the Bible meetings her father attended. Indeed she became a familiar performer at the local mission services, parish concerts etc. that abounded. When Clara was seventeen it was decided she should try for the Open Scholarship to the Royal College of Music, open to all musicians. This would provide free maintenance and tuition for the winner. She passed the preliminary tests and was entered for the final exams to be held in London on 1 March 1890. At the examination she sang *The Enchantress* (Hatton) and completely misunderstood the reaction of the judges, imagining that it was owing to amusement rather than astonishment. Asked to sing a second piece, but "something rather quieter . . . say something out of *Elijah*", she performed 'O rest in the Lord'. Retiring to await the results she was convinced she'd failed, but overhearing someone say that "a singer, a great tall girl had won it", she was overjoyed. *The Enchantress* was sung a second time that afternoon to a much larger roster of professors and her victory was confirmed.

Clara took up the scholarship at eighteen, entering the college on 1 May, 1890 (Summer Term). Living at Alexandra House, Kensington Gore, accommodation for young female art and music students in London, she commenced her training. Her vocal professor was Henry Blower, and Marmaduke Barton her piano tutor for her second study subject. Recognising her potential, the college, insisted that she was not to sing in public without their permission. This held well into her third year. Except for a few concerts at home in Bristol this rule was strictly enforced. However, appearing 'at home' for society

hostesses seems to have been excluded from this edict and resulted in both a small income and a showcase for her. Singing at the home of Mrs. Ronalds, the leading musical hostess in London at that time, she met Paolo Tosti, who was instrumental in obtaining further similar engagements for her. Shortly afterwards it was Tosti who told her that she was required to go to Windsor Castle and sing before the Queen. This engagement occurred after her momentous debut at the Lyceum and was also preceded by her actual royal debut, a State Concert in Buckingham Palace, for which Sir Arthur Sullivan was responsible.

In her third year she was at the Royal Albert Hall, where she was approached by Sir Joseph Barnby (conductor of The Royal Choral Society), who wanted her to audition for him. When she went to this audition, without college permission, she encountered Blower, who, upon hearing her intention, promptly offered to play for her at the audition. Fortunately for her Blower was able to defend her actions when she was hauled before the authorities for breaking her restrictions, excessive restrictions indeed as usually they were for one year, not three. The next step was to admit that three engagements had been accepted with The Royal Choral Society, the contralto parts in *The Golden Legend* (Sullivan), *Israel in Egypt* (Handel) and *Elijah* (Mendelssohn) at five guineas for each performance. She told the college authorities she had to start to earn a living. This accepted, she was now allowed to sing at college concerts, and was cast as *Orpheus* in the college opera production of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*. It was quite apparent that the college's sensible precautions of protecting her from public scrutiny, no matter what rumours might have abounded, had run its natural course and she was soon to appear before the discerning London public.

The production of *Orfeo* on 10 December, 1892 at the Lyceum Theatre, with Maggie Purvis as her Eurydice and Dr. Stanford conducting, made a big impact on the critics and public alike, with excellent newspaper reviews: "Clara Butt gave signs of so much talent that her future career may be spoken of as a matter of national, rather than local, importance". *The Musical Times*

A second performance was arranged at the request of the Prince of Wales, also at the Lyceum, on 1 March 1893. It developed into a society event with musicians of the quality of Sir Charles Santley and Giulia Ravogli present in the audience. This performance, unusual in that the college opera was repeated, brings to our attention the strong will of the contralto. The college intended to change the Eurydice and only Orpheus's threat to withdraw ensured that the original cast was retained. This incident led to a break between Clara and Dr. Stanford which seemingly was never healed. There were one or two other clashes with authority during this final year. Whether they demonstrate the actions of a wilful young woman or a strong-minded musician is debatable.

Three days prior to the first Lyceum operatic performance, 7 December, 1892, Clara made her London debut in the Royal Choral Society's performance of *The Golden Legend* in the part of Ursula, with Emma Albani, Ben Davies and George Henschel as the other soloists. Clara had excellent reviews but they were rather overshadowed by the aforementioned college opera performance. "Clara Butt made a striking effect in the small part of Ursula. Her noble voice told well in the vast building and after the ballad-like air *Virgin, who lovest the poor and lowly* such a storm of applause broke out that a repetition was inevitable". *The Musical Times*

Offers rolled in, including the Triennial Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace for the following year, as well as a U.S. trip to Cincinnati. Sir Augustus Harris, of Covent Garden, even wanted her to sign a three-year operatic concerts contract, but fortunately her tutor saw that sense prevailed.

After Christmas, in the Spring term, she sang the *Israel in Egypt* alongside Anna Williams and Edward Lloyd, and *Elijah* with Esther Palliser, Belle Cole, Andrew Black and Edward Lloyd on 10 May, 1893. However, an illness caused the cancellation of all engagements, including the American trip. The college ordered a complete rest, but she could not resist the Royal Command to sing at the state concert at Buckingham Palace at the beginning of the Summer Season, singing 'Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix', Sir Arthur Sullivan conducting. She gained Sullivan's approval as well as the Queen's. She was in demand at soirees in the great London houses of high society. It could be most hectic: on one occasion she had three engagements in an evening. For someone who was barely twenty-one years old it must have been a heady time. These early society connections were to stand her in good stead during her career.

In the summer of 1893, her fourth year at the RCM (the authorities had extended the benefits of her scholarship for another year), the College decided to send her to Paris for a three-month course to study with Duvernoy, living *en famille* to improve her French. She formally left the college on 21 December 1893 after eleven terms. A note on her college records states that her course was "renewed for one year to Easter 1894 - see minutes of Executive and Finance Committee - 20 October, '92". Also "Miss Butt left Xmas 1893." and "Absent Easter 1894 to undergo an operation". Thus she was under the College's jurisdiction at least until Easter 1894. Queen Victoria, we are told, had offered to defray the expenses of the course. In the meantime, during her absence she was awarded the Royal Society of Musicians medal for the most successful student of the year. Again Clara had undertaken to make no public or professional performances whilst in Paris, so on her return she gave a recital at Queen's Hall, her first in London. The remainder of the season saw her in concerts for the RCS, in the provinces and at several Festivals, including the North Staffordshire (at Hanley) and the Bristol, both during October. At Hanley she probably appeared in *Elijah* again and at Bristol in Handel's *Samson* with Albani, Ben Davies, Bantock Pierpoint and Andrew Black. At the Royal Albert Hall on 23 November 1893 in *Israel and Egypt* the *Musical Times* review included: "Clara Butt's fine voice told well but the young lady's method of production is not improving, and she should guard against a growing tendency to indulge in vibrato".

This echoes a similar note from the review in the *Bristol Times and Mirror* of 26 October 1893, when she sang there in *Samson*. After considerable praise: "a beautiful and remarkable voice. Its range is exceptional, and better still, it is even and strong throughout. Her lowest notes can be heard as clearly as her highest ones, and they all ring out clearly, fully and grandly ... and she sang the music allotted to that part as becomes a true artist. But there is one fault which the lady should at once correct. It is that of using the vibrato. She does it slightly it is true, but it mars rather than enhances the beauty of her vocalisation".

The next two years, 1894/5 and 1895/6, went well for her, with many engagements, including her first Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace under August Manns, the

Chester Festival in July 1894 singing Parry's *Judith*, and RCS concerts including *Elijah*, *Messiah* and again *Israel in Egypt*. Her first call to sing at Balmoral before the Queen came in this period, her fellow artists being Albani and H. Lane Wilson, the singer/composer being the accompanist. She paid the penalty for the hectic artistic life she was leading, fainting at a concert in Exeter and also later at the Queen's Hall. Friends urged her to give up singing for a year and study abroad. Clara saw the sense of this, but she was now her family's financial mainstay, her father's affairs not having prospered. Fortunately, an anonymous donor came forward and made her a gift of £900, that she had calculated she needed for herself and her family during this period abroad. The gift was in admiration of her and her singing, but she could repay it in the future if she so wished. Five years later, after her marriage, she was informed who the donor was and was delighted to repay his generous gift.

Thus in 1896, after a series of 'farewell' concerts (at 24!), she returned to Paris for six months to study with Jacques Bouhy, the original Don Jose. During this period she was heard by Saint-Saens, who wanted her to take up Delilah. This came to nothing. I cannot imagine that she would have been suitable in this part on stage. Afterwards, for another six months it was to Berlin for study with Etelka Gerster, the Marchesi pupil and brilliant Hungarian soprano, who rivalled Patti in her heyday only to lose her voice, never to be properly regained. Clara and Gerster remained friends until the end of the Hungarian's life. Clara often visited her at Berlin and Bologna where she had homes. Gerster must have developed that coloratura aspect of her singing which is so splendid and amply illustrated in many recordings. After returning to the UK she soon went on a European tour in the course of which she sang in Berlin at the *Berlin Singakademie* on 4 October 1897 in a concert of English, French and German songs, then going on to Vienna, Paris, Budapest and Prague. An offer of a Russian engagement could not be taken up owing to prior bookings.

From 1893, when she was 21 years old and had completed her studies, Clara lived at the home of the family of Maggie Purvis, her fellow student at the RCM, until her marriage in 1900. Clara's sisters all had musical training. She sent Pauline (soprano) and Ethel (contralto) to Henry Blower at the RCM and afterwards to Madame Novello-Davies for diction. They often joined her in concerts as duettists. The younger sister, Hazel (another contralto), went to Hilda Wilson, a Bristol teacher, and was later engaged by Arthur Boosey for the London Ballad Concerts. Liza Lehmann composed a quartette *The Birth of the Flowers* for the four sisters, which they recorded. She wrote a second quartette for them, *Stay little wave*, Brother Fred Butt (baritone) was taught by Madame Novello-Davies and sometimes substituted for Kennerley Rumford in the later tours. It is interesting to note that Clara's sisters sang under the name of Hook, not their family name. Did she ensure this?

In 1899, aged 27, she made a short visit to Canada and the USA. She went unheralded and made a great success. Amongst her venues were Carnegie Hall, New York, the Albert Morris Bagby recitals at the Waldorf Hotel, New York, Pittsburgh and Toronto. In later visits in 1914 and 1922, she sang in the Sunday evening concerts at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. The familiar *Sosarme*, *Alessandro* and *Alceste* arias were performed as well as Schubert's *Der Wanderer*, Beethoven's *Die Ehre Gottesaus der Natur*

and some of Elgar's *Sea Pictures*. Fellow artists included Frieda Hempel, Paul Althouse, Angeles Ottein and Leon Rothier.

I have not discovered when she started her practice of making provincial tours, but am sure that it must have been as early as 1894 or 1895. They were a common occurrence: Patti, Melba and similar big names all made them. A star name plus three or four singers and instrumentalists would easily fill a concert hall. She carried on her touring into the thirties, by which time this Victorian format seems to have been superseded by the solo recital. When one considers Clara's imposing voice it is obvious that few oratorios, and even fewer operas, really suited her. Her place was bound to be the concert platform.

About 1897 she met Kennerley Rumford (1870-1957), an up-and-coming young baritone who matched her in build, both being well over 6 feet tall. He was accurately described by Scott as 'being modestly endowed, a typically English baritone, whose natural elegance and refinement were both an example and a restraining influence (to Clara) - but they blended well in duets'. They often sang together in oratorio and he seems to have held his own against the considerable baritone competition of his time. During 1898 and 1899 Rumford often joined Clara on her provincial tours and, at his suggestion, they often sang duets together. After marriage this custom became well established and an essential element of their concerts: many duets were specially written for them. It was an old English ballad, *The Keys of Heaven*, a tale of courtship arranged by Samuel Liddle, a fellow student with Clara at the RCM, and Frederick Sewell, her accompanist at the time, that Rumford utilised on stage to propose marriage.

Their engagement provoked considerable public interest and such was the level of her popular appeal that Westminster Abbey was offered for the wedding, an honour indeed, but Clara returned home to Bristol for the service. Thus at Bristol Cathedral on 26 June 1900 the couple were wed amid great celebrations. After a Norwegian honeymoon they eventually settled at Compton Lodge, South Hampstead which was to be their home for the majority of their married life and where their three children - Joy, Roy and Victor - were born, all by 1906. As soon as the children were old enough they, along with their nurses, accompanied their parents on various international tours.

The remainder of her career from 1900 onwards follows and develops what it had been previously. The tours around the United Kingdom and internationally were their main activities. She continued singing in the Musical Festivals, but for the main ones she did not appear after 1912. She remained a mainstay of the Handel Festivals at the Crystal Palace until 1921 and was still appearing on the London oratorio platform until the early 1920's. These Festivals saw her quite often, but not as frequently as her fellow contraltos, who tended to maintain a more solid base of oratorio, concert recital work and opera - but then they did not go on world tours.

Her range in these and the oratorios located seems to be rather limited, perhaps by a shortage of good contralto parts or, as Elgar decided in 1904, by an overexpensive artist. Of her repertoire Handel's *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* appear to be most prominent. Gounod's *Redemption*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*, Parry's *Judith*, Leoni's *Golgotha* and Handel's *Sosarme*, *Samson* and *Solomon* are also there but less frequently. Of course she appeared

with all the top-line vocalists of her day: Albani, Ella Russell, MacIntyre, Edward Lloyd, Ben Davies, Santley, Black, Watkin-Mills et al.

Of her association with Edward Elgar, it is interesting to observe that she brought out his *Sea Pictures* at Norwich in 1899 to great success, often singing the cycle or its individual songs in concert. One of the memorable performances of the cycle was in March 1904 at the Elgar Festival held at Covent Garden, - a series of performances that helped establish Elgar in the capital. She would have been engaged for *Gerontius* too, but the composer considered her fees excessive and used Kirkby Lunn instead for both *Gerontius* and *The Apostles*.

Where her huge voice really shone was in the vast spaces of the Crystal Palace in the huge Handel/Mendelssohn Triennial Festivals. Here she could sing out against the augmented London Symphony Orchestra of 500 players, the chorus of over 2700 voices (once 4000) and the largest organ in the world.

The First World War initially disrupted life in the United Kingdom considerably; entertainment in all its forms stopped almost overnight. Not only did the public and those directly involved in the war suffer, but innumerable musicians were put out of work. While Rumford went to war-work with the Red Cross at the front, Clara got down to organising charity concerts. Initially her Autumn tour comprising 20 concerts went on, the proceeds going to raising funds for charitable work. She formed *The Clara Butt Concert Committee* of prominent musicians, but as it was an unwieldy way of doing things, it was transformed in the *Clara Butt Rumford Fund*, with herself and W. H. Squire, the cellist, as co-trustees. This fund organised concert tours throughout the UK for small groups of musicians (over 2000 engagements in the first winter) the proceeds going to the Red Cross. This grew. One development was the *Three Arts Women's Unemployment Fund*, and others were numerous 'big-name' London Charity concerts. Another was in 1916, the performances of *The Dream of Gerontius* and three, other, smaller Elgar choral works, which were put on in London for a week, with a further two performances in Leeds and Bradford. Agnes Nicholls, Gervase Elwes, John Booth, Herbert Brown, Robert Radford, Charles Mott and Clara (as the Angel) were the soloists. The Leeds Choral Union and the London Symphony Orchestra were conducted by Dr Henry Coward and Sir Edward Elgar. Albani and Edward Lloyd came out of retirement for a huge Red Cross concert at the Albert Hall in May 1916 and several concerts specifically for war wounded were also organised. In all, she helped raise over £100,000 for the various causes. Clara's work was recognised by the public and, contrary to her wishes, they demanded that her efforts should be rewarded. Thus, after the war, she was created *Dame Commander of the British Empire*.

With the end of hostilities the nation tried to settle down and the Rumfords returned to their previous way of life: concerts, British and foreign touring. One variance from this was in 1920 when Sir Thomas Beecham built a production of *Orpheus and Eurydice* around Clara at Covent Garden for the opening Grand Opera Season after the war. Miriam Licette (Eurydice) and Madeline Collins (Amor) were the other principals, with Beecham and Charles Lauwers the conductors. All four performances were sold out but they were not considered an artistic success. The death of a stagehand during one performance did not help. *The Times* report of 2 July 1920 referred to Clara's first professional appearance in opera and went on:

"It takes great courage for a singer who has made a great reputation on the concert platform to turn to the stage so late in her career and signs of nervousness on her part could only call for the greater sympathy from her audience. But nervousness in Dame Clara Butt is disconcerting for next to her great qualities of voice it is her supreme confidence which has given her unique command over her audience. Sometimes one almost wondered whether the impressive looking Orpheus with the tentative and constrained manner could really be the same singer who holds the Albert Hall in the hollow of her hand. One was reassured, however, when in singing with the chorus her voice came forward quite easily and without any sign of effort and in the arias of the first act she gave much to enjoy in rich tone and some fine singing. She also preserved a dignified restraint of movement . . . She was at her best, because most at ease, in her appeal to the Infernal Spirits that begins Act 2. But the greatest song of all *Che faro* was a disappointment. The attempt to sing it dramatically made her play fast and loose with the time and spoil the phrasing. Sir Thomas Beecham tried to keep her in order - the result was confusion between singer and orchestra". The orchestra and chorus were also considered to be under-rehearsed.

An open-air concert in Hyde Park, London, on 24 May 1927, a community singing festival organised by the *Daily Express*, was another event in the post-war years. On the banks of the Serpentine, with a crowd massed 100 yards deep around the band-stand, Dame Clara sang a number of songs with the musical accompaniment of the Massed Bands of the Coldstream and Welsh Guards. *Land of Hope and Glory*, *Rule Britannia* and *Jerusalem* featured in her songs. Columbia records made at this event sold quite well.

She and Rumford must have found touring both congenial and financially rewarding. With known European tours of 1897, 1912 and 1914, Canada and the USA in 1899 and 1923, Australia and New Zealand in 1907 and 1925, South Africa 1911, and world tours incorporating Canada, USA, New Zealand and Australia in 1912-1914 and 1919-1920.

...to be continued.

Editorial:

My conscience is relieved of any legal infringement by employing Dennis Foreman's biographical study on Dame Clara Butt in this and preceding issues of the *Gazette* by Larry Lustig, editor of *Record Collector* who owns the copyright. Out of courtesy to the author, I have made contact with Mr Foreman and will forward him forthcoming issues of the *Gazette* in which his text appears.

2012 signals a significant step forward by the *Scratchy Record Group*, with a move that sees us extending our presence in the Hawkes Bay at George Boraman's home in Napier. This is something I never anticipated or expected in my wildest dreams. But with a long weekend and Jane's hospitality, we seem destined to make history on this Labour Day venture.

Bill Main



This photo was found in a deserted house by the Whanganui River. It is thought to have been taken in Rotorua during Clara Butt's first tour of New Zealand in 1908.

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