

was more 'active' (if that's the right word) in his conducting than usual, and although there had been no rehearsal I felt totally secure. He gave me every one of my entries, and each time I caught his eye there was that encouraging smile so that I gave what I like to think was one of my best performances of that work.

Talking of tempi, Sir Adrian always had a mental picture of a work's complete structure, and during rehearsal, discovering the sort of tempo which worked for a particular soloist he was never afraid to allow his conception of the structure subtly to change so that the soloist's own contribution would fit easily into his overall view of the work. The result was, as I know only too thankfully, I was never frustrated from giving the performance I felt was right for my voice and personality: it was not always as easy as this with some other conductors.

As so often happens with someone as controlled as Sir Adrian, if aroused, they have a terrific temper; with him I

experienced it only once. We were rehearsing for a radio performance of Vaughan Williams "The Pilgrim's Progress", and there was a problem with getting the exact balance for the distant trumpets sounding "on the other side". Various positions for the players were tried, each unsatisfactory. Faced with this sort of situation, Sir Adrian was prepared to take endless trouble to get something right, but if he felt other people were wasting time he was not so amenable. After about the sixth attempt he asked if it was better - only to be given no reply. When he turned to look at the control room to find they were all busy talking, he exploded, telling them in no uncertain terms that if they could not be bothered, neither would he, and that he was going on to the next scene etc. etc.; that sort of thing happened very seldom, as I said, but when it did it had tremendous effect! Usually he was very calm and placid; indeed he was exceedingly modest and self-effacing. When given the Distinguished Musician

Award by the Incorporated Society of Musicians he would only accept on the condition that the presentation be made in private. He hated any public fuss, and at the end of a concert he preferred to take a bow with all his performers rather than on his own. His name did not appear in "The Daily Telegraph" Birthday column, and I wrote to the Editor complaining that they had ignored his ninetieth birthday, only to receive a reply that many years before Sir Adrian had asked for his name to be removed.

This is a personal reminiscence, so I hope I will be forgiven if I recall him telephoning me just as he was about to record a 90th Birthday "Desert Island Discs" for the BBC, and he wanted to include a record of me singing a song by Gerald Finzi. His request was for me to choose one: I was greatly touched. If I had to sum up, I would say Sir Adrian Boulton was that rare combination of a gentleman and a genius.

PRESENTATION

FOLLOWING THE PRESENTATION to the Duchess of Kent of a picture which was reproduced in the last issue, and the request that she sign a copy for the Company, the following letter has been received:


 YORK HOUSE
 ST. JAMES'S PALACE
 LONDON S.W.1

13th April, 1994

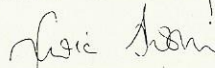
Dear Mr Fletcher,

The Duchess of Kent has asked me to write and thank you for your letter of 11th April.

Her Royal Highness was delighted with the framed photograph and was most touched by your extremely kind gesture. It will hang in York House as a permanent reminder of a most enjoyable and memorable occasion.

The Duchess has signed the Roll of Honorary Freeman and photograph as requested, which I now have pleasure in enclosing.

Her Royal Highness sends you a message of her sincere best wishes.

Yours sincerely

 for Personal Secretary
 Mrs Fiona Ansari

M.J.G. Fletcher, Esq.,

THE COMPANY DIARY to 30th April 1995

ITEMS IN BLUE ITALICS DENOTE LIVERY CLUB EVENTS

1994

- 29 **Sept** Master and Wardens' Committee.
Common Hall, Election of
the Lord Mayor.
- 12 **Oct** Court and Court Dinner.
- 27 **Oct** Maisie Lewis Recital at the Drapers' Hall.
- 9 **Nov** Installation Court and Livery Dinner.
- 23 **Nov** Festival of St. Cecilia and Royal Concert.

1995

- 5 **Jan** (a.m.) Master and Wardens' Committee.
(p.m.) Special Awards Committee.
- 19 **Jan** (p.m.) Court.
- ? **Jan** *President of Livery Club's Evening.*
- 2 **Feb** Musical Evening at the Drapers' Company.
- 16 **Feb** Joint Musical Evening with the Drapers'
Company.
- ? **Mar** *Guildhall School of Music and Drama Opera.*
- 2 **Mar** Musical Evening at the Drapers' Company.
- 14 **Mar** Social Committee.
- 30 **Mar** (a.m.) Finance Committee and
Investment Committee.
(p.m.) Master and Wardens' Committee.
(eve) Maisie Lewis Recital.
- 12 **Apr** Court and Court Dinner.

Please note: Evenings at the Drapers' Company on 2 Feb and 2 Mar have been organised by Sir Nicholas Jackson, their Master and Liveryman Musician. As a result, the Musicians' Livery will be invited.