

Elgar - our first Professor of Music



Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934) was appointed as the first Professor of Music at the University in 1905. Still considered one of the finest ever English composers, the annual BBC-televised Last Night of the Proms would not be the same without his rousing Pomp and Circumstance marches, especially March No.1; otherwise known as Land of Hope and Glory.

The rich Elgar holdings of the University of Birmingham Special Collections provide a fascinating insight into Elgar's long connections with the city and the University:

- In the 1880s he regularly made the journey from his Worcestershire home to play the violin in a Birmingham orchestra; later, four of his major choral works were commissioned by the prestigious Birmingham Triennial Festival.
- He accepted the Professorship at the University of Birmingham in preference to offers of academic posts from other cities.
- He was eager to build a music library for the University and scribbled suggestions for acquisitions on any sheet of paper that came to hand, some of which survive.

You can **[find out more about Elgar on the Department of Music website \(http://www.music.bham.ac.uk/events/Elgar.shtml\)](http://www.music.bham.ac.uk/events/Elgar.shtml)**.