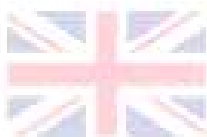




Royal Forest of Dean Orchestra

The Battle of the Imjin River Anniversary Concert

Saturday 23 October 2021
St Paul's Church,
Parkend



Conductor: Fiona Crawley
Leader: Rosalind Taunton



Soloist: Marie Roberts-Watkins

Programme



The Battle of the Imjin River (1951)



The Battle of the Imjin River or *The Battle of Gloster Hill* took place 22–25 April 1951 during the Korean War. 300,000 troops from the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA) attacked United Nations Command (UN) positions on the lower Imjin River in an attempt to achieve a breakthrough and recapture the South Korean capital Seoul.

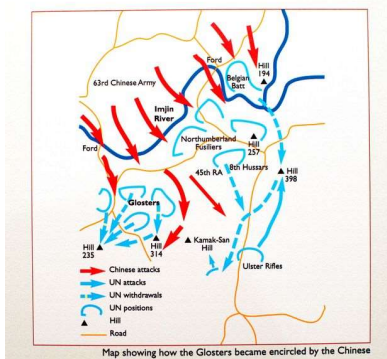
The attack was part of the Chinese Spring Offensive, the aim of which was to regain the initiative on the battlefield after a series of successful UN counter-offensives, in January–March 1951, had allowed UN forces to establish themselves deep into North Korea.



The section of the UN line where the battle took place was defended primarily by British forces of the 29th Infantry Brigade, consisting of three British and one Belgian infantry battalions supported by tanks and artillery. Despite facing a greatly numerically superior enemy, the brigade held its general positions for three days. When the units of the 29th Infantry Brigade were ultimately forced to fall back, their actions in the Battle

of the Imjin River together with those of other UN forces, had blunted the impetus of the PVA offensive.

Though minor in scale, the battle's ferocity caught the imagination of the world, especially the fate of the 1st Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment. Outnumbered, they withdrew to Hill 235 (a feature that became known as 'Gloster Hill') and were given the order "Hold on where you are". They were eventually surrounded by Chinese forces. 522 soldiers of the Gloucestershire Regiment became prisoners of war. Of those, 180 were wounded and a further 34 died while in captivity.



The stand of 'The Glosters', together with actions of the 29th Brigade, allowed the UN forces to retreat and to prepared positions to thwart the taking of Seoul. It has become an important part of British military history and tradition.

PROGRAMME

~Please silence Mobile Phones ~

Schubert

Marche Militaire

Vaughan Williams

The Lark Ascending

Soloist: Marie Roberts-Watkins

Lane

Holding the Hill

Poem by Jennifer Henderson

Reader: Trevor Morris

Haydn

Symphony No 100 'The Military'

Refreshments Available.

Retiring Collection

The Royal British Legion





Franz Schubert

Marche Militaire No1

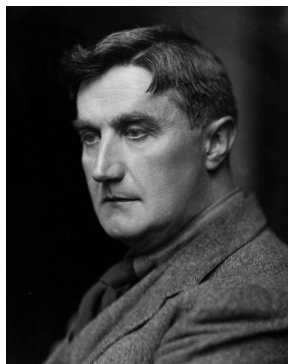
The Three Marches Militaires Op. 51, are pieces in march form written for piano (four-hands).

The first of the three (the one we shall play today, arranged for full orchestra) is far more famous than the others. It is one of Schubert's most famous compositions, and it is often simply referred to as "Schubert's *Marche Militaire*".

It is not certain when the *Marches militaires* were written but believed to be between 1818 and 1824. It is known that they were written during Schubert's stay at Count Johann Karl Esterházy's summer home in Zseliz in Hungary (now Želiezovce in Slovakia). He had accepted a job there as music teacher to the Count's daughters, and these and similar works were written for instructional purposes.

The "*Marches Militaires*" were published in Vienna on 7 August 1826, as Op. 51. They are all in ternary form, with a central trio leading to a reprise of the main march.





Ralph Vaughan Williams

The Lark Ascending

The Lark Ascending is a short, single-movement work by the English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams, inspired by the 1881 poem (of the same name) by the English writer George Meredith. It was originally for violin and piano, completed in 1914 but not performed until 1920. The composer reworked it for solo violin and orchestra after the First World War. This version, in which the work is

chiefly known, was first performed in 1921.

It is subtitled "A Romance", a term that Vaughan Williams favoured for contemplative slow music.

The work has gained considerable popularity in Britain and elsewhere and has been much recorded between 1928 and the present day.

The composer's second wife, Ursula, herself a poet, wrote that in *The Lark Ascending* Vaughan Williams had "taken a literary idea on which to build his musical thought ... and had made the violin become both the bird's song and its flight". At the head of the score Vaughan Williams wrote 12 lines from Meredith's 122-line poem:



He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound,
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.

For singing till his heaven fills,
'Tis love of earth that he instils,
And ever winging up and up,
Our valley is his golden cup
And he the wine which overflows
to lift us with him as he goes.

Till lost on his aerial rings
In light, and then the fancy sings.



Liz Lane
Holding the Hill

With sponsorship from The Forest Musical Landscape, the RFDO was able to commission this new music from local composer Liz Lane, to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Imjin River. Specifically the role taken by the Gloucestershire Regiment ('Glosters') and in particular soldiers from the Forest of Dean.

Today will be the first public performance of this work.

There is a more detailed description of the music, written by Liz Lane herself, on our website (www.rfdo.org.uk).

Poem written by: Jennifer Henderson

Reader: Trevor Morris

Narrative written by: Private David Gardiner; one of the FOD Glosters

The work is in three movements.



1. *Hill 235*

This movement broadly represents the battle itself, depicted by a musical mirage heard four times to represent the four days, followed by the long and arduous trek to a prisoner of war camp. Chinese bugle calls were one of the resounding sounds of the battle, especially a cacophony echoed at night. These are answered by Drum Major Buss playing as many British army bugle calls as he could muster, and in particular the Long Reveille; an echo of this can also be heard.



2. *Hymn to the Cross*

The second movement is a hymn based around the famous Carne cross, carved by Lt Col J.P.Carne, VC, DSO, DSC. The cross was carved from volcanic rock (believed using just a nail) during his 19 months in solitary confinement as a POW. The hymn also echoes Pte D.A.Gardiner's watch, whose glass was cracked on the first day of battle leaving a cross shape in the glass. The music juxtaposes the monotony and bleakness

of life in the camp. There is also use of question and answer, which represents something of the questioning and ideological indoctrination to which the prisoners were subjected, and their ambiguous answers.

3. *Legacy*

The third movement reflects on the soldiers' homecoming and the legacy, which brings us up to date whilst still connecting the music to the past. It is underpinned structurally by a charity run undertaken by Maurice Brisland in memory of his Great-Uncle, Sgt S.J. Brisland. Maurice ran a number of miles each day for five days, representing four days of battle with the fifth day signifying the soldiers' time spent in captivity. This last movement is therefore in five sections, with the number of bars denoting the number of miles ran. Musical reflections on the legacy include both the Korean national folk song *Arirang* and the regimental march of the Glosters (*The Kinnegad Slashers*), both representing the legacy of this battle, often known as the 'forgotten battle'.



Joseph Haydn

Symphony 100 'The Military'

The Symphony No. 100 in G major is the eighth of the twelve London symphonies written by Joseph Haydn and completed in 1793 or 1794. It's filled with surprising, new sounds - most notably the "Turkish" exoticism of the triangle, crash cymbals, and bass drum. Audiences at the time might have expected to hear these special effects in the opera house, but not in a symphony. From a bugle call (a quote of the Austrian General Salute) to

drum rolls, this ‘Military’ Symphony is filled with the sounds of the battlefield. England was embroiled in the French Revolutionary Wars at the time, but Haydn may have been more influenced by the sounds of the Austro-Turkish War which occurred between 1788 and 1791.

Following the premiere, a writer for the *Morning Chronicle* wrote: “It is the advancing to battle...And the march of men, the sounding of the charge, the thundering of the onset, the clash of arms, the groans of the wounded, and what may well be called the hellish roar of war increased to a climax of horrid sublimity”.

Still, all of these “Military” references occur within the context of stately elegance and even humour. The cheerful melody which opens the *Allegretto* second movement originated in this music from Haydn’s *Concerto for Lire Organizzata in G*. There are moments which seem to foreshadow the music of Beethoven. (The young, rebellious Beethoven came from Bonn to study with Haydn around this time). Compare these ascending scale lines in the strings in the third movement (*Menuetto: Moderato*) with a similar passage from the third movement of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony.

This music is a whirlwind of energy, humour, and surprise - an exhilarating unfolding drama of conversing voices.

The work is in standard four movement form.

Adagio; Allegro,
Allegretto,
Menuetto: Moderato,
Presto,





Marie Roberts-Watkins

Marie is a talented violinist who has been involved in music since she was in primary school. She has studied under many different tutors but the most influential to her career was Rhiannon Davies of Cardiff who taught her during her time at Monmouth Comprehensive School. Marie gained an honours degree whilst studying music performance at Bretton Hall College of Music after which she returned to the Forest of Dean and began working in the Health and Safety Department at the (Beechams) Factory in Coleford. At the same time, she joined the

Royal Forest of Dean Orchestra (RFDO) as leader of the second violins, and Gloucestershire Symphony Orchestra (GSO) on front desk of the first violins next to the superb Claire Piper.

It was at the Beechams Factory that Marie developed a keen interest in the diverse world of health and safety including chemical management, culture change, behavioural safety, machinery safety and ergonomics to name a few. During her time at the factory she gained two masters of science degrees in Health, Safety and Environmental Management with the University of Glamorgan, and Ergonomics with the University of Derby.

Over the years Marie has kept her love of music alive by playing with RFDO, GSO, The film Orchestra (TfO) and various musicals and individual concerts, and was given the opportunity to perform as soloist for all three orchestras in the past, her most memorable being *Scheherazade* with GSO. Her last solo was fortunately just before the first lockdown at Malvern Priory with TfO in March 2020 where she performed the haunting three pieces from Schindler's List. It was a very emotional performance and Marie was very touched when an audience member, a holocaust survivor, approached her after the concert to congratulate her.

Marie is very much looking forward to again playing the Lark Ascending for RFDO. "This piece means a lot to me. It is the second solo piece I ever played since leaving university. It is also the piece I played at the wedding of a good friend and unfortunately her husband's funeral only a year later. I am very honoured to be playing this piece again for RFDO, an orchestra I really miss playing with. I may get a little tearful!"

Marie is now Health and Safety Manager for Haberdashers' Monmouth Schools and is currently principal violinist of GSO and TfO. She lives in the Forest of Dean with her husband John, son Isaac (6), daughter Elena (1) and her two Dobermanns Jacob and Micah.



Liz Lane

Liz Lane's music has been broadcast on BBC Radio 3, BBC1 and ITV, and played in major venues throughout the UK and abroad; performers have included Orchestra of Welsh National Opera, Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, Carducci Quartet, the Symphonic Brass of the RAF and Cory Band.

Recent projects include *Age Against the Machine – Grand Finale* (2019), a co-creative inter-generational choral project in London; and *CityScape* for fanfare band, premiered in Holland (2019). Two of Liz's lockdown Bluebird series of miniature songs with soprano Belinda Evans received over 10,000 views on social media (2020/21), including #9 *Enchanted Light* with Colin Booth (ottavino) and the Grimethorpe Colliery Band, which was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 (2021). The multimedia collaborations *River of Time* and *Rainbow River* were commissioned for online performances by Lydbrook Band as part of the Wye Valley Festival and Kapitol Cory Band Online Championships (2020/21).

Liz was awarded a PhD from Cardiff University in 2010. She is a part-time Senior Lecturer at UWE Bristol, also an Associate Lecturer with the Open University and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. She is published by Composers Edition, Kirklees Music and Wright and Round.

Current commissions include *A different kind of living* for the Open University Choir; *Rhythm of Light*, a suite for the Hepworth Band celebrating the life and work of sculptor Barbara Hepworth; an anthem *Hear the Call* for the first NHS, social care and frontline workers' Day on 5 July 2021 and of course *Holding the Hill*, a new work for the RFDO to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Imjin River.

Liz was recently appointed Composer in Association with the Grimethorpe Colliery Band.



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The Royal Forest of Dean Orchestra

Launched in 1993, the Royal Forest of Dean Orchestra is a lively and friendly ensemble which draws musicians from the Forest of Dean and surrounding areas. The orchestra performs exciting orchestral music and specialises in concerto performances by young talented musicians. For further details please visit our website at: **www.rfdo.org.uk** and on Facebook.

The Orchestra, which meets on Thursday evenings, is continuing to expand and would like to hear from interested musicians.

Tel. Fiona Crawley on 01594 563079

Email: fiona.crawley@yahoo.co.uk

Our Next Concert:

Saturday 2nd April 2022 at St Peter's, Newnham on Severn.

Featuring :-

Cimarosa: Oboe Concerto

Beethoven: Symphony No 1

Ives: "The Unanswered Question"

Music by Joseph Bologne (Chevalier de Saints-George)

Music by Gerald Finzi