

THIRTEEN

Mainardi and Casals

In the years after RCM I practised to improve my own playing. When James Whitehead, a student of Ivor James, visited England I managed to have a few lessons with him. He was a contemporary of Harvey Phillips. James Whitehead freed up my ideas on how I should play. At the time there were some feelings among RCM teachers that their students should not take off to someone else, even temporarily. But I believe students are entitled to learn from everyone – yes – when in full time study backed by one steady regular cello parent. Nowadays there are many more masterclasses at the RCM and RAM, which were not there in my day. The RCM and other institutions were more of a closed world in my days.

In 1948 I went to Lucerne on 3 August. I had arranged to go and have lessons from Franz Walter. He was playing in the Lucerne Festival Orchestra and also holding masterclasses. He kindly arranged for me to have a small room (free of rent) above a grand bakers shop. So I managed to live on very little money – making my own breakfast. I was directed to a very good cheap restaurant where I bought a main dish for about three Swiss francs.

I remember playing at a class where the other students thought I played like a viola player. And perhaps due to my limited German I did not make many friends in the class, but somehow I was picked up by a friendly American soldier called John Lavender. We went out to meals and concerts and into the country together – when I was not too busy practising for the cello classes.

The following year John came to London. He visited my parents in Suffolk, which was not a success as my father beat him at chess, and he thought that Marmite was a chocolate spread. He laid it very thick

onto the bread, making an awful face when he ate it. Anyway he vanished back to the US where he became a motor mechanic. He wrote a few letters but we gradually lost track of each other. Again, there was no sex!

In the summer of 1950 I managed to go abroad on an exchange holiday to Zurich and later to Geneva where I had more cello lessons with Franz Walter, mostly on Ševčík³⁷ bowings, learning to attack and bounce the bow. In 1953 I went back to Geneva for a week and visited Franz again.

In 1946 and 1948 Joan Dickson organised the fine Italian teacher Enrico Mainardi to come and give some cello classes in London. The first of these were given at Jane Ryan's flat. Amazingly we were actually taught technique, like how to control the left and right hand, all in the interests of the music. In many ways his teaching still dominates my teaching today.

The second time he came the classes were held in a Kensington Hotel. Mainardi again was wonderful and seemed to have analysed how to help cellists with every detail of their technique. I also found great help with understanding Italian music, including the Boccherini sonatas, a sonata by Francesco Malipiero and Mainardi's beautiful Nocturne for four cellos. I have done this last piece with several groups of students; they find the high double stops of the middle section very hard.

Mainardi was very flirtatious with us girls and rumour has it that he got off with someone on his second visit. He told me I played 'with love of the music.' Alas he never said this to Joan Dickson. Perhaps she was emotionally buttoned up at that age. She always said it took her a long time to recover from her Scottish schooling.

This brings me to tell you of when I found the loveliest golden coloured Ruggeri cello that was on offer for £2000. There was no way I could manage to borrow that amount of money in those days. I

³⁷ Please refer to footnote on page 281

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asked rich relations, like my Polish uncle George Janasz (who lived in Switzerland at the time), and other friends, but eventually had to let it go. It was years later (in the 1960s) when I managed to buy the Tononi for £3000. This cello was previously owned by Ambrose Gauntlett. Meanwhile my French cello had served me well.

Towards the end of 1953 I thought I would enter for a Boise Scholarship, which I did not think I had much chance of getting. I now felt the need to do some study abroad with Mainardi and also Casals. So I got references from Harvey Phillips and from Herbert Howells.

Reference by Harvey Phillips - Royal College of Music – 12 March 1954

Miss Shuttleworth has been a pupil of mine for a year. I can strongly recommend her for her playing and her character. Her talent is worthy of the experience offered by these scholarships.

Harvey Phillips

Then in 1954, when I had flu, I went to play at the Duke's Hall, at the Royal Academy of Music. There were four elderly men adjudicators, one of whom was Gerald Moore. I had arranged my programme so to play some fairly easy Couperin arrangements first, followed by the Allemande and Gigue from Bach's sixth suite. Anyway, one of the adjudicators said I must play the Bach first. I refused, saying I had carefully arranged the programme. He tried to argue with me, but Gerald Moore said 'Oh, let the girl play the Bach second.'

So I did, and much to my amazement I got a scholarship for £300, meant to subsidize a year's study abroad. However I wept when I heard I had won the scholarship because I did not want to leave Noël and Paul for any length of time.

Letter Re Boise Foundation – 12 May 1954

Dear Miss Shuttleworth,

I am glad to inform you that you have been elected to one of the Boise Scholarships of £300.

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As you know, scholars are expected to reside abroad for a period [...] see the Chairman, Sir Reginald Thatcher [...]

You will probably hear quite soon from Mr C. W. Boise, who provides the money for the scholarships. He always likes to meet the scholars.

Yours sincerely,

John Stainer. Hon. Sec.

I arranged to go to Mainardi for two weeks in Rome. Teaching was free at St Cecilia's Music College provided I passed an audition, which I did. I had ten lessons in fourteen days all on Bach's C minor fifth suite. I learnt to understand Mainardi's excellent analysis of the piece, but struggled with his slow tempos which I did not follow after I went home. Noël did not like Mainardi's Bach either.

Then, in the summer I decided to go to Salzburg (Internationale Sommer-Akademie am Mozarteum) where Mainardi taught a cello course for two weeks. I took Hindemith's cello concerto to play to him. Mainardi was there with a beautiful actress as companion who wore a navy blue and white spotted dress, leaving his more elderly wife at home in Rome. I had met her when I went to Rome earlier. During the Salzburg course I was asked to play Maurice Ravel's *Chansons Madecasses* in a festival concert on 13 August. I already had played this piece in London with Catherine Powell, a flautist who not only was a dear friend but did many concerts with me, and helped me find money, both to go to Casals courses and buy a cello.

Quite a lot of cellists from Salzburg went on to Zermatt to the Casals course. Because it was the end of the season, we were put up in very good hotels with excellent food at a cheap rate. The only thing I didn't like was the need to pay four Swiss francs (about £2) to have a bath. So I shared this with Pauline Dunn, a cellist from Harrogate. We mostly studied Bach that year. Casals had broad views and always said: 'Il n'y a pas de règle spéciale pour l'interprétation de Bach.' Casals always made encouraging remarks before making other suggestions to improve the performance. I remember, in the Courante of the sixth

suite, he got me to change all the fingerings, and copying him in public was not an easy task.

One year I played the Schubert Arpeggione Sonata in class. In a book there is a photo of a headless cellist, *me*, who while leaning down to look at my copy on the floor, got snapped by a photographer lying between the front rows of chairs below the platform! This same year a fine German cellist called Angelica May played the Schumann concerto. I was told that while she would win prizes, Casals would prefer to come to a concert given by me! Mieczyslaw Horszowski, Casals' fine little pianist, also congratulated me on my performance.

Much to my embarrassment, I was chosen to lead the cello orchestra for a concert when the principal cellist of the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra was sitting with me. However, at the second rehearsal I could not play. I had spent the previous day up in the mountains, and caught the sun very badly. A huge sun hat, dark specs and gloves did not help me! So the cellist from Stuttgart remained the principal.

There was a cellist who sat in the cafés swanking [read: *showing off*] that he could play perfectly well without practice, implying that we wasted our time practising! Rudolf von Tobel was persuaded to allow this cellist to play a slow moment in a class. Well, most heads (people like Colin Davis and Suzanne Rozsa) were below their seats trying not to quake with laughter. Casals, usually never short of praise for each student, was flabbergasted, and he could think of nothing to say at the end except 'En core.' After an equally embarrassing second performance the cellist walked off to a, by then, silent hall. After this von Tobel always auditioned every cellist before they played to Casals.

After Zermatt I went down by myself to the Dordogne for three days on the train. I had booked up at the Lion D'Or Hotel at Sarlat. My ambition was to go to see the Lascaux Caves with their famous rock paintings. I met a pair of Canadians who had the same idea, so we set off on hired bicycles to visit the caves. Fortunately we managed to see

the caves that year, because they have been shut since then due to the mass of tourists who tended to make the cave paintings paler.

I then went on by train to Perpignan, where I was relieved to find Noël and Paul waiting for me because a Frenchman had been doing his best to seduce me on the train. We took a train up to Prades, still then an unspoilt Catalan small town, where we went to the room we had booked. There was a double bed, which had a small flat area in the middle but went down on all sides. After one very uncomfortable night we put Paul on the 'island' bed and put the mattress on the floor for ourselves, so Paul looked down on us from above. We used to do our shopping in the market, where I remember seeing Yehudi Menuhin in shorts. There we bought delicious fresh, and locally grown, peaches and apricots, which were in season. But unfortunately Paul saw one worm in a peach and refused to eat any more fruit!

One day we went for a long walk up and over a bare mountain, with no shelter from the sun. Paul kept losing his shorts. It turned out he was collecting pebbles with which he filled his pockets (which weighed his shorts down)!

After the Prades course we took the train to Gerona in Spain where we found rooms behind a restaurant which was on the first floor. We then took a little local train down to the seaside. Now the train is non-existent, but then it was full of pheasants and chickens. It rattled along between villages on hills and cork trees to an almost unspoilt seaside where we swam!

I have no memory of how we went home to England, but this was a very happy time in our lives, and perhaps one of the best holidays I ever had. From the programme of this 1955 Prades Festival there are a couple of special memories:

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau sang *Die Winterreise* by Schubert accompanied by Gerald Moore. All the lights went out in the middle but they both managed to continue to play in the wonderful dark church.

At another concert Casals played the opening tune of the fourth movement of the Brahms B flat major string sextet most beautifully.