Morning Stars & Moaning Bars: An Evening of Victorian Song

Brian Abel Ragen, Baritone
M. Noel Prince, Pianoforte

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Program

"I Am a Pirate King," from *Pirates of Penzance*
W.S. Gilbert & Arthur Sullivan

"The Three Fishers"
Charles Kingsley & John Hullah

"Crossing the Bar"
Alfred, Lord Tennyson & Dudley Buck

"The Holy City"
F.E Weatherly and Stephen Adams

"Kashmiri Song"
Laurence Hope & Amy Woodforde-Finden

"Come into the Garden, Maud"
Alfred, Lord Tennyson & Michael W. Balfe

"Menie"
Robert Burns & Edward MacDowell

"On the Road to Mandalay"
Rudyard Kipling & Oley Speaks

Glossary & Notes

Adams, Stephen: The pseudonym of Michael Maybrick (1844-1913). Why the composer used an alias for his more popular works is unknown, though the cruel attribute his decision not to appear *in propria persona* on the sheet music of "The Holy City" to a natural shame at having perpetrated the song.

Balfe, Michael W. : An Irish composer (1808-1870), best remembered for the opera *The Bohemian Girl*. He composed many other operas and more than 250 songs. He wrote and produced an opera titled *Falstaff* and sang in Rossini's *Otello* at La Scala early in his career; it was natural, therefore, that he presented several of Verdi's operas when serving as music director of Her Majesty's theater. The aria from *The Bohemian Girl* "I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls" was recorded by Enya in 1993, and while it gained some popularity among connoiseurs of New Age music, it did not achieve the the same cultural éclat that greeted Enya's lyrical guide to world geography, "Orinoco Flow."

Bar: A sandbank or shoal at the mouth of a harbor or estuary. A distinctive "moan" is often heard at a harbor bar during storms. That phenomenon must have been must have been familiar to Tennyson, whose father was vicar of Grimsby in Linconshire.

Buck, Dudley: An American organist and composer (1839-1909). He served at Holy Trinity Church in New York for 25 years and became well-known as a writer of oratorios including a version of Sir Edwin Arnold's life of Buddha, *The Light of Asia.*

Burma: A country in South Asia bordering on India, China, and Thailand. Now known to those who wish to toady to its military dictators as Myanmar.

Burns, Robert: Burns (1759-1796) is one of the greatest of writers in Scots, sometimes placed in the same Pantheon with Dunbar, Douglas, Hennryson, and MacDiarmid. A pioneer researcher into folklore as well as a poet, Burns is often underestimated by Saxons because, much like modern country musicians, he often played the role of a rube to attract an urban audience.

Cornwall: Formerly a kingdom whose inhabitants spoke Cornish, a Gaelic tongue; now a county in England where people attempt to earn a living from scenery and memories of Daphne du Maurier's novels. The heir to the British crown by law becomes Duke of Cornwall and is seized of the duchy's considerable income. He may be created Prince of Wales, but that title comes without any additional cash. The wife of the current Prince of Wales eschews the title "Princess of Wales" for "Duchess of Cornwall," doubtless as a penance for not being as pretty as her predecessor.

Gilbert, W.S.: Sir William Schwenck Gilbert (1836-1911) was the first British author to be knighted purely on the basis of his dramatic works. (Previous theatrical knights had also served in political roles.) His works, especially the Savoy Operas, added many phrases to the English language and, to paraphrase Dr. Johnson on David Garrick, "increased the public stock of harmless pleasure."

Great God Budd: Thomas Atkins's version of "Buddha," who is not strictly-speaking a god in most Buddhist schools of thought.

Great Shoe Question: An attempt by misguided Burmese officials to assert their nation's sovereignty by requiring visiting British dignitaries to remove their shoes before entering the palace. Thought by contemporary scholars to be the tragic result of Burmese ignorance of British feet.

Hope, Laurence: Nom de plume of Adela Florence Nicolson, née Cory (1865-1904). The daughter of a colonel in the Indian Army, she was reared in England by relatives, until she joined her father in Lahore in 1881. Colonel Cory was by then editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette,* and thus the employer of Rudyard Kipling, who was Adela's contemporary. Miss Cory married Colonel Malcolm Hassels Nicolson in 1889. Nicolson was a skilled linguist and introduced his wife, who was half his age, to Indian culture and foods. (Their interest in such things earned them a reputation as eccentrics in Anglo-Indian

circles.) After his death Adela, who had been subject to depression from childhood, committed suicide by taking poison. Her first book of poems, *The Garden of Kama* (or *Indian Love Lyrics* in its American edition) was presented as translations of native poets, but most saw through that pretense immediately. Somerset Maugham wrote a story, "The Colonel's Lady" about the scandal that arose from her poems, which focus on unrequited love and are sometimes tinged with violence. Her *Selected Poems,* edited by her son Malcolm, were published in 1922. She is among the subjects of Lesley Blanch's *Under A Lilac-Bleeding Star, Travels and Travellers* (1963).

Hullah, John: John (Pyke) Hullah (1812-1884) was an English music teacher and composer. His opera *The Village Coquettes* with a libretto by the young Charles Dickens was a success in both London and Edinburgh in 1836. He became the champion of a new method of teaching solfège, which helped establish singing as a subject in English schools. His reputation in later years suffered because of the implacable animosity that grew up between the adherents of the "Fixed Do" and "Movable Do" solfège systems.

Jedha: Also spelled Jedhah, to the frustration of the proofreader of the fist edition of *Revolt in the Desert*. T.E. Lawrence's she-camel, and, by his own report "a splendid beast."

Kashmir: A state in the extreme north of the Indian Subcontinent, ruled in different epochs by Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and the British. Since 1947 it has been divided between India, Pakistan, and China. Likely *casus belli* in the next nuclear war.

Kingsley, Charles: The greatest literary achievement of Charles Kingsley (1819-1875) may have been goading the Blessed John Henry Newman into writing his masterpiece, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua,* but Kingsley was himself a writer of note, both in verse and in novels such as *Alton Locke* and *Westward Ho!*

Kipling, Rudyard: A writer hated by those who have only heard of him and loved by those who read him. Kipling (1865-1936) was born in India and spoke Hindi before he spoke English. As a young journalist he got to know people of all sorts, including common soldiers. His

poem "Mandalay" describes the lure of the East for an Englishman who feels more at home in Burma than in his own country.

MacDowell, Edward: Edward Alexander MacDowell (1860-1908) was a prominent American "Victorian" composer. Raised by the sort of expatriate American family in Europe familiar to readers of Henry James, MacDowell studied music in Paris and Frankfurt. After his return to the United States, he became Professor of Music at Columbia University and a celebrated figure in American culture. Tragically, he entered a state of tranquil dementia after being run over by a hansom cab in 1904. His fortune went to endow the MacDowell Colony, a retreat for artists that, like Yaddo, will never give the likes of you, dear reader, a fellowship. (I wouldn't expect a Fulbright, a Guggenheim, or an NEH, either.)

Mandalay: A city in central Burma, traditionally the capital and center of Burmese culture. Kipling's "Mandalay" is set at the start of the road to the capital in the coastal city of Rangoon. The "China" over which the sun rises is Indo-China, not the Middle Kingdom itself. The "bay" is the Gulf of Martaban, part of the Bay of Bengal.

Menie: A feminine Scots Christian name.

Penzance: A town in Cornwall, at the extreme southwest of the island of Great Britain. As southern and tropical climes are known to encourage a laxity of morals and a lust for gold, it is unsurprising that the place has become associated with piracy in the popular mind.

Pilot: While now commonly used as a synonym for "aviator," the term pilot was originally nautical. A "pilot" was one well-versed in the tides, shoals, and other specific characteristics of a harbor, coastline, or river. Mark Twain, for example, was a Mississippi River pilot. Pilots are engaged when navigation is too difficult for "blue-water" captains. In a still older sense, "pilot" means "leader."

Pirate: Most simply, a criminal afloat. Any crime committed at

sea could be prosecuted as piracy, and the courts of any nation lucky enough to capture a pirate were considered competent to try the crime, no matter where it had been committed. Like all men who excel at murder, theft, and rapine, pirates are generally considered fit subjects for romance (*vide* Depp, Johnny). The term has also be applied to all who take what they please by force or fraud, even those who do not raise the black flag, sail the high seas, and wear mascara.

Planet of Love: Venus, both the Evening Star and the Morning Star. The planet is beautiful in the evening and morning sky, but is uninhabitable by real human beings. It is, therefore, an excellent symbol of that form of obsessive disorder that will be listed in some future edition of the DSM as Love, Romantic.

Rangoon: A Burmese city now known as Yangon.

Savoy: A region on both sides of the Alps that was once part of the Frankish Kingdom of Burgundy. Peter II, Count of Savoy, built a palace in London, where his nephew by marriage was King Henry III of England. Peter gave the site of that palace, between the Strand and the Thames, to a congregation of canons, who first turned it into a hospital and then sold it to Queen Eleanor, who gave it to her second son, Edward, Earl of Lancaster. In 1351 Lancaster, including the Savoy, was declared a county palatine. Therefore the King's writ did not run in the Duchy of Lancaster, and the rule of law stemmed from the Duke of Lancaster. (Lawyers were untroubled by the fact that the King was himself the Duke of Lancaster except in the earliest times.) Thanks to this special status, ordinary legal proceedings did not apply to the Savoy, and those convicted of debt could live there without fear of arrest. The Savoy Chapel also enjoyed a special status, becoming a "royal peculiar" after the Reformation. At times divorcés could be married in that chapel when the doors of every church under the authority of a bishop were closed against them. Wherever debt and dubious relations between the sexes are to be found, members of the theatrical profession will be found as well. The Savoy became, in Victorian times, the home of a hotel that catered to a wealthy if not always entirely respectable clientele and, thanks to the work of the impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte (1844-1901), of an up-to-date theatre. The Savoy Theatre saw the premieres of Gilbert & Sullivan's operettas, which are for that reason

known as "The Savoy Operas." Savoy itself has been divided between the modern national states of France and Italy.

Scots: The language of civilized people in the Kingdom of Scotland, for the most part mutually intelligible with the dialect known as English south of the Tweed. Not to be confused with Gaelic, the language of Scots uninfluenced by the recent waves of Saxon and Norman immigration.

Scots words in the texts in this program:

blaw	blow, i.e. bloom
body	person
doat on	dote on; love
e'e	eye
maun	must
shaw	a small wood, thicket, coppice, or grove
winna	will not

Shalimar: Garden.

Solfège: Known in America mostly as a mneumonic device for categorizing deer by sex, solfège is a means of referring to musical notes by syllables, rather than by letters.

Speaks, Oley: An American composer (1874-1948). Speaks was a native of Ohio who worked for churches of various denominations but struck gold continuing the tradition of the parlor song. More than a million copies of "On the Road to Mandalay," published in 1907, were sold as sheet music.

Srinagar: The capital of Kashmir. Famous for the Shalimar Gardens created by Jahangir, the Mughal emperor, in 1619 and Dal Lake, which is known for its houseboats.

Sullivan, Arthur: Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan, M.V.O. (1842-1900) is a composer whose works are known both to theater-goers and church-goers. Besides the comic and satiric Savoy operas, Sullivan wrote serious operas, hymn tunes including "Onward, Christian Soldiers," and many instrumental works. He was knighted a quarter century before that honor was bestowed on his collaborator W.S. Gilbert and was later appointed to the Royal Victorian Order in recognition of his service to the Crown.

Supiyapit: The wife of Theebaw.

Tennyson: Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) was the greatest poet to write between the heyday of the Romantics and the advent of Modernism. Tennyson wrote two of the long poems that define both the fears and hopes of Victorian people, *In Memoriam* and *Idylls of the King*. "Come into the Garden, Maud" is taken from another long poem, *Maud: A Monodrama.* An unsympethetic review of the first edition of the poem suggest that the title had "one vowel too many; doesn't matter which."

Theebaw: The last native King of Burma. Deposed by the British in 1885 as a result, in part, of his role in the "Great Shoe Question."

Thomas Atkins: "Tommy" is the archetypal British Soldier, just as "Bobby" is the archetypal British Policeman and John is the archetypal whoremonger. Derived from the appearance of "Thomas Atkins" as the model entry for an Army form. (John Doe evidently played a similar role in the police courts after a Bobby ran him in for being a John or for not having the jack to get a room or the sense to check into the Sally Ann.)

Victorian: The term "Victorian" can have many meanings, the oddest being "adverse to sex," since it derives from the reign of Queen Victoria (r. 1837-1901), who conceived nine children and gushed in her journals about her fiancée"s "delicate mustachios."

Weatherly, F.E.: Brasenose College, Oxford, reports on its website that Frederic Edward Weatherly (1848-1929) acquired fame at the college "on, or in, the river." Sculls competing in the four-oared boat race were then required to start the race with a coxswain on board. Believing that the coxswain's stroke call did not justify his weight, the crew of the four asked Weatherly to serve as coxswain at the start of the race but to jump out of the boat as soon after the gun as practicable. Weatherly did so, and although the Brasenose crew were disqualified, they were seen as the pioneers of the Coxswainless Fours that were to come. Weatherly took a degree in classics and is said to have written more than 3,000 songs, including, besides "The Holy City," "Roses of Picardy" and the words most commonly associated with the Londonderry Air, "Danny Boy."

Woodforde-Finden, Amy: A composer (1860-1919) born Amy Ward in Valparaiso, Chile, where her father, an American, served as British Consul. After her father was killed, her mother moved the family to London, where she studied music and began publishing. At the age of 34 she married Lieutenant-Colonel Woodford Woodforde-Finden, a surgeon in the Indian Army. The couple lived in India, where he rose to the rank of brigadier and she published many songs blending Indian and Anglo-Saxon elements. She lost her husband in 1916, just as her work was being featured in a film, *Less Than the Dust,* starring Mary Pickford as an English girl abandoned in India and raised by a low caste Hindu and David Powell as the English captain whom she rescues and then marries. Woodford-Finden died three years later, reportedly at the piano while composing.

Zembla: A Distant, Northern Land.

Every attempt has been made to contact the authors and composers in order to acquire rights to the performance of these songs; sadly, all were in an extended meeting with Congressman Sonny Bono to discuss his continued efforts to secure them royalities even at their present addresses.