

FROM ORIGIN TO EXILE: THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF DR. WILLIAM WALTON

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Abstract

The formative years of William Walton (1902-1983) are rarely considered when studying the composer's life and works. However, careful study of that period indicates many of the directions that the adult Walton would take. Industrial Lancashire was more musically active during the period of Walton's youth (covering the years 1902 to 1912) than is generally considered. His time as a chorister and later undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford (1912 to 1920), is replete with influential interactions with talented adults and fellow students. Detailed consideration of Walton's juvenilia reveals a keen thinker who assimilated these various influences in a unique manner. Far more than merely a springboard for a future talent, these years resulted in inspired works and a firm purpose for the budding composer.

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