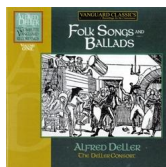


Alfred Deller - Folk Songs and Ballads. CD2 The Cries of London (2008)



1 John Cobb (ed. D. Stevens): *These are the Cries of London Town* 1:26 2 Thomas Ravenscroft (ed. D. Stevens): *New Oysters* 0:54 3 Richard Dering (ed. D. Stevens): *The Cries of London* 0:26 4 Thomas Ravenscroft (ed. D. Stevens): *A Bellman's song* 0:52 5 Anon.: *New Oysters* 1:13 6 Anon.: *The Painter's Song* 2:21 7 Savage: *Muffins Ho!* 1:16 8 Richard Dering (ed. H. Purcell): *Country Cries* 6:01 9 Anon. (ed. D. Stevens): *A Quart a Penny* 1:16 10 Anon.: *I Can Mend Your Tubs and Pails* 1:12 11 Edmund Nelham (ed. D. Stevens): *Have You any Work for the Tinker* 1:33 12 Thomas Ravenscroft (ed. D. Stevens): *Brooms for Old Shoes* 2:10 13 Thomas Weelkes (ed. J. Noble): *The Cries of London* 6:34 14 Luffman Atterbury: *One a Penny, Two a Penny* 1:32 The Ambrosian Singers Denis Stevens - conductor (1-2, 5, 7, 9-12) The Deller Consort (3, 4-6, 8, 13-14) Alfred Deller – counter-tenor (tr.4) April Cantelo – soprano (tr.13) Wilfred Brown - tenor (tr.6) London Chambers Players Alfred Deller - director
15 William Lawes: *She weepeth sore* 2:11 16 Henry Lawes: *Angler's Song* 1:07 17 Jonathan Bartishill: *Here on his back* 2:21
The Deller Consort Alfred Deller – counter-tenor Edgar Fleet - tenor, Gerald English - tenor Wilfred Brown - tenor, Owen Grundy - baritone Maurice Bevan – bass Alfred Deller – director

First a non-exhaustive but I think necessary introduction. Vanguard has embarked on an extensive re-issue programme here and plans to reissue the Complete Deller performances on this label in six multi-disc box sets. Needless to say I shall be alerting the powers-that-be at this site to prepare my orders forthwith. For the record they are, aside from this one; the Music of Henry Purcell, Christmas Carols and Motets, Music of Handel and Bach and the English Renaissance, Music of the French and Italian Renaissance and finally English, French and Italian Madrigals. Each box will come with what I assume – from the sole example here – will be a CD ROM with details of track listings and performers as well as reprints of the original liner notes and full texts. The printed booklet has track details and a very brief resume.

And now a few words about the tracks – words which are by no means exhaustive, merely an

indication as to how Vanguard has gone about assembling the contents of these ten LPs on their seven CDs. The first CD collates all of the Vanguard 'Bach Guild' Catches, glees and other diverse entertainments of merrie England LP and adds items from the Tavern Songs disc, which it splits with volume two; there are three missing items and they will appear in the second box. A bit disappointing but perhaps it couldn't be helped. In Disc 3 - derived from the LP The Three Ravens - we are missing the two lute solos. And from The Wraggle Taggle Gypsies disc we no longer have a number of items including those by the Taylor Recorder Consort, the Dolmetsch arranged consort pieces, the Fantasia on Polly Oliver and Gathering Peas. On disc 4 we have the Vaughan Williams arrangements and all are here. Western Wind is split between discs six and seven. The Cruel Mother, on disc 6, is intact. The Deller/Dupré performances from Vanguard's 'Bach Guild' of the Elizabethan and Jacobean Music LP releases have been extracted; originally they were coupled with non-Deller consort performances.

A brief conclusion then as to the conundrum of how this has been achieved. I'm most sorry to have lost the Dupré lute solos. One appreciates that Deller was a silent partner but they have for so long now been imprinted on the consciousness of anyone familiar with the original LP or subsequent CD reissue that I would be hard pressed not to be churlish about their omission. Maybe we can have them reinstated at some point? I hope Vanguard will at least think about this.

The Catches disc might not be as well known as some others but you should hear it for the truly filthy Sir Walter as much as for the wistful beauty of An epitaph; 'Under this stone'. There's a witty Arne example from the Catches and Glees LP enshrined in this disc as well as a cosy parlour Joseph Barnby Sweet and Low. The Cries of London and Tavern Songs are much better mannered than one would ever expect to find on disc nowadays; if there's a slight air of Ealing Comedy about it all then let me say that Ealing Comedy is my thing. April Cantelo has a beautiful voice, high and pure, but she's not quite one's idea of an oyster or orange seller. The third CD is my own personal favourite containing as it does The Three Ravens and The Wraggle Taggle Gypsies. Some of Deller's most rapt and beautiful mid-period solo singing is contained here; the breath control, colour, legato, diction, the way he conveys sentiment, sorrow, elation, earthiness and courtly restraint. I can't begin to enumerate my personal pantheon of greatness, just encourage you to acquaint yourself with them all.

The VW arrangements are coupled with some lute songs on volume 4. I have to say that the arrangement of the lute songs over discs four, five and seven is rather frustrating. Still the Deller Consort certainly enjoys these warm VW arrangements and does them justice. Of perhaps more compelling interest are the lute songs in which Deller's attention to detail, to the textual nuances and the dictates of rubati lend his performances a sense of malleable expression, of a truly lived experience; nothing metrical about these songs at all. One of the most notable performances is the song Me, me and none but me, which is here in two versions, one solo and

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one consort. The same imperatives drive the rubati, Deller's imprint as firmly stamped on his consort performance as on the solo one. Sorrow Stay, from disc 5, is astonishingly stark – the range of attacks, colours and dynamics remarkable. Only very occasionally does one find oneself unsettled. In my case it concerns the excessive ornamenting of Have you seen but a white lilly Grow and the perhaps extreme rubati between verses in Come Again! When set against so much however that's of marginal importance – and very much a matter of taste.

The discs seem to have transferred from commercial copies not master tapes. There's residual LP rumble at very high volume but it's not especially noticeable otherwise. Since some of the extensive Vanguard series has only achieved limited international release Deller admirers will cast envious eyes on these boxes. And, if we're honest, critics too. ---Jonathan Woolf, musicweb-international.com

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