

## *About the music*

### *Grainger "Harvest Hymn"*

For the processional, we wanted music that was in keeping with the harvest festival theme, whilst adhering to the requirements of being both stately and just long enough to accompany the bride's procession up the aisle! Hence the choice of "Harvest Hymn" by the Australian composer Percy Grainger (1882 to 1961).

Most people will know Grainger as the author of "Country Gardens", "Shepherd's Hey" and "Irish Tune From County Derry" (aka "Oh Danny Boy"). Although these are in fact three of Grainger's many folk song arrangements, he did write a great deal of original music, including "Harvest Hymn".

Grainger sketched the first 17 bars of this in London in 1905 with the title "Hymny Tune" and completed the rest in 1932. He made several arrangements for different instrumentation, but this version for two hands works very well on the organ and the first 17 bars are just right for a processional piece!

### *Alkan "Prière" Op. 64 No. 11*

Anyone who knows Steve will know that, since his schooldays, he has been a devotee of the music of Charles-Valentin Alkan (1813 to 1888).

Alkan wrote mostly for the piano and his output includes a sonata and two sets of piano studies (Op 35 and 39). The Op. 39 studies are gargantuan and quite unlike any other set of piano studies. Four of the Op. 39 studies together comprise a Symphony for solo piano, three studies comprise a Concerto (with both orchestra and soloist represented using different pianistic styles), and there is also an Overture and a set of variations- Le Festin d'Esopo. The whole set, if performed complete, lasts around two hours. The Grande Sonate Op.33 has four movements, each representing a stage in a man's life, at 20, 30, 40 and 50 years.

He also wrote several works, including the "Prières", for the organ or pedal piano (a now-defunct instrument of which he was a masterly proponent). Alkan's "Treize Prières" (Thirteen Prayers) Op. 64 appeared in the late 1860s and several of these, including no. 11, were prepared in a performing edition for organ by César Franck.

We think that No. 11 makes a great recessional wedding anthem (as well as being a change from Mendelssohn's "Wedding March"), being both dignified and celebratory.

# *Order of Service*



*Caroline Frances Sharp & Stephen James Smythe*

*Saturday 23 September 2006  
St. Melor's Church, Linkinhorne*