

John Bridge: Musical director and conductor 1872-1945

Leader of the Halle Orchestra, member of many other orchestras and music groups, and performer with the BBC

Enid Stuart Bridge (née Jones) 1867-1937

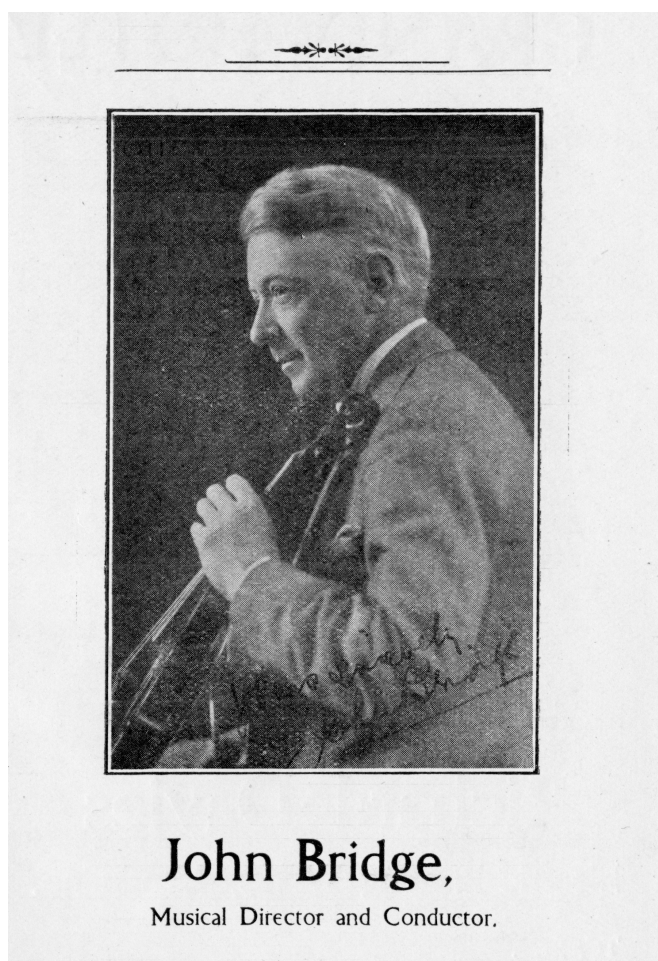
Concert pianist and music teacher

An account by Frank Rutherford

John Bridge moved to Withington in 1904 at 17 Goulden Road, where he lived until 1937, he then moved to 62 Northern Grove, where he died in 1945.

He joined the Halle Orchestra in 1893, becoming principal second violin in 1914, then deputy leader in 1923 and leader in 1925, succeeding Arthur Catterall. In those days the Halle only played in the winter months and John Bridge had summer engagements as leader of the Llandudno Pier Orchestra, the Harrogate Kursaal Orchestra, the Devonshire Park Orchestra, Eastbourne etc. He was a member of three famous Manchester chamber music groups, namely the Brodsky, Catterall and Rawdon Briggs String Quartets etc. He was a soloist of note playing the Mendelssohn concerto in 1925 with the Halle under Hamilton Harty and the Bach Double concerto with Arthur Catterall, which they recorded in 1924. He also made several recordings with the Catterall Quartet.

Throughout his career he had regular engagements with musical societies – he was guest soloist with Wilhelm Schroeder's Withington Orchestra on 28th March 1908 when he played Mozart's Violin Concerto No 5 in A major and, with the same group on 10th December 1910, playing works by Beethoven, Kreisler and J. H. Foulds accompanied by his wife. He toured North America as a guest with

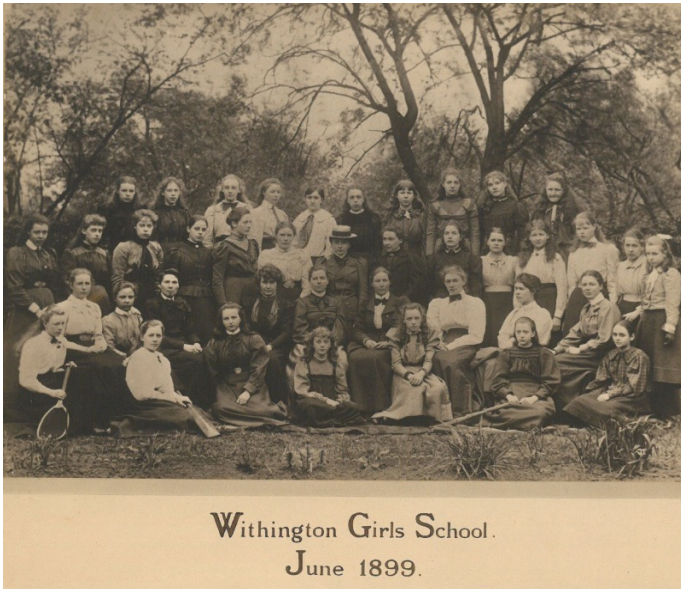


John Bridge conductor of the Llandudno Pier Orchestra 1929. Photograph courtesy of Conwy Archives.

the London Symphony Orchestra in 1912 and played in Dr Hans Richter's orchestra for several seasons at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He retired from the Halle in 1930 and worked full time for the BBC where he was leader of the 2ZY Orchestra which became the Northern Wireless Orchestra, then the BBC Northern Orchestra. Also, he was director of the Northern Studio Orchestra. He was a member of the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra from 1900 to 1939 and between 1928 and 1939 was a violin teacher at the Royal Manchester College of Music.

His wife was the pianist Enid Stuart Bridge who was noted particularly as an accompanist, being resident for the Ladies Concerts at the Midland Hall and the Schiller Anstalt Concerts, both in Manchester. She was also a music teacher at Withington School for Girls between 1899 and 1914.

John Bridge was a very good amateur golfer, he broke the course record at Withington Golf Club in 1914 with a round of 67 which included three twos. The bogey (par) for the course was 75.



Withington School for Girls 1899, Mrs Enid Bridge is in the centre wearing a straw hat. Photograph courtesy of Withington School for Girls archives.



Catterall Quartet. Left to right: John Bridge 2nd violin, Johan C. Hock 'cello, Frank S. Park viola, Arthur Catterall 1st violin.



Above: Halle Orchestra 1927, Conductor Sir Hamilton Harty, leader John Bridge. Photograph courtesy of the Phonograph Monthly Review.



Withington Golf Club Council, about 1945
 Standing, from left: J. J. Smith, Stuart Mackenzie, Unknown, George Churchill, Johnnie Bridge, Unknown, Dan Prime, John Shaw and Charles Perkin.
 Seated, from left: Arthur Dodd, Frank Wheatley Jones, Charles Bridgen, John Bramwell, Sam Doran and George Sidders.

Right: Withington Golf Club Council c. 1945. John Bridge is 5th from the left on the back row. Photograph courtesy of Withington Golf Club archives.