

work for mandolin – and we're talking about a sum of between five and seven thousand dollars – even from Stravinsky, I wouldn't have achieved the money. And I thought it more important at that time to continue my job of raising my family of four.

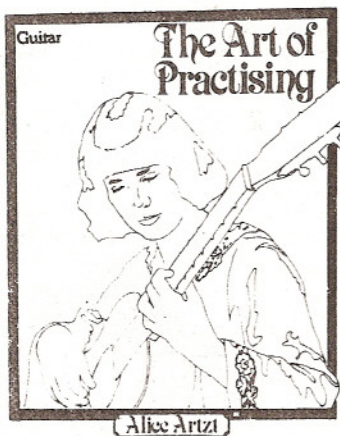
Hugo D'Alton is full of energy and gives you the impression that he's itching to get started on something. I knew the reason for his present anxiety to get his fingers working – he was shortly due at the Edinburgh Festival to play in Mahler's 7th Symphony (to be repeated at the Festival Hall, 16th and 19th October), plus some Beethoven at the Benson & Hedges Music Festival at Aldburgh, plus some other dates. So I took my leave. But on the way out we started talking about a guitarist who couldn't play a note unless there was a bottle of whisky handy; and this led to an anecdote:

'After I had been playing with Troise and his Mandoliers for about two and a half years – this was before the war – I was with a combo called H. A. Powell and his Banjo Octet. This outfit rehearsed above a pub in Soho. We used to go in stone cold sober every morning, do a four hour rehearsal with the beers coming up continuously so that after that you came out nine eighths over – no questions. After three weeks that show was ready for the road and the first date was the Hackney Empire. Well, on the opening night, first house, H. A. said to us "Lads, be good, no drinking, it's the first show." Alright H. A. Well the sum total of that was that whatever could be pelted at us was pelted; rotten apples, cauliflowers – anything that was rotten came down on us – I'm not joking. Right, if it's going to be like that we might as well be tanked up. So, two by two, nobody saying anything to anyone we went out to the different pubs . . . if we're going to get the bird we may as well enjoy it! – just like the rehearsals. Came back, gave the show, the whole house to a man acclaimed us as though we were absolute perfection. There was no stop to the applause and we had to give encore after encore. And for the rest of that outfit, for about a year and a half, there was never a sober member. And I remember going to Nottingham too. Nottingham is famous for its beer. A trip to Jerusalem – a hell of a brew. I can remember going there, and I know we had a twice nightly show plus matinees; plus numerous other engagements in that week. Can't remember a thing about it! Next thing I remember was coming to in London on the following

Monday. 'Well, I thought, this is fairly terrible' after all, I was featured as a soloist many times. I must have been terrible and I must have got the sack. Anyway, when I met up with the lads later on they said I played fine. But to this day I can't remember a single thing out of that week.'



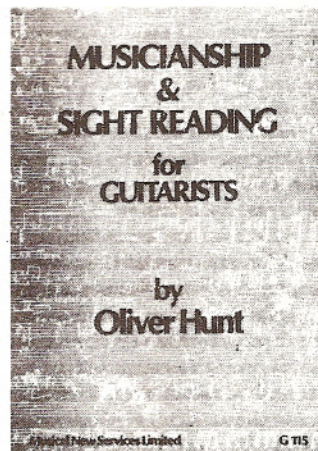
Hugo D'Alton going over the score of *Agon* with Stravinsky.



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