“Musical Evangelists”

The life and work of music copyists in the United Kingdom during the early-mid twentieth century.

With particular reference to Rosina "Rosie" Bramson.
An orchestral part for a William Alwyn work, copied by Rosie Bramson's agency.
WANTED, Thorough Good Bill-Poster for Tour, Bostock and Wombwell’s Menagerie. Join at once. Apply, FRANK BOSTOCK, Sittingbourne, Saturday and Sunday; Faversham, Monday; Canterbury, Tuesday.


WANTED, Music Copyist. Must be clear. Cheap. Large number of Songs. Address, Box 4,630, “The Era” Office.

WANTED, Lady of Twenty-five, with tact, fair education, and pleasing manner, for confidential position involving travelling. Liberal Salary. Particulars, Box 4,626, “The Era” Office.
A young William Alwyn and a sketch for a film score
Copyist at work
Copyists worked in many places, including theatres...
Parts for an Alwyn film score, using different copyists both from Rosie's Agency.
Sometimes, copyists were needed urgently...

And they were spread across the country...
Not every composer's text was clear.
Rosie's official Musicians' Union stamp.
Andy Hodgkiss, a young music copyist/musician, who died tragically young.
Rosie shared an address with the publishers of Band Wagon magazine.
She was involved with copyists joining the Musicians' Union from the beginning.
A public thirst for music and dance during wartime, led to more, not less, work for music copyists.
Rosie is listed on the Committee of the Arrangers, Composers, and Copyists Section of the Musicians' Union early on in its history.
Finding manuscript paper was difficult, with even large suppliers running out.
6-STAVE
Manuscript Music Book
HARD PAPER
R.C. 62: Open, 32 pages
R.C. 64: Open, 16 pages
AUGENER
LONDON
Printed in England
Salute to Farmers, 1941.
Merton Park / Ministry of Information.
Composer – William Alwyn
Parts were seen as ephemeral, as these doodles illustrate.
I like to think that this might be Rosie Bramson, as I have no idea what she looked like.
The agency continued to prosper after the war.
...though its original site now lies somewhere under Centrepoint.
Photocopying and new devices would overtake the hand copyists....
...but a strike by music copyists at the BBC in 1972 proved that they were still needed, despite changing times.
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With particular reference to Rosina "Rosie" Bramson.

The reason for my title?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Married Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bramson Lewis J</td>
<td>M. 14 Mar 83</td>
<td>M. Porter (commission agent)</td>
<td>Unpaid domestic duties</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Bramson Emma</td>
<td>F. 7 Sept 85</td>
<td>M. Unpaid domestic duties</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bramson Thomas L</td>
<td>M. 8 May 06</td>
<td>S. Banking machine manager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bramson Rosie C</td>
<td>F. 15 July 07</td>
<td>S. Medical assistant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An entry for Rosie and family (Rosie is on the bottom row, with her married name) in Ancestry.co.uk
And appropriately, a copyist’s mistake...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rosina C Bramson</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Rosina C Butt]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Date</td>
<td>15 Jul 1907</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence Year</td>
<td>1939</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence Place</td>
<td>Sutton and Cheam, Surrey, England</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Music Evangelist</td>
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<td>Schedule Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub Schedule Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enumeration District</td>
<td>CNKR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration district</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Suggested Records

- 1911 England Census
  Rosina Bramson
  Rosina Charlotte Bramson
- England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915
  Rosina Charlotte Bramson
- British Phone Books, 1860-1984
  Rosie C Bramson