

Peter Warlock Society

NEWSLETTER

Issue No 12 May 1973

EDITOR: John Bishop 14 Earlby Road London W10 6AR

'THE CURLEW' - GOOD NEWS

The last issue of the newsletter gave news about the recording that has recently been made by James Griffett, the Haffner String Quartet, Mary Ryan and Mary Murdoch of 'The Curlew' and other Warlock items. Many members ordered copies of the record, and we apologise for the delay, due entirely to production difficulties in the record industry. However, all is now well, and the first copies should be available in about a week, and will be despatched immediately. Pearl are issuing the record, and for those who haven't yet ordered and would like to, the price is £2 (including post and packing). Orders please to the address above; cheques to be made out to John Bishop.

Further good news is that the long-awaited reprint of the score of 'The Curlew' should also be available this month. This is being issued by Stainer and Bell, with a foreword specially written by our chairman, Fred Tomlinson. The price is £1 plus postage, and orders should go to Stainer and Bell at this address: 82 High Road, East Finchley, London N2 9PW.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

We welcome Peter Todd to our committee; he was elected at the AGM held in April. The chairman's speech is included with this newsletter. At the end of 1972 our funds stood at approximately £40.

TWO OTHER NEW PUBLICATIONS

Members will, we are sure, be interested to know of two other Warlock publications due out at the end of June. The first is Candlelight, the set of nursery jingles long since out of print. These are to be reissued by Thames in a special edition with introduction by Fred Tomlinson. Also from Thames will be a 12-page publication consisting of two carols not available hitherto: A Cornish Carol (not to be confused with the Cornish Christmas Carol issued by Boosey and Hawkes, although now out of print) and The Rich Cavalcade. Full details will be sent to all Warlock Society members on publication.

DEATH OF OWEN BRANNIGAN

We very much regret the death of Owen Brannigan, a society member for some years and a fine singer of Warlock songs like Ha'nacker Mill. Your editor recalls a recital he gave to the Kensington Music Society about three years ago. He included a Warlock group, which he sang with enormous conviction and style.

BIRTHDAY CONCERT AT THE PURCELL ROOM

To mark Warlock's 80th birthday, the committee is planning a full-scale Warlock Merry-go-down at the Purcell Room in October 1974. Details later.

WARLOCK EXHIBITIONS

As a result of energetic behind-the-scenes activities there are to be two exhibitions devoted entirely to Warlock. One will be at the Westminster Central Music Library in October; the other will be at the Royal Festival Hall next April-May. The committee is now drawing together suitable material but would be extremely pleased to hear from any member who has items he would be prepared to loan (they will, of course, be insured while in our hands). So please contact the editor if you think you can contribute.

DR COPLEY'S BOOK

News on this front is no more precise than it has been for some time: July and August has been mentioned by the publishers, Dobsons, but since their promises have failed to materialise so many times before, we have our doubts. However, you will be mailed immediately it becomes available, and bonfires will be lit on the downs - particularly the South Downs, where Dr Copley lives.

OXFORD'S 50 YEARS

Oxford's music department is 50 years old this year, and various celebrations are in hand. One of the first batch of OUP publications, on June 21, 1923, was Warlock's Balulalow - a point made by the latest issue of the Oxford Music Bulletin.

CORRECTION

The last issue contained two photos of Warlock. That taken outside the '5 Bells' in Eynsford was wrongly captioned: Hal Collins is on the left and Warlock on the right. Sorry about that!

MORE WARLOCK ON RECORD

The choral version of Bethlehem Down is included on a new Abbey release featuring the Hereford Cathedral Choir and Richard Lloyd. The number is LPB 696, the price £1-22.

That fine soprano Wendy Eathorne includes The First Mercy on a recent recital disc. Unfortunately she includes, as well as some songs by Quilter and Armstrong Gibbs, Malotte's setting of The Lord's Prayer and others of its ilk!

CECIL GRAY - WARLOCK LETTERS

We understand that a large number of Cecil Gray - Warlock letters have recently been bought by the British Museum from Cecil Gray's daughter. The letters are currently being bound and are not yet available for inspection at the BM. More details later.

WARLOCK AND PUBLISHERS

A little more evidence has turned up of Warlock's relationships with publishers - thanks to some delving in the archives of J and W Chester by member Peter Todd, who works there. In 1923, Chester published An Old Song, Lilligay, Saudades, and the first set of Peterisms, as well as some transcriptions of Dowland and Danyel. The original contract, signed by Philip Heseltine and witnessed by A Booth-Clibborn, shows that the Serenade to Delius and the second set of Peterisms were also due to be published by them but were transferred to OUP, where Hubert Foss was in charge. A copy of the Danyel Chromatic Tunes shows the reason for Warlock's dissatisfaction. Only the first page is free from error. No fewer than 17 errata are noted in Warlock's handwriting on the other four pages. Unfortunately the corrections were not made, and the finished copies still contain these mistakes. For someone as meticulous as Warlock it must have been infuriating, particularly as his manuscripts were always beautifully written. A point in Chester's favour - of the major publishers of Warlock's songs they are the only one that has kept them all in print. (An errata sheet for the Danyel is available from Fred Tomlinson).

NEWS ITEMS....

Warlock's book on Gesualdo has been reprinted in the USA, we understand, by Greenwood Press, Connecticut.

Committee member David Johnston recently gave a lecture recital on Warlock to students of the Royal Academy of Music.

Society member John Potter included a Warlock group in his recent Wigmore Hall recital. The three Saudades were particularly effective.

WARLOCK IN SUSSEX

The whole of the second half of a recital at Northiam (near Rye) on February 3, organised by the Brickwall Music and Arts Society, was devoted to Warlock. Ian and Jennifer Partridge performed 16 songs. Our chairman, Fred Tomlinson, interspersed snippets of biographical and other information, accompanied Miss Partridge in two of the early Winthrop Rogers songs, and joined her at the piano for the Two Cod-pieces. The audience was most appreciative, particularly of I asked me a thief, Pigganick, The Old Codger, Away to Twiver, My Lady Is a Pretty One, and the 'Sussex spot' - Mr Belloc's Fancy and My Own Country. Belloc's book The Four Men, from which Warlock took the last poem, starts about 5 miles from Northiam.

DEATH OF A.D. PETERS

Some members may have noticed in February the death of A.D. Peters, who was literary agent to Belloc and J.C. Squire, amongst others. Of particular interest to collectors of useless Warlockiana is the fact that Peters played in the famous cricket match at Hambledon on New Year's Day, 1929 (see Newsletter 10). He was top scorer for Squire's 'Invalids'. According to The Times he 'made 20, and made them as though he was playing in mid-July after making three consecutive 50s'. When the Hampshire 'Eskimos' looked set for an easy victory, Peters collected 3 wickets for 10 runs, including that of Bruce Blunt, bowled for a duck.

RECORDS

Finally a reminder that copies of two LPs of Warlock's music are still available through the address at the beginning of the newsletter. Cheques should be made out to John Bishop, and the prices are:

- Choral music and songs (The Elizabethan Singers) £2 (including p and p)
- A Peter Warlock Merry-go-down (Ian Partridge etc.) £1 - 25 (including p and p)

Rather than talk about the year's activities I would like to relate the present position. I have recently been doing the rounds of all the publishers of Warlock, and have prepared a rather pretty visual aid. I won't read it all, for obvious reasons; I hope to organize the information in a suitable form for the next newsletter, so I will content myself today with a summary and a few statistics, publisher by publisher.

OUP have a good record as far as compositions are concerned. Only one song and two or three part-songs are out of print. The instrumental items that can't be bought are obtainable through the hire-library. Transcriptions are not so well served. Three of the six volumes of English Ayres are still in print but scarcely anything else. Particularly grieving is the English Ayre book - I think it's time we had another shot at getting it back into print.

Boosey and Hawkes looks worse than it is. Many of the o/p items are still available in another key. Still, 7 songs are completely o/p and over half of the part-songs. The only transcriptions are Delius ones, which are buyable or on hire.

Galliard (recently changed to Stainer and Bell) have two songs O/p and they were rather vague about the Folk-Song Preludes. (However, a few copies have turned up, thanks to Peter Todd. Anyone interested should apply to John Bishop, who also has a few copies of the miniature essay on Warlock written by E.J. Moeran). The only two transcriptions available are the two concerto reductions of Delius.

Chester have a 100% record for compositions and transcriptions, though they couldn't tell me the price of the full score of An Old Song. Apparently one has to negotiate.

Enoch still have Milkmaids in various versions and all but one of the mixed-voice transcriptions. Chappell and Paterson have their solitary songs, while Elkin-Novello have almost disappeared.

I've put off Curwen till now because the situation is somewhat confused. As you may know, Kenneth Robertson handles the purely vocal items from this list now - or rather he doesn't, as the only item left in print is the SATB Corpus Christi, apart from one or two concoctions from Capriol. Vocal Faber handle the instrumental side of the catalogue but there are strange anomalies. Capriol, of course, is available in various instrumental forms, but for some unaccountable reason the string quartet version of Corpus Christi is supposed to be their concern. Unfortunately they seem unaware of the fact. I have written to the Faber Music managing director to say that at least it ought to be on hire and listed in their catalogue. The Purcell Fantasias are in print but none of the other transcriptions.

Last, but by no means least, I have to thank John Bishop and Thames Publishing for another 100% record. Not only has he produced volumes hitherto unobtainable, but he has plans to rescue works that other publishers have allowed to lapse.

My collection of statistics has brought a somewhat depressing conclusion. As in other spheres, the accountants are taking over. Unless £Z earns Y more pounds in X years, a thing is not worth doing. Without wishing to pick on Boosey and Hawkes in particular, there is now no Winthrop Rogers, who did as much as anyone to help this country's song-writers, not primarily for financial reward. Luckily, most of Warlock's songs are in albums, which tend to be better value than separate copies (over 50 songs can be bought in albums for less than £3). There is a startling difference in price - may I quote one or two. OUP seems to be the fairest, with what I might call the 'two-bob song', costing 17 or 20p. 20p seems about standard, but when 30p is charged for a song originally 1/6d, and 9p for a part-song originally 4p (printed on fewer and smaller pages of poorer quality paper), it seems a little out of proportion, remembering that these items have paid their original costs years ago. I even saw a copy of the low-key version of Whenas the rye, o/p for many years, printed in the days when Winthrop Rogers published from Berners Street; it was obviously rescued from an old pile in the stockroom, and had a 25p sticker covering the old 2/-. I don't know what the answer is - perhaps the long-term view is to start a subscription list for a complete Warlock in 1980, when there will be no copyright problem.

In the immediate future John Bishop's solution seems as good as any. Firms seem quite happy to draw a royalty for doing nothing, and there is already a reprint of Candlelight planned by Thames on this basis, as well as the possibility of a volume of 'sociable songs'. We must make sure these ventures are successful.

~~Before finishing I must comment briefly on the record scene. The new Curlew record is imminent - and that will make four LPs devoted solely to Warlock, with sundry items on other records. Quite a healthy situation.~~

It only remains for me to thank the committee for their work over the year.

Fred Tomlinson