

PETER WARLOCK SOCIETY

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Peter Warlock Society NEWSLETTER

Newsletter No. 22

April 1978

Editor: John Bishop, 14 Barlby Road, London W10 6AR

AGM DATE

The AGM will this year be held on Saturday, May 13, at 14 Barlby Road, London W10 6AR.

A committee meeting at 3 pm will be followed at 4 pm by the AGM, and a short Warlock entertainment. Buffet high tea will be served at about 5 pm, and there'll be plenty of opportunity to chat over a glass.

It would be very helpful if members other than committee members would let us know if they are coming, so that we can make suitable catering arrangements. Please send us a card.

PUBLICATIONS SCHEME GOES AHEAD

The ambitious 5-items publications scheme announced in the last issue is going ahead. There have been some production problems (there always are!) but the first item – Warlock's *Serenade to Delius*, in Fred Tomlinson's piano-duet arrangement – will be despatched early in May, and *Warlock and van Dieren* will be published the following month.

We feel there must be a number of members who want to join in but haven't yet returned their order form. Another one is enclosed – please let us have it back immediately if you want to be sure to get all the items, some of which will not be available separately.

BY WAY OF REPLY . . .

The article by committee member Ernest Kaye in the last issue has inspired another committee member, David Cox, to take up his pen. The results are included in this issue.

NORMAN BAILEY'S RECORD

We wrote in the previous newsletter about the splendid recital of Warlock songs given by Norman Bailey on L'Oiseau-Lyre DSLO 19. Reviews of the record are still appearing, including this one by Eric Sams in the *Musical Times*:

WARLOCK Songs. Bailey, Parsons
L'OISEAU-LYRE DSLO 19 (£3.50)
Warlock and Parsons make (however surprisingly) an ideal alliance; full of spirit and fire, yet calm and serene whenever the mood requires. The selection is generous and reasonably representative; Norman Bailey's singing is typically resonant and often well phrased, with an occasional sensitive inflection. But there, for me at least, the good news ends. The piano sounds rather under-recorded, with some loss of expressive detail, whereas the vocal line is always obtrusive, often dubious, and too often just carelessly wrong. As a result the music suffers, and so

will the music lover. The strong-nerved might try comparing vocal line with score, for example at bars 10, 31 and 39 of *As ever I saw*. The words fare worse still. In *Sigh no more*, how long is it since summer first was 'levvy'? The horse's hoof in *The Fox* should be 'crumbled', not 'crumpled', which is more like the cow's horn. The May morning in *After Two Years* is surely 'bright', not 'white', least of all 'wite', whether there or in *The Frostbound Wood*—the agonized penitence of which is not best conveyed by referring to a 'Save-ye'r' or describing Mary as 'the child mother' instead of 'the Child's mother'. Poor Warlock, to have such maledictions pronounced on his art.
ERIC SAMS

But don't let yourself be put off by Mr Sams – it's a very worthwhile buy. Any member having difficulty getting a copy should write to the editor – we are holding a supply of copies.

HESELTINE AND 'HASSAN'

The famous 1923 production of James Elroy Flecker's *Hassan*, with music by Delius, was one of the landmarks of British theatrical history. Philip Heseltine made a contribution to the musical side of the production and this is duly chronicled in *Flecker and Delius – the making of 'Hassan'*, published this month by Thames.

The enclosed leaflet gives full details.

WARLOCK AT ETON AGAIN

A singularly ambitious all-Warlock programme is being put on at St. Mary's Church, Datchet (near Windsor), on April 22 by the St. Mary's Strings and boys from Eton College. The programme includes *Capriol*, *The Curlew* and about 20 songs. Driving force behind the venture is Julian Nott, a boy at the college and a member of the Society. We wish good luck to this venture by an Etonian as a tribute to an old Etonian.

Incidentally, we understand, there is in the library at Eton a substantial collection of Heseltine's printed music – presented by his mother. We are obtaining details.

HERITAGE OF SONG

Boosey and Hawkes have just published two magnificent volumes under the general title 'A Heritage of 20th Century British Song'. Selection, made by the Association of English Singers and Speakers, comes, needless to say, entirely from the Boosey and Hawkes list.

Each volume contains 50 songs. Volume 1 (a revised version of the collection previously known as 'Fifty Modern English Songs') includes Delius, Gurney, Harty, Somervell, Stanford and Vaughan Williams. Volume 2 features Bridge, Britten, Finzi, Armstrong Gibbs, Head, Howells, Ireland, Quilter, and five by Warlock – *The Bayly Beareth the Bell Away*; *My Little Sweet Darling*; *Sweet Content*; *Take, Oh Take Those Lips Away*; *Whenas the Rye*.

The volumes cost £8 each but there is a special offer (£12.50-for-the-two) until the end of May. By today's standards 12.5p per song isn't bad value.

DR COPLEY'S OTHER BOOK . . .

Ian Copley's book *The Music of Charles Wood – a critical study* is shortly to be issued by Thames: a leaflet is enclosed.

Since publishers Dennis Dobson have won the Nobel Prize for Procrastination so many times, we will merely say 'no firm news' about Ian's Warlock book. But come the day, beacons will certainly be light across the land . . .

SUCH IS FAME . . .

A recent issue of *Men Only* contained – not uncharacteristically – an article about phallic symbols. Entitled 'Long-standing Phalluses' it includes, without acknowledgement, Heseltine's famous limerick – the one that begins 'Young girls who frequent picture palaces' – also printed in full in Gray's biography.

CAUGHT IN TIME

If you've been following the BBC TV series 'Caught in Time,' which features the rediscovered work of amateur cameramen and home-movie makers of the 1920s and 30s, you may have seen the programme on March 12. It showed the film record made in the 1930s by F. C. Hynard – now 95 – of life in the village of Eynsford – the Women's Institute costume play on the castle lawn, the church fete, the cricket match and various village characters. Pity he hadn't been busy with his camera in the Warlock-Moeran era in the late 20s.

'MUSIC TO MURDER BY'

David Pownell's play about Warlock and Gesualdo, *Music to Murder By* (see note in last newsletter) has now been published by Faber.

RARITIES AVAILABLE

The editor has a small supply of copies (new) of three out-of-print Warlock items: *The Lady's Birthday*, *As Dew in Aprylle* and *Lullaby* (the SSA version). The cost, respectively, is 20p, 15p and 15p (plus postage). First come . . .

MALE-VOICE ANTHOLOGY

One of the most attractive choral records to come our way recently is an anthology of male-voice part-songs presented by the Baccholian Singers (HMV CSD 3783). Main items in the programme are Elgar's *Five Part-songs from the Greek* and Britten's *The Ballad of Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard*. Vaughan Williams, Howells, Bax and Delius are also represented – and Warlock, with *The Shrouding of the Duchess of Malfi* and *The Lady's Birthday*.

FAITHFUL SERVANT

The Boyd Neel Orchestra's recording of the *Capriol Suite*, which first appeared in the early days of LP records and has most recently been available on the Decca Eclipse label, has been deleted. One imagines it has been finally been put out to grass.

ADDITIONS TO PHOTO COLLECTION

Two or three issues ago in the Newsletter we published a list of the collection of photos and other illustrations we have assembled of Warlock and his circle. Since then we have added to the collection, and plan to publish a revised list in the next issue of the Newsletter. One day we hope to bring about publication of a book containing the best of these pictures. In the meantime, any member interested in obtaining copies of any of the photos should contact the editor.

STOP PRESS – the editor has for sale a copy of Gray's book on Warlock. Price £8 plus postage.

Unbewitched I

DAVID COX offers further information about the poem of 'The Bayly berith' ('The maidens came'), and another interpretation of it. He also provides a transcription of what was probably the poem's original musical setting.

Ernest Kaye's 'black mass' interpretation of 'The Bayly berith' (circulated with Newsletter No.21) is certainly thought-provoking - whether we agree with it or not. It's not plain sailing, by any means; much is open to question.

Mr. Kaye 'surmises' that Peter Warlock must have known the 'true meaning' of the poem (that is, the meaning which Mr. Kaye believes to be true) but deliberately suppressed it. Such intellectual dishonesty doesn't sound like Warlock. If he thought of the 'black mass' interpretation - and with his great interest in such matters, he probably did - it's surely more likely that he rejected it because he found it unconvincing. He seems to have come to the conclusion (similar to Aldous Huxley's in 'Texts and Pretexts') that the poem 'means nothing' but is rich in poetic imagery. A function of poetry is to suggest feelings and states of mind through images, rather than to state clearly and factually. With the medieval poem in question, allusions, overtones, undercurrents have now been lost, it seems, leaving a very wide range of possible interpretation! No doubt, in 400 years' time, interpreters will similarly have some fun with (for example) Yeats's 'sleepy country where swans fly round, coupled with golden chains ...' And perhaps a composer of the time, making a new setting of those words, will conclude that they mean nothing but are rich in poetic imagery.

It's rash to talk of the 'true meaning' of a poem full of obscurity. But what are the facts?

Almost certainly 'The maidens came' (let me call it that rather than 'The Bayly berith') is not part of a longer poem. It appears in a section of the Harleian Manuscript 7578 (in the B.M.). This section is described in the MS as 'an oblong paper-book given in 1717/18 to Mr. Wanley by James Mickleton esquire of Grays-inn, containing the treble part of a collection of old songs, etc., set to music, used within and about the bishopric of Durham in the time of Queen Elizabeth.' (Incidentally, the words of Warlock's song 'As ever I saw' are also found

here, with a tune.)

I'm attaching the transcription I've made of the tune of 'The maidens came', from what is almost neumatic notation. Presumably Warlock never saw this setting. It appears to be a 6/8 tune - but I'm not clear what the rhythm does at 'How should I love', where it has been made different, I think, to show that this line has a particular significance. The 'E's are flattened throughout, producing for us the effect of B flat major. An easy-flowing tune - nothing sinister in feeling. There's no verbal punctuation, no barring, and there's an end-of-line mark for each line except the three places where the refrain begins. (So you plunge straight into the refrain each time, it seems.) Note that the refrain is exactly the same each time: 'The lily the rose the rose I lay'. The variant was apparently editorial.

A German professor, Bernhard Fehr, in Vol.107 of the 'Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen', published in Brunswick in 1901 (not 1846: that was when this Archiv series began), quoted the words of a number of these songs, putting them together as if they were a sequence, beginning 'I love walking and oft musing'. But they are not a sequence; they're a collection of miscellaneous songs, each with its own very distinct tune. They're not even all in the same handwriting in the MS. Immediately before 'The maidens came' is a self-contained song featuring that well-known character Robin. It contains a reference to the North Bailey (a place); but there is no likely connection between this and our Bayly (a person) of the next poem. 'The maidens came' is followed by what seems to be the epilogue to a play, when one of the players turns and addresses the audience. The character of this poem is quite different; so is the character of its tune. It begins:

For to report it were now tedious;
We will therefore now sing no more
Of the games joyous.

'Games joyous' hardly suggests anything sinister. The lines that follow are a loyal salute to Queen Elizabeth, and then comes a sort of doxology.

I'm convinced therefore that the poem, 'The maidens came', is an entity in itself. Bernhard Fehr gives no reason for the 'sequence' which he made, and no clues to the poem's meaning. He does little more than point out that there are certain obscurities. I wonder whether he got a D.Litt. (or whatever) for that! Be that as it may, he misled Warlock, Huxley, and Ernest Kaye into thinking that 'The maidens came' was part of a longer poem. It may even have been more self-contained still, because the

refrain could have been added by another hand (half-comprehendingly) when the poem was set to music.

Warlock first saw the poem in the Chambers and Sidgwick collection (1907), 'Early English Lyrics' (the Notes at the end of that book make it clear that they took it from the Archiv publication). Modern spelling was used:

THE maidens came
 When I was in my mother's bower;
 I had all that I would.
 The bailey beareth the bell away;
 The lily, the rose, the rose I lay.
 The silver is white, red is the gold;
 The robes they lay in fold.
 The bailey beareth the bell away;
 The lily, the rose, the rose I lay.
 And through the glass window shines the sun.
 How should I love, and I so young?
 The bailey beareth the bell away;
 The lily, the lily, the rose I lay.

So, what is it reasonable to believe about the poem's meaning? It seems, on the face of it, to be about a very young girl for whom a marriage has been arranged. The first three lines make clear that she comes from a comfortable home, with servants (or companions). 'Bower' is 'inner room' or 'home'. 'Beareth the bell away' means 'carries off the prize'. 'Bailey' is 'bailiff', and it can also mean the area under the control of a bailiff, including an estate - so it's just possible (but unlikely) that the phrase could mean 'home is best'. Was the girl marrying the bailiff, or was he just making the arrangements? Or is this refrain a meaningless jingle?

'The lily, the rose I lay': the meaning of this phrase is crucial to Mr. Kaye's interpretation. He discovered that lilies and roses are laid on the altar at black mass. Therefore ... But they are also laid on altars at, for example, the annual Ceremony of the Lilies and the Roses (21 May) in the Tower of London and at Windsor, in loving memory of King Henry VI, who founded King's College, Cambridge, and Eton College, around 1440 - and I doubt whether there's a black mass connection there. Lily and rose, flowers of Venus, representing various forms of beauty, innocence, love, passion, and so on, have been brought together with monotonous regularity as a poetic image from medieval times to the present. The medieval poem beginning 'Maiden on the moor lay' has the lines 'What was her bower? / The red rose and the lily flower'. I find, also, that the refrain of 'The maidens came' brings to mind another medieval poem:

All night by the rose, rose,
 All night by the rose I lay;
 I dared not steal the rose-tree,
 But I bore the flower away.

'To bear the bell away' could of course mean the same as 'to bear the flower away' (to take her virginity). Droit de seigneur is very unlikely, because the girl in 'The maidens came' is obviously not the daughter of a vassal. If she were going to be violated at a black mass, the girl would hardly be saying 'How should I love, and I so young?' This is surely the expression of doubts about a personal relationship - doubts as to whether she is yet ready for marriage and consummation.

'The silver is white, red is the gold'. White lily and red rose remind her either of her own wealth (money or ornaments) or the wealth she will acquire through marriage. 'The robes they lay in fold'. 'In fold' is a regular medieval term meaning 'pleated': perhaps they are the costly, pleated robes put out ready for her marriage ceremony.

'Through the glass window shines the sun'. This also suggests wealth. Glazed windows did not become general until after the 17th century (previously parchment and various kinds of skin were used); only well-to-do homes would have had glass. But in medieval poetry we often find secular and sacred images becoming transposed. The sun shining through glass was a symbol of immaculate conception - the rays passing through without breaking the glass. This undercurrent may have been in the poet's mind. Many other things may have been in his mind, too, including black mass. But, personally, I find a 'marriage' interpretation of some sort the most reasonable alternative to believing that the poem means nothing.

THE MAIDENS CAME


See David Cox's article, 'Unbewitched!'

(A piacere) (Moderato)

The musical score is written on six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 4/4 time signature. The second staff changes to a 6/8 time signature. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score includes various musical notations such as bar lines, repeat signs, and dynamic markings like 'rit.'. The lyrics are: 'The maidens came when I was in my mother's bower, I had all that I would. The bai-ley berith the bell a-way; The li-ly, the rose, the rose I lay. The silver is white, red is the gold; The robes they lay in fold. The bai-ley berith the bell a-way; The li-ly, the rose, the rose I lay. And through the glass win-dow shines the sun. How should I love, and I so young? The bai-ley berith the bell a-way; The li-ly, the rose, the rose I lay; The bai-ley berith the bell a-way.'

From a collection of old songs, used within and about the bishopric of Durham in the time of Queen Elizabeth. Harleian Manuscript 7578.

'Edited' by D.C. (Note-values realised, bar-lines added, spelling changed.) In the original, 'berith' (beareth) is given one note only, and would have been pronounced as one syllable.

The song doesn't need an accompaniment. Some contrast in the simple, chant-like effect can be obtained by singing the refrain more lightly than the other lines. And 'How should I love' can be projected in a special way ().

April 1978

LETTER TO THE EDITOR 'PW SOCIETY NEWSLETTER'

WARLOCK, VOWLES and WALSINGHAM

Ernest Kaye's mention of Jane Vowles (Witches and Warlock) and a reference in Peter Warlock's letter to Mr G.A. Thewlis (Fred Tomlinson's Notes) to the 16th century tune Walsingham raises interesting connections with the Leicester composer and teacher, Dr Benjamin Burrows (1891 - 1966)

I have little doubt that Jane's query to PW was a result of her studying his setting of The bailey beareth the bell away in conjunction with one that Ben Burrows had written for her. In 1927 she became a student of theory with BB. Very soon their relationship became very close and the composer wrote a series of 93 songs for her. She was a fine soprano who later studied at the RCM and became an opera singer. The two of them gave recitals including many contemporary songs, often by BB and some by Warlock for whom BB had a certain admiration. In the case of The bailey, he did, however, feel that PW did not sufficiently catch the radiance of the sun "through the glass window" and in his own version expands the vocal range to incorporate a high A for this radiant moment. In one of a series of notes on his songs which BB wrote to Jane Vowles there is this reference to Warlock :

"On reviewing the song (i.e. By the hearthstone to a poem by Sir Henry Newbolt) I find I am indebted to Peter Warlock for an idea - "Burning in the embers etc." - something about golden hair in The Curlew (But as usual, mine is the better use for it is also brainy - my series of chords reharmonises the tune and therefore has a real justification. Peter Warlock's is a nice bit in a patchy whole.)"

It should be said that, despite the seeming conceit, BB was a most modest and gentle man and would have said this kind of thing only in private to friends, though there is no doubt that, brilliant theorist that he was, this was a very considered opinion. There is some evidence that he corresponded on the subject of song composition with Warlock but I can find no trace of the letters from either party. I understand from the source from whom I had this information that their views were not wholly in agreement. I should be glad to hear whether any of your readers knows of this correspondence. Thames Publishing will shortly be issuing Six Songs by Benjamin Burrows, one of which is his setting of My ghostly father so readers may make their own comparisons between the two styles.

PW's idea that Walsingham was an appropriate tune for variations had occurred to Burrows too. Augener, in 1925, published a set of five Fancies for piano by BB. The fourth of these uses Walsingham and the fifth Coranto Hooper as the basis of varied treatment. The following year he attempted more variations on Walsingham, but they remain in MS.

B.B. Daubney

Dept. of Expressive Arts (Music) Leicester Polytechnic

FLECKER and DELIUS

the making of 'Hassan'

Dawn Redwood

Hassan was hailed 'the greatest poetic play since *The Tempest*'. When it was produced in 1923, it was claimed to be 'a production all London will flock to see'. And London did flock, to 281 performances.

Hassan did more to bring the name of Delius before the British public than any other composition, yet it was the last he wrote in his own hand. Flecker had been even more unfortunate, dying in his 31st year, eight years before it was produced.

The music of Delius today seems inseparable from *Hassan*, yet Dawn Redwood, basing her research on previously unpublished letters, shows that he was only one of nine composers considered.

She recounts in detail the revisions to both words and music before this important play reached the stage, compares the lives and outlook of the two men, and analyses the plot. There are 16 pages of illustrations, reviews of the first productions in Germany and England, and a note on the music for future producers.

ISBN 0 905 210 06 9

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Publication June 1978

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- a critical study

Ian Copley

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PUBLICATIONS SCHEME

This is important!

One of the main benefits of a society such as ours is that it can, by enthusiasm and concerted action, bring about specialist publications that would not be a proposition for the general commercial publisher.

The present subscription just about covers the cost of producing and posting the newsletter twice a year. But the newsletter's scope is limited, and we all desire more ambitious realisations of our interest in Warlock and his circle.

Raising the subscription is one way of financing extra ventures. But a better way, we feel, is by a special subscription offer and this is what we propose to make.

For it to succeed we must have the support of virtually all the members, so we are asking you to consider this offer carefully and reply quickly.

If sufficient support is forthcoming we can commit the necessary capital in the knowledge that the scheme is commercially sound and that over a year (at approximately 2-month intervals) members will receive five highly interesting publications that are unlikely to become available otherwise. With today's high production costs it is ever more necessary to plan editions against known demand. The subscription idea will facilitate this.

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**for details of publications — see over.*

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I wish to be included in the subscription scheme and agree to pay the full sum (approximately £10) on receipt of the first issue in February 1978.

1. *Serenade to Frederick Delius.*

Members attending the Purcell Room concert on December 18 will remember a piano-duet arrangement of *Serenade* played by Jennifer Partridge and Fred Tomlinson, who arranged it for the occasion. By arrangement with OUP, Thames Publishing are issuing this with a special preface by Fred Tomlinson. This is very pleasant to play and not too difficult.

2. *Warlock and van Dieren, with A van Dieren Catalogue.*

Written and compiled by Fred Tomlinson, this was planned as a companion to *Warlock and Delius*, but the almost total lack of published information on van Dieren has resulted in a much larger book. After a study of the PH/BvD relationship there is a complete catalogue of BvD's compositions, transcriptions and books, with a bibliography of articles, facsimiles of letters and music by both writers, photographs etc.

3. *Folk-Song Preludes.*

Originally published by Augener in 1923, these have long been out of print. As this is Warlock's only serious work for pianoforte solo we feel it is important that it should be available, and have obtained permission for Thames to reprint it. Again, there will be a specially-written preface, and it is hoped to incorporate the identification of the hitherto untraced melodies (see COMPETITION elsewhere).

4. *Warlock and Blunt.*

It is not generally realised how greatly Bruce Blunt influenced Philip Heseltine in his last few years, and a study of the relationship will be most useful. John Bishop will write on Blunt as poet and as man, and will select a number of poems, some previously unpublished. There will also be several illustrations - facsimiles, photographs and sketches.

5. *Transcriptions.*

A number of unpublished transcriptions survive in PH's hand, among them works of Cornysh, Dunstable, Henry VIII, Lawes, Weekes, Whythorne and several mystery items (see COMPETITION elsewhere). These will be reproduced in facsimile in a volume of approximately 30 pages.