

Peter Warlock Society

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NEWSLETTER NO 40

FEBRUARY 1988

ISSN 0266-366X

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A WARLOCK OBSESSION

It's now more than twenty years since our Founder, PATRICK MILLS, wrote in the Newsletter about 'how it all began'. Since then, a lot of water has flowed under the Eynsford bridge, and there are many new members. With this in mind, we asked him to write again something about the Society's origins.

When I was seven years old, I listened in Children's Hour to a serial which concerned the life and times of Mary, Queen of Scots. At that time of life, every story told to me had had a happy ending, and so I was ill prepared for her grisly demise. The music used for this production was selections from *Capriol*, mostly the first two movements. I listened with tears streaming down my face to the last melancholy instalment, which concluded with the Pavane. I had never heard music like that before, which for me had a haunting and deeply ominous quality, relieved only by the brief sunshine of the penultimate movement. Even today, it is possible to feel irritated at hearing *Capriol* described as 'a sweet confection of French dance arrangements'. It seems much more than that to me.

No more Warlock crossed my path until five years later when my loving parents entertained the illusion that my singing voice was worthy enough to be heard publicly in a competitive music festival. The set piece was *The Countryman*, which I thought to be a very fine song - with the little counter-melody given to the piano towards the end of the second verse.

A few years later I discovered, in the local public library, Cecil Gray's book, which, to put it mildly, enthralled me. Yes, I know we've learnt to look down our nose at its lamentable standards of accuracy, but the point of Gray's memoir was its ability to inspire and enthuse. Warlock had not had his due. Something must be done. But what? One could hardly walk down the street with sandwich

boards. Instead, I bought a gramophone record of Alexander Young singing *The Curlew* and twelve other songs, the titles of which I had only seen listed at the end of Gray's book. Alexander Young's (and a little later, Gordon Honey's and Wilfred Brown's) interpretations have always remained particular favourites of mine, not least because of their dramatic involvement and commitment. Young's performances of *Away to Twiver*, *The Lover's Maze*, and, on the darker side, *The Fox*, are rarely equalled.

In the Royal Air Force, where I spent the next three years, I seized the opportunity in 1959 of making a pilgrimage to Eynsford, where the occupant of the house in which Warlock had lived appeared to know what she was talking about. She told me of his particularly loud taste in wallpaper, and that when she was a child she had joined in with the village boys in attaching a long piece of cord to J. C.'s door-knocker. (Warlock was known as J.C. [Jesus Christ] because of his beard.) The cord was pulled, the knocker rapped, and an enraged Warlock, uttering loud imprecations, would chase them down the village street. There were people around the area who remembered him quite well; and so I wrote to the BBC suggesting that a programme might be made on the subject. The BBC remained unpersuaded, and now, of course, it's too late.

In 1961, I left the Air Force and got a job with the British Catalogue of Music, eventually becoming its editor. It was also at this time that I learnt of various composer societies such as the Hugo Wolf Society, etc. and I had no doubt that one day a Peter Warlock Society would be established, and resolved to read *The Musical Times* regularly so that I could join it immediately. I also studied all of Warlock's musical output until my fervour made my friends avoid mentioning him, so heavy were the hooves of my hobby horse. During another bout with Cecil Gray's book, my eye rested on a reference to Warlock's limericks, which were Rabelaisian lampoons at the expense of various critics and composers of his times. I wrote to *The Musical Times* Letters column suggesting that if the limericks were still extant, it might be possible to publish them. Gerald Cockshott wrote a letter saying that *The Musical Times* might be a little reluctant to publish the limericks since such a course of action would expose them to possible legal consequences. However, if I cared to call at his home, he would be very pleased to read them out to me.

I accepted the invitation with alacrity, and took the train to Henfield the following weekend, where Gerald, clutching a copy of the *Merry-go-down* book so that I should recognise him, was waiting on the station platform. It was a short walk to his house, called Sunnyside ('Not Suicide, Mr Mills'), where he sat me down and declaimed Warlock's canon of limericks. I was spellbound. He reached the last one:

That scandalous pair Foss and Goss *
Once attempted to put it across
A young girl in a train;
But their efforts were vain -
So Foss tossed Goss off to King's Cross.

Silence fell.

'Why have you come?' asked Gerald Cockshott. 'Have you come all the way from London to hear this filth?'

He was scrutinising me, his spectacles glittering dangerously. I felt entirely unnerved.

'No', I spluttered, lying in my teeth.

'Then what is your reason?' he demanded sternly. I later learnt that his inquisitorial style had been honed as a headmaster at a Henfield school. Lost for words, I groped at the nearest respectable lifeline.

'I was thinking,' I said earnestly, 'of attempting to establish a Peter Warlock Society.'

'An excellent suggestion!' said he; and without more ado he rattled off names and addresses like a machine-gun.

And so it was that I found myself writing to the most likely people to be interested. But it seemed that the Most Likely People were not as interested as Gerald supposed. Only half-a-dozen had replied, and so --

'Only half-a-dozen? Half-a-dozen!' Gerald exclaimed. 'Someone tried to start a Stanford Society and nobody replied at all! Now then, some more names...'

And so I continued to write, and write, and write. A letter of mine on the matter appeared in *The Gramophone*, where I was subsequently mauled by Trevor Harvey, who said he was decidedly bored with people preoccupied with what he termed minor talents. Why couldn't such people do something for Elgar? My indignant retort produced further free publicity - which I like to think was Mr Harvey's idea all along. He *must* have known that an Elgar Society already existed...

On a chilly spring Saturday in 1963, a collection of prospective Peter Warlock Society members made their way to Gerald Gover's house in Arkwright Road, Hampstead, and there the Society was formed, with Gerald Cockshott as the chairman.

The Society, in its inception, owed a very great deal to Gerald, and it was his know-how and encouragement which kept the idea alive. Twenty years ago, Nigel Heseltine told me that Walter Legge and he had discussed the possibility of a Peter Warlock Society in 1938, but the war had intervened. That Peter Warlock should be remembered and his music promoted struck me then, as now, as an inescapable moral imperative, and no words of mine can thank sufficiently those members, past and present, that made it possible.

I now function as a research assistant in the Music Library which is part of the British Library, and if anyone should step in my direction in the cause of Warlock research, you may be sure that I shall do all I can to make such a person particularly welcome.

Patrick Mills

* Hubert Foss (1899-1953), besides being a writer on music, was music editor for the OUP, one of Warlock's main publishers. John Goss (1894-1953) was a baritone singer, closely associated with Warlock and dedicatee of some of his songs.

THE FIRST RECORDING OF THE FULL-ORCHESTRAL VERSION OF 'CAPRIOL'

A review of Lyrita SRCS 120 by ERIC WETHERELL

Warlock: An Old Song (Boult) (i)
Serenade for Strings (Braithwaite) (ii)
Capriol Suite for full orchestra (Braithwaite) (iii)

(i) LPO (ii) LPO (iii) LSO *

Sir Adrian's performance appears to belong to a more spacious era when players were marginally less pressed for time, while Nicholas Braithwaite's contributions contain unpardonable and untypical signs of haste. Tempi are well chosen, but the performances cannot survive players who clearly have not had time to assimilate unfamiliar music.

Balance in the 'Serenade' fails to catch the special Delius-type magic of divisi cellos and independent double-bass lines, and also fails to even out the semiquaver decorations in recapitulation and coda.

This is the first recording of the 'Capriol' Suite in its version for full orchestra. It starts well, though a faltering initial G minor chord unsettles the Pavane. Ill-fitting counterpoints in *Pieds-en-l'air* again betray indecent haste, and someone should surely have spotted the rumble 6/7 bars from the end. A bass-player who jumped a line? If it's traffic, it's a beautifully in-tune D.

Warlock must take most of the blame for the final section of *Mattachins*. A combination of thin scoring and octave transpositions for the woodwind rob these inventive chords of the impact that is such a stirring feature of the string and piano-duet versions.

Overall, this is an opportunity sadly missed.

* The record also contains the little-known 'Suite de Ballet' by Holst (conducted by Braithwaite).

(Eric Wetherell, conductor, instrumentalist, is a member of the PWS Committee.)

OTHER RECORDS (Warlock)

James Griffett's recording of *The Curlew*, with the Haffner String Quartet, Mary Murdoch (cor anglais), Mary Ryan (flute), is now on CD: Pearl SHE CD 9510. The record also contains 12 songs for solo voice and instruments. (Pavilion Records) ++

Ian Partridge's recording of *The Curlew* was reissued on 18 January on HMV Greensleeve label, ED 769 1701, and cassette ED 769 1704. With the Music Group of London. (With Vaughan Williams's *On Wenlock Edge*.) A CD, in the Studio series, will follow in May.

Benjamin Luxon will make a Warlock record, CD and cassette, in April for Chandos.

++ Brian Collins writes: "I bought my copy in early December and wrote to Pavilion Records (Sparrows Green, Wadhurst, E. Sussex) about the possibility of further PW re-releases. I am informed that it is 'just possible that the earlier SHE 504 may appear on CD - and even the later SHE 523'. So all members should write to them - to encourage them to augment what is a very poor catalogue as far as Warlock is concerned."

PUBLICATIONS

John Bishop writes:

All copies ordered by members of the Collected Edition, Volume 4, have been despatched; but I would be happy to service any further orders. The address remains the same as ever: 14 Barlby Road, London W10 6AR.

Volume 5 is at proof stage, but I do not expect publication before the summer. Full details will be in the next Newsletter.

Attached to this Newsletter is a prospectus for the planned LIFE IN PICTURES. It will help greatly if you would respond to this swiftly. Publication cannot be before the autumn 1988, but an early show of support will encourage us all !

Also enclosed with this issue is a list of recent Thames sheet-music publications, which may interest some members. Orders should go through Novello, please.

Thames books on music are ordered through the 14 Barlby Road address. Our new catalogue will be available shortly. Please let me know if you'd like a copy.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED...

... to the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, which, as we've said before, is not just a meeting but also a festive occasion. Do try to come. As in 1982, 1984 and 1986, we shall be holding it in David Cox's house, not far from Eynsford, on Saturday, 28 May, and the schedule of events will be: lunch at The Five Bells, Eynsford, at around 1 pm, followed by a Committee meeting at 2. After that, we proceed to Bell Cottage, Magpie Bottom, Shoreham, for the Annual General Meeting at 3. Then refreshments will be laid on (no extra charge!). If the weather is kind, use could be made of the solar-heated swimming pool. For those who choose to remain after all that, there will be musical entertainment of various sorts - including bring-along and sing-along some Warlock - and we shall have some recordings for people to hear. There will also be the premiere of a song specially written by Anthony Ingle - a setting of Warlock's poem *The Nautical Nit*, a poem which we included in the Newsletter No 34 (January 1985) from a Warlock MS.

There are trains from Victoria to Eynsford on a Saturday at 56 minutes past each hour (a 50-minute journey). So 11.56 would be a good one.

No further notice will be sent, so note the date now in your diary, and if you are coming, please fill in and return the form below - so that we know how many to cater for at Magpie Bottom.

Eynsford is on the A225, one mile from the A20. For Magpie Bottom, you turn into Bower Lane at the Eynsford War Memorial, carry on for about 3¼ miles till you come to crossroads. Then turn right, and almost immediately right again (by a farmhouse). You are now in Magpie Bottom, and Bell Cottage is about half-a-mile down on the right - a drive entrance amid pine-trees (or what's left of them after the hurricane!)

To Malcolm Rudland, 17 Gledhow Gardens, London SW5 0AY (01-373 9292)
I shall be coming to the AGM on 28 May. I have a car/ I have no car, and will need transport from Eynsford to Magpie Bottom. (Delete as necessary.)

NAME Number of persons with me
MY ADDRESS PHONE

HOW I FIRST CAME ACROSS PETER WARLOCK'S MUSIC

This time we have an unsolicited contribution to the series by a non-member of the Society, JONATHAN STEIN, who is a student from Reading

Dear Mr Cox,

Your readers may be interested to learn of the coincidental circumstances surrounding the making of a new 'Warlockian'. I am a pianist studying at the Guildhall School of Music and, several weeks ago, during a lunch-time excursion to the Barbican Library, I caught sight of your Society's newsletter. My heart jumped, for this discovery followed a series of coincidences surrounding the enigmatic P.H.

Months ago, during preparation for an Associated Board exam, I stumbled across Warlock's 'Folksong Prelude No 2' in a selection of romantic music. From first playing, the little piece captivated me with its bizarre fusion of folk-like simplicity and harmonic complexity. My curiosity aroused, I conducted some preliminary research into the composer, discovering only that Warlock had led a bohemian existence and finally taken his own life - the two biographical details most likely to engage the interests of a young musician/writer!

More recently, in the Guildhall's library, I overturned a record that had been left beside the turntables. It was a collection of Warlock's songs! Needless to say, my assignment (to listen to and analyse several Haydn quartets) got shelved, and I spent a pleasant lunch-hour revelling in rumbustious 'Elizabethanism'.

Then again, one day in college, I overheard two singers discussing Warlock's *Sleep*. I resolved to go and properly research this enigmatic figure who had been haunting me in such mysterious ways. On my way to the Grove's in the reference section of the Barbican Library, a certain newsletter jumped out at me from the magazine rack...

I wonder whether other musicians have taken unusual routes to this unusual man. All I can do now, apart from playing and listening to this master's music, is wonder - What will happen next?

Yours in brotherhood,

Jonathan Stein

We hope the next moves will be to join the Peter Warlock Society, and come to the AGM on 28 May (see p. 5). Membership for students is £4 a year. -Ed.

WARLOCK IN WALES

by IAN PARROTT

Looking back at the life of this remarkable musician, I am struck by the strange absence of detailed reference to Wales by Cecil Gray and indeed by the many others who have written about him. His mother, originally from Knighton in Radnorshire, returned from London to the neighbouring county of Montgomeryshire after the death of his father in 1896.

The nearest village which can be seen on the map today is Abermule, but the house called Cefn Bryntalch, where they lived, when his mother remarried, is merely a couple of miles from the smaller but more ancient village of Llandyssil. This place, spelt Llandissel, appears on Saxton's map of 'Montgomeri' of 1578, produced before the Armada, so it is of considerable antiquity. It was with this village that Peter Warlock's stepfather's family were associated; and it was on the organ (built by Conacher & Co of Huddersfield) of the parish church here that the composer sometimes played.

There are many references here to the Buckley Jones family who had strong military connections, the rank of general being reached, and it is significant and tragic that during the first World War, when some of them were laying down their lives, Peter Warlock was associating himself with the pacifist views of D.H.Lawrence and Aldous Huxley. Surely the violent split in his personality had already been goaded into existence. *Talch* means fragment; *bryn* means hill; and *cefn* means ridge. Further up this 'part of a hill' is a farm appropriately named. The house where Mr and Mrs E.Buckley Jones lived is therefore on the 'ridge of part of a hill'. It is in fact at the end of the ridge; the ground begins almost immediately to fall away from the back of this substantial building, which dates from 1869. The view, especially in autumn colours, was beautiful in all directions.

Warlock was aged 18 when we have the first hint from Cecil Gray's biography that he was living in the county, since he asked Delius to 'come over and see us in Wales next August or September. I long to roam the wild hills with you, who understand them, who are in sympathy with them, and to whom they are not merely "sights pleasing to the eye".' Delius replied in March 1912, 'I should love to wander about the Welsh hills with you and hope to come to see you next September', but there is no evidence that he ever did.

In the meantime the young man was coached 'by more than one parson-tutor' for entry to Christ Church, Oxford, but he wrote from Cefn Bryntalch to Colin Taylor in 1914 that he had been saturating himself with Delius' music which is 'always with me and seems, by its continual presence, to intensify the beauty of everything else for me'. 'Everything else' was an unhurried rural community near the remote upper reaches of the Severn, as well as the more sophisticated world of Oxford and - at a later stage - places in or near London and the home



Cefn Bryntalch

counties. He made his mother's and stepfather's house sufficiently his home for him to use that address in 1916 when he styled himself the secretary of a short-lived organization to promote the books of D.H. Lawrence (although he was at that time living in Cornwall).

He was also to shake off the 'saturating' influence of Delius and forge a personal style which reached a peak in these lovely surroundings. He contemplated settling in Cornwall in 1917 but went instead for a full year to Ireland. The Celtic languages fascinated him (he became a not inconsiderable scholar in them), and after learning Cornish he produced the *Cornish Christmas Carol* with a text in this extinct language.

'I have lately made a great many experiments with Celtic tunes', he wrote to Delius in the summer of 1918, 'without approaching a solution of the problem of their adequate - I had almost said legitimate - treatment'. They seemed somehow too 'proud' and complete for using as 'themes'. 'A notated Irish tune', he goes on, 'bears much the same relation to Irish music as a phonetician's graph of the rise and fall of a voice bears to a rich dialect speech'.

In 1921 Warlock met Bartók in Budapest and found him a most lovable personality. In March of the following year Bartók was persuaded by the enterprising Walford Davies, then professor of music in the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, to visit that seat of learning. On March 14 he had joined Jelly d'Aranyi in the first performance of his First Violin Sonata in London. The following day must have been spent on the Great Western Railway, passing through Abermule, but it is unlikely that he would have had time to break his journey. He played in one of the College concerts the next day two groups of his own piano compositions. Walford Davies had spoken at some length beforehand, but was heard afterwards to whisper, 'Baffling, isn't it?'. After this notable visit to West Wales the great Hungarian composer was able to fit in a visit to Peter Warlock's home only 50 miles from Aberystwyth. The influence of Bartók on the song-cycle *The Curlew*, which was completed at this time, is quite pronounced. Bartók was much in Warlock's mind. He wrote on 'Modern Hungarian Composers' for *The Musical Times* of March 1922, and the methods of composition he employed in *The Curlew*, particularly in interval relationships, are more like Bartók's than those of Delius. Indeed this aspect of Warlock's music has not been fully appreciated.

Yeats, in the poems which Warlock set, was undoubtedly thinking of the Irish curlew. The composer on the other hand must frequently have heard flocks of Welsh curlews flying overhead with their scooping rising sixths and sevenths. Their cry is emphasized by the use of cor anglais and flute, the resultant colour being very true to what he must have heard on the 'ridge of the hill'. 'I feel ever so much better here than in the city', he said in 1922, 'and I have never been able to work so wholeheartedly before' - but congenial companionship, he told Cecil Gray, was lacking. He lived almost continuously in this remote part of Montgomeryshire from 1921 to 1923, frequently returning later, and wrote more in this period than at any other time of his life. Through the spacious drawingroom he would go, stepping out on to the broad lawn and right through a shrubbery until he reached a secluded arbour. Here he listened to nature, brooded and composed. Such songs as *In an Arbour Green* and even the later *Elore Lo* (1928) must have formed themselves at this period of prolific creativity.

Sometimes he would shut himself up in the drawingroom in the mornings, working on an old Broadwood. His son, Nigel Heseltine, who was six in 1922, remembers the strict instructions not to go in! This was the period of the creation of many cheerful songs and also such masterpieces as *Lillygay*, *Sleep* and *Tyrley Tyrllow*.

Although only five miles away on the other side of the river, he was obviously so unorthodox as to be *persona non grata* at Gregynog Hall, where musical services and occasional concerts took place in the twenties under the patronage of Gwendoline and Margaret Davies. These ladies devoted their great wealth towards artistic beauty: they became owners of a magnificent collection of paintings and a unique Press; later they instituted a fine series of Festivals of Music and Poetry. Although Peter Warlock, the man, had no place in their

world, his genius was recognized soon after his death at the end of 1930 when William R. Allen, the choirmaster (under the direction of Walford Davies) sang *The Fox*, and got the choir to perform *The Spring of the Year* early in 1932. This was followed up the next year by including *My Own Country* and *Sleep* at Gregynog.

Another series of concerts had been taking place since 1921; the Montgomeryshire County Festivals were held each year in a pavilion at Newtown five miles to the West; and in the year of Warlock's death his stepfather, a JP, joined the Music Committee.

Parry Jones, from South Wales, who was one of the first singers to perform *The Fox*, took part in the 1929 Montgomeryshire Festival under Boult, the main work for the 21 assembled choirs, including one from Abermule, being Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* - not the sort of work to appeal to Peter Warlock. By 1933 this festival paid its tribute, when Frank Phillips gave *Jillian of Berry*, *As ever I saw* and *Yarmouth Fair*, the accompanist being Charles Clements of Aberystwyth.

Two months before his own death last December, Parry Jones gave me the following opinion on Peter Warlock: 'He was a genius, and I believe that at last the comfortable world of music is beginning to realize it'.

(This article appeared in 'The Musical Times', October 1964, and is reproduced by kind permission of author and publishers.)

REINSTATED! REINSTATED!

YOU ARE INVITED TO A WELSH WARLOCK WEEK-END : 23/24 JULY

This trip, planned for last September, unfortunately had to be cancelled - or rather, postponed. Now it is being reinstated, and we hope that the good response we had last time will be repeated.

Our plan is to visit Didbrook Vicarage (near Cheltenham), Hay-on-Wye, Tintern Abbey, Cefn Bryntalch, and have an over-night stay at Prof Ian Parrott's home in Aberystwyth. Ian Parrott has kindly agreed to act as host again for Saturday night. He has some spare rooms in his house, and has offered to help with extra accommodation required. Sleeping bags may be useful. Or accommodation could be in local bed-and-breakfast houses, or possibly University lodgings. A paddock also is available if you wish to bring a tent... We can discuss this further with you when we know how many are coming.

We shall hire a drive-it-yourself coach. We already have a driver (non-drinking). It would work out at £13.60 each for a 15-seater, or £11.65 each for a 12-seater.

If you are interested, please fill in the slip below and return it as soon as possible. We must know by 24 June at the very latest.

I shall be coming to the Welsh Warlock Week-end, 23/24 July.
 I shall not be bringing anybody else with me.
 I shall be bringing spouse/friend/friends. [How many? Male/female.].....

I can bring sleeping-bag/tent if required Please fill in and delete as appropriate.

NAME (in capitals, please)

ADDRESS

.....TELEPHONE

Please return this slip to Malcolm Rudland (address on p.1 of this Newsletter) as soon as possible, and definitely not after June 24.

NOT ALL OF IT WAS SET BY WARLOCK
(a series)

IN all this world nis a meriar life
Than is a yong man withouten a wife;
For he may liven withoughten strife,
In every place where so he go.

Warlock's song *The Bachelor*,
dedicated to Philip Wilson, is
included in Volume 3 of the PWS
Collected Edition. The anonymous
poem is from the later 15th century.

In every place he is loved over all,
Among maidens grete and small,
In dauncing, in piping, and renning at the ball,
In every place where so he go.

They lat light be husbondmen,
Whan they at the ballè renne;
They cast her lovè to yong men,
In every place where so he go.

nis, is not (line 1)
her, their (line 11)

Than sey maidens 'Farewell, Jacke!
Thy love is pressed all in thy pake;
Thou berest thy love behind thy back,'
In every place where so he go.

TAKE O TAKE THAT BLOODY STANZA AWAY

In the last Newsletter we gave John Fletcher's version of the poem *Take O take those lips away*, with its inferior second stanza - from his play *The Bloody Brother*. Warlock must have known this version (there's a quotation from the same play on p.35 of *The English Ayre*) but he understandably refrained from setting the second stanza.

An interesting aspect of the poem - with its one-stanza settings by many composers - is that in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* the words are clearly addressed to a man; whereas in Fletcher's *The Bloody Brother* they are palpably addressed to a woman. Decide, then, on your playwright - and the one-stanza settings can be appropriately performed by singers of either sex.

But does it matter? We have had, absurdly, *The bayly berith* recorded by a man. And Fauré's song-cycle *La Bonne Chanson* - settings of tender love-poems by Verlaine addressed to his very young fiancée - is often sung by a woman (and was even premiere'd by one). A well-known counter-tenor not long ago included Schumann's *Frauenliebe und -leben* song-cycle in one of his Wigmore Hall recitals. Many other such examples could be given. In the world of song, the unisex flourishes.



THE ENGLISH SONG AWARD

The latest Bulletin of the English Song Award includes an article on Warlock by Fred Tomlinson; and this competition for singers is of particular interest to members of the PWS this year because one of the special prizes is for the best performance of any song by Peter Warlock. The prize is £100 given by the Peter Warlock Society, plus two £50 vouchers contributed by the OUP and Boosey and Hawkes for music. We learn also that Ruddles Brewery is pleased to be associated with the Warlock Prize... So the final content and value of the prize is not yet fixed.

As part of the Brighton Festival, the theme this year is "Voyage and Vision", linked to the Australian Bicentennial. That theme is wide enough to admit practically anything, if one is thinking in terms of songs. Each candidate is asked to submit a 20-minute recital programme which may, in fact, be on any theme or no specific theme at all.

The first prize is £2,000 and a Wigmore Hall recital; second prize £1,500; third £1,000; and £100 to each remaining semi-finalist.

Preliminary auditions 16-18 May. Semi-Finals 19 May. Finals 20 May.

Entry forms from Rachel Cook, 44 New Road, Bryanston, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 0DR (Tel. 0258 55127). Closing date 28 March. Age limits: over 20 and under 40 on May 1. The entry fee is £20.

ROISTERDOISTERING

One of our members was surprised to find that the page of Warlock's manuscript of *Roister Doister*, reproduced on p.10 of Volume 4 of the Society's Collected Edition, shows several significant differences in notes and other details when compared to the printed version in the same volume. He wondered why - and what our editorial policy was in such a case.

We reproduced the whole of Warlock's MS of this song in Newsletter No 36 (February 1986). Checking it against the printed version, we find no less than twenty differences - in notes, in chords, in markings - including some characteristic Warlock touches which have been lost. The 'mf subito' (p.17, l.3) must surely start half-a-bar earlier, as in the MS. And is the last chord of all meant to be truly staccato? - the MS has no Ped. mark.

The version of the song in the Collected Edition is taken directly from the OUP edition, and the proofs (Fred Tomlinson tells us) were corrected by Warlock himself. Did he check them carefully? Did somebody at OUP do a bit of crafty revising? Probably we shall never know. But the MS version seems a little more special and characteristic than the one made public.



MARIE RAMBERT

presents

By arrangement with Sir NIGEL PLAYFAIR

for

A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE

on Tuesday, February 25th, at 3 p.m.

The Marie Rambert Dancers

in

A Programme of Ballets

including

"CAPRIOL SUITE"

to music by PETER WARLOCK
with choreography by FREDERICK ASHTON

"OUR LADY'S JUGGLER"

to music by RESPIGHI
with choreography by SUSAN SALAMAN

"LEDA AND THE SWAN"

to music by GLUCK
with choreography by FREDERICK ASHTON

Orchestra under the direction of NORMAN FRANKLIN

The Cast includes:

PEARL ARGYLE	FREDERICK ASHTON
LOUISE BARTON	WILLIAM CHAPPELL
PRUDENCE HYTHE	ROBERT STUART
DIANA GOULD	HAROLD TURNER

Stage Manager - - - - - PHILIP WHITCOMB

IV.

Capriol Suite

Music by PETER WARLOCK. Choreography by FREDERICK ASHTON.

- (1) BASSE-DANSE PEARL ARGYLE, PRUDENCE HYTHE, WILLIAM CHAPPELL, ROBERT STUART
- (2) PAVANE DIANA GOULD, FREDERICK ASHTON, HAROLD TURNER
- (3) TORDION LOUISE BARTON, HAROLD TURNER
- (4) MATTACHINS FREDERICK ASHTON, WILLIAM CHAPPELL, ROBERT STUART, HAROLD TURNER
- (5) PIEDS-EN-L'AIR PEARL ARGYLE, DIANA GOULD, FREDERICK ASHTON, WILLIAM CHAPPELL
- (6) BRANSLES ENSEMBLE

The Capriol Suite of Peter Warlock contains themes from old French dances—Basse-danse, Pavane, Bransles, Tordion, Pieds-en-l'air—and these are amusingly modernised in Frederick Ashton's choreography. His ballet of "Leda and the Swan," on the other hand, is purely Botticellian in its spirit and line. "Our Lady's Juggler" is the lovely legend of Barnaby, who in holy simplicity, lays his only talent at the Blessed Virgin's feet.

Piano quintette under the direction of NORMAN FRANKLIN.
Piano duet, KATHERINE HOWARTH and NORMAN FRANKLIN.
Costumes for the "Capriol Suite" designed by WILLIAM CHAPPELL.
Frederick Ashton's costume in "Leda" designed and made by BRUCE WINSTON.
Costumes for "Our Lady's Juggler" designed by SUSAN SALAMAN.
Scenery designed and executed by MICHAEL SALAMAN.
Costumes for "Mars and Venus" designed by HERBERT NORRIS.

Stage Manager JOHN MACNAIR

AFTERNOON TEA—A Special Service of Tea is served this Afternoon in all the Saloons and in the Auditorium.

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Victoria and Albert Museum



Diana Gould, Frederick Ashton and William Chappell in the Pavane



Frederick Ashton as he appeared in Capriol Suite

THE CAPRIOL BALLET

by MALCOLM RUDLAND

Three performances of Sir Frederick Ashton's 'Capriol' by the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet on 27, 28, and 29 October last year, at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, London, have prompted some research into its history.

As is well known, Warlock's 'Capriol' Suite is based on dance tunes set out in Thoinot Arbeau's *Orchésographie* (writing dancing) of 1588, a book which takes the form of a dialogue about dance, between Arbeau and a young man called Capriol, outlining its history and describing the different types of contemporary dance and their music. Sir Frederick Ashton's ballet originated in a suggestion from Constant Lambert at a time when Ashton was proposing to Marie Rambert that she should present her pupils (Ashton included) in a public matinee. In the end, it was Nigel Playfair who arranged for them to use the little Lyric Theatre, Hammer-smith, and the first performance took place on 25 February 1930 (see programme on photograph page). There was also a season of it from 23 June to 25 July in the same year and theatre, and the programme suggests that the piano duet version was used, though in a review of the later season, Ernest Kuhe in *The Daily Telegraph* of 24 June 1930 said: "...a good deal of playful fancy characterises the...choreography in the Capriol Suite - though two pianos hardly do justice to Peter Warlock's clever and ingenious dalliance with ancient dance forms".

Although Warlock must have given Warlock permission to make a ballet of his 'Capriol' Suite, it is still not known whether he attended any of the performances. The three dancers in the Pavane photograph are all still alive, but sadly none of them remembers whether Warlock was there or not. Diana Gould is now Lady Menuhin.

The music for the ballet was as we know it, with the exception of the *Bransles* being placed at the end, presumably as the only number involving the full company. However, in the programme of the first performance, you will see *Mattachins* and *Pieds-en-l'air* changed positions as well. It is known that Ashton referred to Arbeau's *Orchésographie*, but he altered the French setting to an English Elizabethan one. The steps are obviously a lot more complex than those for Arbeau's young Capriol, but the style of the music is admirably captured in the dances. The predominant colours of the costumes have changed since 1930, and are now mostly pink and white, and exude an air of pastel elegance throughout.

The setting is simple; and after two couples have danced the *Basse-Danse*, the lights dim and two boys lead on a girl dressed in a long skirt. During the *Pavane* she dances between her escorts, then sits on the knee of one, and is presented with a pink rose. She sweetly refuses it, as she does the scroll upon which is written a poem for her, offered by the other boy. The boys stand on either side of her contemplating the rejected gifts. The lights brighten and they move aside to watch another couple dance a capricious *Tordion*. Another girl enters and the two couples come forward and the boys perform *Pieds-en-l'air* to entertain the girls. When this dance is over, the boys kneel and the girls fall back over their shoulders. They leave the stage. For the *Mattachins* four boys jump out onto the stage, and as the sword dance ends, the victor is lifted over the heads of the other three. Gradually all the dancers return and perform different versions of the *Bransles* - there being different versions for different age groups. The more ebullient dancers enclose in a moving circle around the more stately couples; and the curtain falls.

In 1938 Madge Atkinson made her own Ballet of the *Basse-Danse* and the *Tordion*, but the Ashton ballet remained in the repertoire of the Ballet Rambert until the 1947-9 Australian tour - to be revived in the 1983-4 season. It was taken up in 1948 by the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet (direct predecessors of the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet), and that production was revived by the Royal Ballet School in 1984. It is now preserved for posterity in a Benish Notation Score.

Last October, Bramwell Tovey conducted the string version with appropriate grace and charm, though I felt *Bransles* was a little too slow, maybe having been choreographed for that speed. On this occasion, the other two ballets in the Triple Bill were set from Walton's *Façade* and Poulenc's *Two-Piano Concerto*, both requiring full orchestra - so I immediately wondered why Warlock's full-orchestral version* had not been used, and whether it could not be used in any subsequent

*see p.4

similar productions. A reply from the Company revealed that the version for strings was used because of the precedent created at their predecessor's performance on 5 October 1948, which was conducted by Guy Warrack. On that occasion the other ballets in the programme also required full orchestra (e.g. the pas de deux from Act 1 of *Giselle*). Although no further performances are planned at present, Sir Frederick Ashton has been approached to see if he would approve of the orchestral version being used on a future occasion. We are pleased to report he does give his blessing, provided he could feel that the composer would have approved. We can also report that the Royal Opera Music Library has sets of parts of both versions.

SOME OTHER PERFORMANCES

3.00 A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve in King's
College Chapel, Cambridge
Processional Hymn:
Once in royal David's city
(Descants: Cleobury)
Bidding Prayer
Carol: The Lord at first did
Adam make (Cleobury)
First Lesson: Genesis 3, vv 8-15,
17-19: A CHORISTER
Carols: Jesus Christ, the apple
tree (Music: Elizabeth Poston);
Adam lay ybouden
(Music: Peter Warlock)
Second Lesson: Genesis 22,
vv 15-18: A CHORAL SCHOLAR
Carols: In dulci jubilo
(Pearsall); I saw three ships
(Philip Ledger)
etc.

Warlock at King's

It was good to have Warlock's setting of *Adam lay ybouden* at King's College, Cambridge, on Christmas Eve, instead of the customary version by Boris Ord - which in fact was modelled closely on the Warlock setting. (See also Elizabeth Poston, p.15)

Balulalow was performed on Christmas Eve in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

In the Baronial Hall of the famous Chetham's School, Manchester, on 24 January, during a concert mostly of English song, the soprano Honor Sheppard sang a group of Warlock - *Sleep; Pretty ring time; Rest, sweet nymphs.*

At the Barbican on 15 February: the 'Brass Cuckoo' - i.e. Warlock's arrangement for brass of Delius's *On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring*. 1 pm at the Barbican Hall. The Guildhall Brass Band, directed by Philip Jones. Admission free.

Our Secretary, Malcolm Rudland, still has two copies of the record *Peter Warlock - Songs, Part-songs, and Carols*, DSLO 27, to sell to members. (Performed by the Louis Halsey Singers with Wilfred Parry; and Robert Tear with Geoffrey Parsons.) Price: £2.99 + 75p for packing and posting.

Malcolm Rudland's arrangement of Warlock's *Cod-Pieces* (*Beethoven's Binge, The Old Codger*), for home or pipe organ, will be published in the summer by Thames (distribution by Novello).

ELIZABETH POSTON (1905-1987)

As reported in the last Newsletter, Elizabeth Poston died last March. She was closely associated with Warlock and his work. But when we asked her to write about him, or be interviewed, for our Newsletter, she firmly but politely declined, saying: 'I feel I cannot discuss any person I have known and loved'. Nevertheless, she did write a fair amount about Warlock at various times in her life, and the text exists of her presentation of some programmes of Warlock's music for the BBC. In a future Newsletter we hope to reproduce some of this writing.

As far as the Peter Warlock Society was concerned, she wished to be 'an honorary member unlisted', and made occasional small donations to the Society. We were always led to believe that she was the guardian of some sacred secrets, which she promised to write about one day. Perhaps these will be discovered amongst her papers. At least the infamous 'urtext' toilet-roll of Warlock's limericks, which E.J. Moeran is alleged to have given her whilst he was once in hospital, has come to light. A further report on this at a later date.

Elizabeth Poston was a composer, writer, and pianist (she often accompanied Warlock songs). She spent much time collecting folk-songs abroad. During the war, until 1945, she worked for the BBC's European Services. Then, after a spell in the USA and Canada, she returned to the BBC in 1947 and was involved with the beginnings of the Third Programme.

Last Christmas, at King's, her very fine carol *Jesus Christ, the apple tree* was sung (see excerpt 'Radio Times', p14). There she was placed on top of Warlock. It was a coincidence: we've been assured that there was no symbolic planning!

Now we have the strange affair of the Warlock letters. Although it is surprising that both sides of the Delius-Warlock correspondence came from the same source - Bernard J. van Dieren (Warlock's executor's son) - the side from Delius to Warlock was acquired by the British Museum in a Sotheby's auction on 16 December 1964 (lot 395) - now Add. Ms 52547/8; and it was embarrassing that Miss Poston unwittingly bid against the Delius Trust for the correlative correspondence in a further Sotheby's auction on 16 May 1967 (lot 434). This led her to pay well in excess of the market value for the 160 letters and manuscripts. In 1972 she told the PWS that the letters would be published - but she could not give a date. Her subsequent delicate and always polite avoidance of letting anybody see the material has halted the otherwise complete preparation of the Correspondence Volume of the Peter Warlock Handbook, of which Volumes 1 and 2 are already published. The material is now the responsibility of her executors, and no decision concerning it can be made until after Probate. It's to be hoped that before long the final proof of Volume 3 can be prepared.

Felix Aprahamian relates that Elizabeth Poston telephoned him just before she was going to America, not long after her purchase of the letters - some time in the late sixties. She told him she was adding a codicil to her Will, leaving him her Warlock archive as 'he would know what to do with it'. After her death there appeared nine wills, none of which was signed.

M.R. and D.C.

LILLYGAY, CURLEW, AND THE WARLOCK STYLE

An article on *Lillygay* by Brian Collins - far more extensive than the one which appeared in the last Newsletter - is due to come out in *The Music Review* shortly. Brian Collins also gave a paper on various constructional aspects of *The Curlew* to the 21st Annual Conference of Music Research Students hosted by the Music Department of Leeds University just before Christmas. In it he "tried to show that the characteristics that Warlock supposedly acquired from others were either already a part of his compositional methodology or, in the course of the work, are totally subsumed into the unique Warlockian style".

A 93rd-BIRTHDAY CONCERT FOR PETER WARLOCK

On Friday, 30 October, London's Trinity College of Music gave a concert of Warlock's music at Hinde Street Church. A good audience was present to enjoy a mixed programme of solo songs, choral music, and songs with instrumental accompaniment. The order of events was a little strange, with the most substantial item, *The Curlew*, coming at the beginning; it might well have been better to open with the two songs for women's voices and piano, and have the instrumental items at the centre of the programme. It was also a pity that no names of poets were given, since songs do have words!

I have to confess this is the first time I have heard *The Curlew*, but the performance, conducted by The Principal, was certainly good enough for me to want to hear it again. Nicholas Keay was the tenor soloist, singing with conviction and excellent intonation in this difficult work. The accompanying instrumental group made a good attempt at the many problems. Though the slightly ragged ensemble suggested a lack of rehearsal time, the individual players showed good command of their instruments. The one really disappointing section was the second song, *Pale brows, still hands*, which was too fast, with Warlock's indication of 'non legato' for the strings somewhat exaggerated, so that the despair of this central moment was lost.

This was followed by *Sorrow's Lullaby* [not *Sorrows Lullaby*, as the programme spelt it] sung by Fiona Firth-Spiller and Simon Colston, with the same string quartet as had played in *The Curlew*. This was some of the best singing of the evening, with well sustained legato lines from both performers, and deserving of the immediate repeat given at the request of the Principal. Simon Colston managed the high-lying baritone part with an almost tenor quality of tone, which emphasised the difficulty of finding the appropriate voices for these two works. *The Curlew* asks for tenor, despite the fact that there is only one high A in the whole piece, and much of the part lies between middle C and the C below - whereas *Sorrow's Lullaby* has a tessitura a third higher, with just one low A at the end, which is not of vital importance. It would be interesting to hear a tenor in this work, and a baritone in *The Curlew*.

We were then given a group of four songs with piano, sung by Fiona Firth-Spiller, accompanied by William Hancox, who was the sole pianist involved in the programme. These were slightly disappointing after the beautiful singing we had heard in *Sorrow's Lullaby*. When a true legato line is not obviously required, as in *Mourn no Moe*, this singer's diction became a little wordy, losing the sense of the poetry. *Mockery* was adequate, but *And wilt thou leave me thus?* lacked the intensity of feeling needed by this intensely emotional song. *Pretty Ringtime*, given as *It was a lover and his lass* in the programme, was unfortunately a little beyond the pianist's technical abilities; the last page is almost unplayable as written, but it is not that hard to re-arrange the left-hand chords into something manageable, rather than omitting many of them altogether.

The ladies of the Trinity College of Music Vocal Ensemble then sang Warlock's three-part arrangement of *Lullaby* - very effective, and well sung. Though the second item, the two-part version of *The Bayley*, was also well performed, I cannot feel it is a successful arrangement, since the descant, of no great interest in itself, gets in the way of Warlock's marvellous original melody.

The baritone Jeremy de Satjé then joined William Hancox for three songs. This group was not up to the high standard of the rest of the concert. *Piggesnie* was reasonably accurate, but somewhat slow and heavy, requiring far too many breaths, and losing much of the point of this lighthearted piece. *Sleep* is a standard repertoire song for any English singer and accompanist, and blatant errors of notes and rhythm are really not acceptable from budding professionals. *Yarmouth Fair* produced audience reactions successfully enough, but by losing all sense of rhythm and treating the song as a music-hall comic number. This was a pity, since the singer showed himself to have performance capabilities.

However, the best of the evening was saved for the end: three pieces from the Vocal Ensemble. The original unaccompanied choral version of *Bethlehem Down* received a breathtakingly beautiful performance under Geoffrey Mitchell. This was followed by *The Birds*, with David Scott at the organ, and finally *Benedicamus*

Domini, sung with immense enthusiasm and verve. When an encore was demanded, the choir very wisely chose to repeat *Bethlehem Down*, which was without doubt the finest performance of the evening.

We are grateful to Trinity College for arranging this concert and giving us all such an interesting and enjoyable evening. I feel sure that the performers also gained much from being involved in such a programme. We hope that the Guildhall School of Music, which will be presenting a Birthday Concert next year, will give us as interesting a presentation.

Michael Pilkington

The Birthday Concert at the Guildhall, where Michael Pilkington teaches, is on Friday, 28 October 1988 at 7 o'clock. Michael Pilkington is a Committee member of the PWS. His book English Song - a Guide to the Repertoire (Gurney, Ireland, Quilter, Warlock) will be published shortly by Duckworth. More of this later. -Ed.

HESELTINE ON DELIUS

The Delius Society Journal, Autumn 1987, Number 94 (64 pages), is devoted entirely to the published writings of Philip Heseltine on Delius. There is a foreword by Dr Eric Fenby. Additional copies can be obtained for £3.50, inclusive of postage (those interested should contact Malcolm Rudland, whose address is on p.1 of this Newsletter). The contents are as follows:

English Music Masterpiece (Piano Concerto) Daily Mail 9.2.1915
Some notes on Delius and his Music Mus. Times March 1915
Philharmonic Concert D. Mail 14.4.1915 (Koanga epilogue)
New Violin Sonata D. Mail 1.5.1915
British Music Festival 12.5.1915 (Including Seadrift)
Two Concerts D. Mail 17.6.1915 (On Craig Ddu; Violin Sonata)
Delius's New Opera Mus. Times April 1920
Contingencies The Sackbut May 1920 (A Village Romeo and Juliet)
Letters to the Editor Sackbut Oct. 1920 (Re critics Ernest Newman, Edwin Evans)
Music in England: (ii) Frederick Delius German publ. March 1922
Frederick Delius The Music Bulletin May 1923
Music Weekly Westminster Gazette 14.7.1923 (Cello Concerto)
Hassan " " " 29.9.1923
Hassan D. Telegraph 29.9.1923
Frederick Delius 1924 A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians (Dent)
The Works of Delius Mus. Times July 1927
The Yorkshire Genius of Friday's Concert Radio Times 1.2.1929
Delius, Composer and Interpreter of Nature " " 4.10.1929
1929 Delius Festival
Introduction and programme notes: Brigg Fair; In a Summer Garden; A Village Romeo and Juliet (music from); A Song before sunrise; Cello Sonata; Summer Night on the River; Air and Dance; Piano pieces; First Cuckoo; Eventyr; Cynara; Piano Concerto; Arabesk; Appalachia; A Mass of Life
Delius: a concise biography
A select bibliography

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