



The Peter Warlock Society

Newsletter N° 70 – Spring 2002

Chairman & Newsletter Editor

Dr Brian Collins 10 Persla Court 2a Oliver Grove London SE25 6EJ ☎ & 📠 020 8771 1280 e-mail: prosdociumus@yahoo.co.uk

EDITORIAL

There have been some splendid Warlockian occasions recently and 2002 promises even more. Please look at our *Forthcoming events* section but, in the meantime, let me use the expressions "AGM" and "morris dancing". OK, forget "morris dancing". I wish that I could but . . . However, do try to get to our AGM, not just for the meeting itself (which I shall try to get through decorously but as quickly as propriety will allow) but for the extras. There are some excellent events that Rhian Davies has lined up around the meeting itself so why not consider taking your bank-holiday break in mid-Wales this year?

Dr Trevor Hold, well-known to many PWS members, has a new book being published shortly. His study of British song-composers has been on the stocks for some time but will shortly be issued. It includes a substantial section on Warlock. Some may quiver at the asking price of £45 (\$75) but Boydell and Brewer, the publishers, are giving a generous 25% discount not only on this book but on a selection of others that will probably be of interest too to our members. This is a special offer for the Peter Warlock Society for which we are very grateful. A brochure is included with this Newsletter but hurry, hurry, hurry; the offer is only available until the end of June.

I appealed a year ago for members to let the Society know of e-mail addresses. Some I already have, mostly committee members and friends, but I was recently able to contact them about events that we had come to know about but which were to take place before the appearance of this Newsletter. This is an increasingly easy and cheap way of contacting people quickly and so I repeat my request. My last entreaty produced only one new name. Even if you don't have e-mail do try to look at the website if you can as information is posted there too on a regular basis.

Brian Collins

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

2 Barbara Peache – Part II

Silvester Mazzarella

5 The real Robin Goodfellow?

Brian Collins

6 The bayly berith the bell away

Silvester Mazzarella

7 Piskie Phyl

Rhian Davies

8 AGM 2002: Peter Warlock comes home

Rhian Davies

9 ERRATUM

REVIEWS

10 Warlock in Cardiff (1)

Brian Collins

Warlock in Cardiff (2)

Rhian Davies

11 Fall in the House of Usher

Chris Sreeves

A Warlock archive at Eton

Eric Wetherell

13 Sacred and Profane

Brian Collins

14 A medical Curlew

Malcolm Rudland

14 FORTHCOMING EVENTS

15 NEWSBRIEFS

Back page – Crickley Hill revisited

Andrew Bax

Chairman Emeritus Fred Tomlinson

Vice-Presidents Sir Malcolm Arnold Lord Harewood Pat Mills (Founder) Prof. Ian Parrott Benjamin Luxon Dr Peter Heseltine Dr Barry Smith

Secretary Malcolm Rudland 32a Chipperfield House Cale Street London SW3 3SA ☎ & 📠 020 7589 9595 mrudland@talk21.com

Treasurer John Mitchell Woodstock Pett Bottom Canterbury Kent CT4 5PB ☎ 01227 832871

American representative William Perry 1414 3rd Avenue Apt 3D New York 10028 USA ☎ & 📠 001 212 861 3439

ARTICLES

Barbara Peache – Part II

In my first article¹ I looked closely at Barbara's Peache ancestors; this time I shall concentrate on Barbara herself, but as far as possible avoid covering the years when she was living with Peter Warlock, since this period has been extensively researched by others. In January 1975 Barbara told John Bishop and Fred Tomlinson that she first met Warlock at a party in Chelsea in the early 1920s.² In her statement to the police on 18th December 1930, just after Warlock's death, she said she had known him about six years and lived with him for about five.³

Barbara's father, Clement Kemble Peache, the second youngest of four sons and three daughters, was born on 10th February 1866 at Mangotsfield near Bristol where his father was Vicar. He went to school at Tonbridge and Haileybury before going up to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took a Third in Political Economy in 1887. He then joined the London Stock Exchange as a "jobber" and by 1890 was also a captain in the Territorial Army. Early in 1898 he married Elsie Rose Keyworth in London at fashionable St George's, Hanover Square; he was 31, his bride only 18. The stockbroker and his young wife then settled in a fine old house surrounded on three sides by woods in a secluded corner of West Byfleet, Surrey.

From the 1881 census, taken when Elsie was not quite 2 years old, we learn that the Keyworth family were then living at Knapp near Bideford in north Devon. Elsie's parents (John Walter Keyworth and Angelina Dorinda *née* Street) were away from home on the day of the census, and had left four children aged between 1 and 13 in the care of seven servants (nursery governess, cook, laundry maid, footman, groom and two housemaids); only one of these servants (the governess) was over 30. Little Elsie was seven years younger than her nearest sibling. She had been born locally, but the birthplaces of her elder sister and two brothers were as far apart as Kildare (Ireland), Sandgate (Kent) and Bishopsteignton (south Devon). This was no doubt a consequence of their father's occupation: Elsie's birth certificate describes him as "late captain" in the 48th Regiment of Foot. We may infer that Elsie's father, like Clement Peache's, had inherited rather than made money and that both were born into large houses with lots of domestic servants; certainly both had military connections.

Barbara was Clement and Elsie's first child, born at home at Sheerwater Lodge, West Byfleet (or Woodham – the geographical description varies), on 20th July 1900. A brother, Clement Anthony (to be known as Anthony), followed on 4th April 1904. The Peaches last appear on the electoral role as living at Sheerwater Lodge (or "Tirveyne", as the house was also known), in 1906, and for a long time it was not clear to me what happened to them after that. However, on 10th April 1906 Clement, now giving his address as 11 King St, St James's (London), made a remarkable will, which he never afterwards altered though he lived another 36 years. In it he made no mention

whatever of his wife and son, appointing his youngest brother Gilbert one of his executors and his prosperous, married, eldest brother James Courthope (junior) "Guardian of my Infant Daughter Barbara during her minority", which is odd considering that Barbara had a very young mother not likely to die in the near future. The rest of the will is taken up with financial provisions for Barbara, with something also for Clement's two surviving sisters should their unmarried brother Gilbert, an architect, predecease them.

The mystery of the Peache family's disappearance from Sheerwater Lodge by 1906 was solved for me by Mrs Yvonne Zarb Cousin,⁴ a friend of Barbara's old age, whose address in Malta as a legatee appears in Barbara's own will. Apparently Clement discovered that Elsie – still only 24 when her son was born in 1904 – had a lover, and was convinced that his wife's second child (described on his birth certificate as his son and named Clement Anthony after him) was in fact not his; he therefore left home, and despite writing a will obsessively centred on Barbara had little or no contact with her for the rest of his life. According to Mrs Zarb Cousin, in old age Barbara would talk of her mother and "me and my brother" – they were apparently very close – but never of her father. When their daughter's marriage collapsed, Elsie's parents took charge of Barbara and Anthony and encouraged their daughter to leave England with her lover. The couple set up home in Marbella (not then as fashionable as it has since become); they eventually parted but Elsie stayed on in Spain for some time before returning to England. Elsie's parents brought up Barbara and her little brother themselves and Barbara did not see her real mother again until she was 18, having in the meantime come to believe she was dead. Quite possibly she grew up in Devon, where the Keyworth family continued to have strong connections for several generations. I have discovered nothing about Barbara's education. Meeting her mother at the age of 18 for the first time since early childhood, Barbara was soon on good terms with her, though she told Mrs Zarb Cousin that they never developed a close mother-daughter relationship. Among the documents relating to the inquest on Warlock discovered by Barry Smith is a manuscript letter, apparently to the coroner, from Elsie Peache, written on the headed paper of the Ladies' Imperial Club, 29 Dover St, London W1, on 19th December 1930, two days after Warlock's death. Elsie was perhaps trying to protect Barbara from publicity:

Dear Sir – In connection with the death of Mr Peter Warlock – my daughter's attendance at the Inquest on Monday – I should be very grateful if I might see you personally before then – Yours faithfully Elsie Peache.⁵

Perhaps it was her mother who suggested that Barbara should be identified only as "Mrs Warlock" at the Inquest. In later life Elsie enjoyed a close friendship with Francis Howard,⁶ an American who lived in London and later in Surrey. Elsie settled in Dorking. It is said that, when together, Elsie and Francis subsisted on porridge and china tea. Francis Howard was rich enough to build up a collection of some 200 important old master and contemporary

paintings that included works by Titian and Tintoretto, but he is not likely to have been the rich lover who shared in the break-up of Elsie's disastrous marriage to Clement Peache in or just after 1904. For one thing there is no evidence that he ever lived in Spain; for another, he married in 1903 and his marriage produced a son.

Barbara's family background was much less conventional than the world of that other important woman in Warlock's life, Winifred Baker, who was daughter of a prosperous and paternalistic provincial businessman.⁷ In the generally accepted picture of her life with Warlock, Barbara often appears as not much more than part of the scenery in which he lived and moved and had his idiosyncratic being. But major events not connected with Warlock did, of course, happen in her life during those years. While she was living with him at Eynsford in Kent her "virtual" parents died within a week of one another at Bishopsteignton in Devon: her grandfather John Walter Keyworth on 31st December 1926 and her grandmother Dorinda Angelina Keyworth on 7th January 1927. She had already lost the only other member of the home in which she grew up: her brother Anthony, who had started work as a clerk in the grain trade, a job found for him by the family. On 4th August 1924, at 13a Delamere Terrace (near Warwick Avenue in the Paddington district of London), he was found dead from coal-gas poisoning. He was only 20 years old. There was a post mortem, and an inquest which found that he had 'killed himself while of unsound mind'. The documents connected with the inquest have not survived, and no more information can be gleaned from the local Paddington paper beyond the melancholy fact that suicide was distressingly common in the district at that time. Like other members of the family, Anthony was buried in Dormansland churchyard near Lingfield in east Surrey, although the gravestone has apparently been moved since. Barbara must have been deeply shaken by her brother's suicide, which seems to have occurred within a few months before or after her first meeting Warlock; and presumably at some point, during their intimate connection over the next five or six years, she must have talked to him about how much her brother had meant to her and how he had died. It is said that suicides often aim to cause pain to the person they expect will find the body. Perhaps Warlock's own choice six years later of coal-gas poisoning (assuming his death was deliberate and not accidental) was aimed in some way at Barbara – in her statement to the police after his death she said, "He [Warlock] has been very depressed and he has more than once threatened to commit suicide by gas".⁸ Similarly, what may have been the last thing Warlock did before turning on the gas may have been at least partly an attempt to hurt Barbara: the writing of an (unwitnessed) "will" leaving everything to Winifred Baker.⁹ Barbara had arranged to spend the night elsewhere after quarrelling with Warlock, and returned in mid-morning the day after to find she couldn't get into the basement flat they shared in Tite Street. In the statement to the police I have already quoted from she also said:

The last time [he threatened to commit suicide by gas] was on Sunday 14th Dec. 1930 ... On Wednesday 17th Dec I got to the flat about 10.45am. I tried to open the flat door with my key but I found I could not as the door was bolted ... The maid then came down from the flat upstairs and she said there had been a strong smell of gas since 7.30am. I told her to fetch the Police as I remembered what he had said on Sunday.

Robert Beckhard tells me that it was Anne Macnaghten¹⁰ who looked after Barbara on that horrible day. During the morning, naturally knowing nothing of what had happened, she called at Tite Street to invite Warlock and Barbara to come and share a chicken with André Mangeot¹¹ and herself. She found both Barbara and the police there, and took Barbara away for lunch. Barbara spent the rest of the day with Macnaghten and Mangeot; they were joined by other friends of Warlock and a good deal was drunk, especially in the evening.¹²

After Warlock's death Barbara seems to have continued to live in London. Yvonne Zarb Cousin, the much younger Maltese friend of Barbara's last years, works on the wardrobe side of the film industry (recently in Malta on the film *Gladiator*). When she told Barbara that she had worked (or was then working) on a Michael Caine film, Barbara said that, when Caine was a small child, his mother used to clean for her; the little boy used to come along too and continued coming round to see her even after his mother stopped working for her. Michael Caine (real name Maurice Micklewhite) was born in 1933 and was evacuated from London to Norfolk during the war, so probably her friendship with him must be dated no later than 1939 and located in Camberwell, where he and his family were then living. Incidentally, Caine was born in Rotherhithe – exactly where the boat-building Peaches first established themselves in the eighteenth century or even earlier. He also states in his autobiography that his mother worked all her life as a charlady.¹³ A letter to Michael Caine about Barbara has elicited no response. Barbara's contribution to the war effort was to work as a rent collector in London, and this may have been what she was doing for a living at the time she met the future Michael Caine. Later she was associated with the Islington area and after the war had a flat in the Bayswater-Notting Hill district. Those who knew her then and later remember her especially for her lively sense of humour, seen at its best in the stories she liked to tell about the wide variety of human types she came across in her rent-collecting work. In general she got on well with people, and was very popular with the housing departments she worked for. Later she found another occupation which, like rent-collecting, brought her into contact with a wide variety of people. This was working as a "general assistant" in the sort of small, independent hotels that have now all been swallowed up by large chains. Among other things this involved filling in at reception, in the office, or anywhere else a deputy might be urgently needed. She may have done this in several hotels – she certainly greatly enjoyed the work – but my informant remembers her specifically at Cheltenham.

On 23rd July 1955, three days after Barbara's 55th birthday, Robert Beckhard, then on his second Warlock research trip to Britain, went to meet her in London at the Overseas Club. She was with Warlock's old Oxford friend Basil Trier, and the three then moved on to a restaurant called the *Soave*, possibly in Great Portland Street. Beckhard has described this meeting to several people at different times. Some of this information has already been published, for instance by Barry Smith.¹⁴ In Beckhard's own words:¹⁵

She was still a beautiful woman – rather small, but with sharply defined features; her eyes were clear, her bronze hair streaked with grey. She was dressed in black, with a small hat, on her way to visit her mother in Dorking.

Her voice was soft, evoking a kind of calm poise, but I noticed some tears from time to time when she spoke of PH [Philip Heseltine]. She said she tried to break away from him many times, and wondered why she stayed so long with him. She definitely believed in his duality of personality, and in a mood of sadness felt pity for PH, though she suffered ill treatment. She felt the relationship was doomed from the beginning, feeling always that something was wrong.

After PH's death his mother was 'nice' to her.

After Beckhard returned to New York, Barbara sent him a letter from her home at Linton, some ten miles south of Cambridge. The complete letter has not been published before, and appears here with Beckhard's permission:

24 August 1955

Dear Mr Beckhard,

Thank you so much for your letter and also so much for kindly entertaining me to lunch when we met in London, and for being so sympathetic in approach to any information you asked for in respect of your book on Philip Heseltine.

Of course – should I be able to help you regarding any additional information, I shall be very glad. That is – provided I know the answers! But please do write and ask if something crops up you think I might know about.

Regarding any material in my possession – I am afraid I destroyed Peter's letters long ago – before he died. I have regretted this for a long time and now – at a distance – I wish I had them. Apart from anything else – they were very beautifully worded & works of art in themselves – as you can conjecture. However, there it is. And any correspondence with his friends that I possess was mostly written at the time of his death and has – I think – nothing of documentary value.

I do hope you will come to Cambridge – and also Linton – when you come to England again. I think you would like them both in their different ways and anyway hope to meet you on your next trip to England.

Yours very truly

Barbara Peache

In his letter to me, Beckhard also drew my attention to the fact that Barbara calls the man in question both Philip and Peter in the same short letter. He concluded: "What impressed me most, looking back over 40 years, was Barbara Peache's beauty and charm. Being in her presence was a most moving experience, brief as it was."

Nearly twenty years later, in February 1975, a short note appeared in Newsletter no 16:

January 23 saw the chairman [Fred Tomlinson] and your editor [John Bishop] standing on a windy corner at

Notting Hill Gate, where we had somewhat incongruously arranged to meet Barbara Peache – referred to as 'Mrs Warlock' at the inquest on Warlock's death. We had long wanted to meet her and it was only after a considerable effort that we tracked her down to Malta, where she has recently taken a flat; however, she still comes often to England.

Miss Peache, who lived with Warlock through the Eynsford period and until his death, first met him at a party in Chelsea in the early 1920s. An alert but rather shy woman, she has clear recollections of the personalities of PW's circle, although she herself was not much involved with the literary and musical side of his activities. She destroyed many years ago all the letters she had from PW.

We had a pleasant evening with her and finished up by taking her out to dinner. We intend keeping in touch.

However, Fred Tomlinson tells me that in fact on this occasion she was not at all forthcoming and said nothing whatever of personal interest about her time with Warlock. Nor did they keep in touch.

She was now 74 and, when not in Malta, based in Cambridge. Only eight days after her evening with Fred Tomlinson and John Bishop she made her will, which includes a number of small legacies to named relatives and friends, including Mrs Zarb Cousin in Malta. The will also makes clear that, at least in old age and perhaps earlier, this granddaughter of the arch-protestant Alfred "vae mihi si non evangelizavero" Peache had gone over to the enemy, so to speak, and become a Roman Catholic.

As we have seen, Barbara told Fred Tomlinson and John Bishop in January 1975 that she had "recently taken a flat" in Malta. She died in Cambridge almost exactly two years later (24th January 1977). Yvonne Zarb Cousin has described¹⁶ how she met Barbara in Malta in Paceville, north of Valletta, towards the end of her life. Becoming aware that a sad-looking and apparently lonely old lady had moved into a house across the road, she introduced herself and invited her over for coffee. At first Barbara did not welcome these overtures of friendship, so Mrs Zarb Cousin suggested that if Barbara would leave a window open any time she felt like a drink and a talk, she would come over. This became a regular routine. Barbara would have a bottle of gin, two bottles of tonic and two glasses ready and they had many long talks, always taking two drinks each, never more and never less. Sometimes moody and secretive, she would say, "I don't like people feeling sorry for me." She never talked of Peter Warlock. She believed her mother, now over ninety and in an expensive old people's home in Dorking, to be very well off: "If my mother dies before me, Yvonne, you won't have to work in the film industry." Barbara explained that the lover (unnamed) who had been involved in the break up of her mother's marriage had been extremely rich; they "lived it up" together and would go on cruises, etc. He made a will in her mother's favour which he left unchanged when they split up; he was now dead. When told about Fred Tomlinson and John Bishop's failure to elicit anything from Barbara about her days with Warlock, Mrs Zarb Cousin said she was not at all surprised. She too had found there were times when Barbara simply did not want to talk; she also

noticed that Barbara ate very little, and sometimes cooked for her. She was intrigued by Barbara's formal manner, noticing that she would put on a trouser suit just to go to the bank. But her main impression was that Barbara seemed sad and lonely, she believes she was her only friend in Malta. One December day (it must have been 1976) Barbara, suffering from cancer, told her friend that she wanted to die in England and, about to leave from Malta airport in a wheelchair a few days before Christmas said, "Yvonne, I don't think I'll see you again." On 29th January 1977 *The Times*, briefly reporting Barbara's death in Cambridge five days before, described it as "sudden", though clearly she had been ill for some time. In fact, Addenbrooke's hospital in Cambridge asked the family's permission to conduct a post-mortem for purposes of medical research to find out how Barbara had managed to survive so long; the family decided against this. When told of Barbara's death her mother Elsie, now 97, murmured "Poor soul"; she lived another two years and just missed her century. Ironically, Barbara and her "rich" mother left just over £32 000 each.

Silvester Mazzarella

Acknowledgements

I am extremely grateful to Robert Beckhard and Yvonne Zarb Cousin for their generosity, and also to other informants who do not wish to be named. I have made use of the Surrey History Centre at Woking and the Westminster City Archive, and as usual have found the Family Records Centre in Finsbury and the Probate Office invaluable. My aim in writing this article has been to try and present Barbara Peache as far as possible as herself, away from the shadow of Peter Warlock. SM

Notes

- 1 The *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter* [hereinafter referred to simply as *Newsletter*] No 68, Spring 2001, pp.6-10. Incidentally, the impression given in that article with the help of Wordsworth's famous sonnet *Upon Westminster Bridge* that life on the south bank of the Thames in London c.1800 was idyllic should be tempered by the very different picture of poverty and misery given by another poet who actually lived in Lambeth at about this time, William Blake.
- 2 Note in *Newsletter* No 16, February 1975 (reproduced in full later in the present article).
- 3 Quoted by Barry Smith in David Cox and John Bishop (eds) *Peter Warlock a Centenary Celebration*, 1994, p.77.
- 4 Telephone conversation of 18th January 2001. The surname is pronounced like French *cousine*.
- 5 Photocopy of original received from Barry Smith, 1994. Not reproduced in his article *The Mystery of Philip Heseltine's Death* in Cox & Bishop, *op. cit.*
- 6 (1874-1954); a direct descendant of Benjamin Franklin. Art critic and organiser of many important exhibitions; himself a painter of no great distinction,

he gave up his own work to concentrate on promoting that of others.

7 See my articles on Winifred Baker and family in *Newsletters* Nos. 65-7, especially the one in No 66 (Spring 2000).

8 The full text of this statement is reproduced by Barry Smith in Cox & Bishop, *op. cit.*, p.77.

9 The full text is reproduced by Barry Smith in Cox & Bishop, *op. cit.* p.80.

10 (1908-2000); violinist and co-founder of the Macnaghten-Lemare concerts which did invaluable work promoting the work of contemporary English composers in the 1930s.

11 (1883-1970); British violinist of French origin.

12 The address Barbara gave for herself next day in her statement to the police - 66 Strand on the Green, Chiswick - was probably that of a woman friend.

13 *What's It All About?*, 1992, p.6. The rest of my information about Michael Caine's early years comes from the early pages of the same book.

14 In Barry Smith *Peter Warlock, the Life of Philip Heseltine*, 1994, p.226 and footnote 16 on p.320; also p.285 and footnote 28 on p.325.

15 The whole of this quote and all other comments reproduced here on Beckhard's meeting with Barbara in July 1955 come from his letter to me of 20th June 2001.

16 Telephone conversation, 18th January 2001.

The real Robin Goodfellow?

A pharmacist revealed!

When I was working on the book of limericks and light verse, the late John Bishop suggested that I add descriptions of individuals who were either the subjects of the poems themselves or were referred to therein. I tried to keep the resulting footnotes brief but could have erred on the side of caution by including information about persons already well-known to all and sundry. A couple of people evaded research (e.g. the "Chanoine Docre" - who he?) but there was one whose name I didn't even think to look up.

I read somewhere that Warlock (like Ogden Nash) was never short of a rhyme. He challenges himself severely in a number of his limericks and some achievements are more successful than others. One of his outstanding efforts is on page 111 of the collection. That the same rhyme-scheme is maintained over three stanzas is remarkable for such a throwaway genre and a real record of Warlock's wit and invention. I reproduce the whole of it here.

There was an old sister of Binneray
Who came to a chemist in thin array
Just like Monna Vanna. This
Great punk wanted cannabis
And said, "O my dear Mr Whinneray

Give me some, and I'll pour all my gin away -
What more can a sodden old sinner say?"
But he said, "For a tanner, miss,

I'll sell you a can o' piss -
Nothing else - though the chemist at Pinner may."

"But I need a stiff swig to begin a day -
Can you get me some coke before dinner, eh?"
"No," he said, "these vile practices
Are the death of young actresses."
So she walked with a grisly grim grin away.

To be honest, I was so busy trying to track down Monna Vanna (she's a character in Dante) that I overlooked "Whinneray" assuming it to be a name invented or otherwise applied to fit the rhymes. I should have known better. When I recently read Martin Booth's biography of Aleister Crowley¹ the truth shouted at me from its pages. E P Whineray (which I take to be the correct spelling - PW wasn't always reliable in this department) was a pharmacist. As Booth puts it:

A gruff Lancastrian with a bald head, heavy eyebrows, sharp eyes and a cynical laugh, he was said by Crowley to be discreet, understand every aspect of human frailty and know all "London's secrets." As indeed he might, for Whineray was a purveyor of narcotics and other drugs to the wealthy and well-to-do, although it must be pointed out that many of these were legally supplied. Yet people of position wanted their use and addiction kept understandably quiet. [...] As Crowley was experimenting widely with hashish throughout 1906, it seems more than likely that he purchased his supplies from Whineray, who, some years later, was arrested after the ratification of the Dangerous Drugs Act for prescription irregularities.²

One has to ask, therefore, whether PW also "purchased his supplies" from the same source. Gray is cagey on the subject but it has to be recognised that Warlock used cannabis although whether experimentally, occasionally or regularly is open to question. Nevertheless, Whineray was clearly a figure familiar to particular sections of London society at the time and the fact that he figures in one of Warlock's limericks should come as no surprise.

Which leaves "Binneray" . . .

Brian Collins

Notes

1 Martin Booth: *A magick life*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 2000. Inevitably the relationship between Crowley and Victor Neuberg also figures large in its pages. Neuberg was also a sometime friend of PW; his anthologies *Lillygay* and *Larkspur* were sources for the texts of some of Warlock's songs.

2 *idem* pp.248-9

The Bayly Berith the Bell Away

In mid-December 2001 the *Times Literary Supplement* published an article by Judith Chernaik about a 2-stanza version (26 lines, of which Warlock - not mentioned by Chernaik - set the first 14), of the above poem, as published in Viking's *Poets of the English Language* (1950). The second stanza, which mentions "Elizabeth, our quen princis,/Prepotent and eke victorius" is much inferior poetically to the more

famous first stanza. In the eighteenth century the antiquarian Joseph Ritson described the relevant part of the poem's source, BL MS Harley 7578, as "old songs set to music, used within and about the bishopric of Durham, in the time of queen Elizabeth". Chernaik, seeing a reference to the defeat of the Armada in the reference to the "prepotent and eke victorius" queen, assigns the whole two stanzas to "May Day games in Durham c1590", and relates the line "The baily berith the bell away" to the refrain of a frankly licentious song - first line "we be maydens fayr and fre" - attributed to John Taverner and published by Wynkyn de Worde in his pioneering 1530 songbook *XX Songes* - a text that might well have appealed to Warlock, had he known it. The last stanza goes:

syster, loke that ye be not forlorn
for then every man wyl laugh you to skorn
and say Kytt hath got a clap under a thorne
alak wer shal we then dwel la
the bella the bella
we maidens berith the bella

Chernaik interprets the refrain to mean "We're the best, we take the prize", with a punning allusion to swelling like a bell in pregnancy. With this in mind she detects a note of protest in the beautiful lines "And through the glasse window shineth the sun/how shuld I love & I so young" and adds, "Rather than praising marriage, the maidens may be celebrating the gaiety, freedom and self-sufficiency of youth, with special reference to the Virgin Queen, their protectress and champion." Of course this interpretation depends on the two stanzas having been written at the same time and to go together; some I think would maintain the famous first 12 lines are a lot earlier, perhaps mid-fifteenth century, and thus cannot have been written to refer to Queen Elizabeth and the 1590s - although, of course, that doesn't prevent the poem being an anti-marriage song, and the place of the lines in the MS implies they were still known and appreciated in Queen Elizabeth's time.

Chernaik's article provoked a lively correspondence in the *TLS* in the weeks that followed. Edwin Moore of Glasgow pointed out that "The maidens came" is still regularly included in poetry anthologies, most recently in Collins *Book of English Verse* (2001). He added, "And for those who don't know it, do listen to Stravinsky's setting of the poem in *Cantata*. It's perhaps the loveliest arrangement of an English lyric by a foreign composer." Piers Burton-Page at BBC Radio 3 drew attention to Warlock's own setting of the words, describing it as "one of his most exquisite creations", and suggesting Warlock would have been ideally suited to make the most of the earthy innuendo and springtime excitement which had now been detected in the text: "too late, alas; and the way is surely now open for a contemporary composer to give us an alternative setting". Noel Malcolm, in London, while agreeing that the lines were not set down entirely at random, saw the poem as part of a long tradition of "relative" nonsense verse: "in relative nonsense, each of the lines makes sense, and it is only their juxtaposition that is nonsensical". He castigated Chernaik for detecting a "Tudor Emily

Dickinson" behind the lines "And through the glass window shineth the sun,/How should I love and I so young" and concluded "It is the besetting sin of literary critics, when faced with any type of nonsense poetry, to compensate with an excess of sense in the explanation for the lack of sense in the explicandum." To this Judith Chernaik replied, "There is no hint of 'scrambling' either in the words or the clearly structured musical setting." (This presumably refers to the original musical setting in the MS, which Warlock apparently never saw.) She linked the style to Spenser's poem *Epithalamium* (1595), a "triumph of holy matrimony", though "the 'boys and wenches' of Durham in their riotous May-games may have taken another view of the matter." Noel Malcolm then wrote again to state that Chernaik's letter "confirms my impression that she is not familiar with the genre of the medley, which did not normally exhibit, in its musical setting, any incoherence corresponding to the incongruity of the sense." He could not understand how she could claim that there is no scrambling in the words, and suggested she should look at some other medleys of the period. He ended a little waspishly, "It is kind of her to describe my reading as ingenious, but I should prefer to grant all the credit for ingenuity to her."

Silvester Mazzarella

References

Article: Judith Chernaik: "We be maidens fair and free: A licentious antecedent for an Elizabethan bridal song?", *Times Literary Supplement (TLS)*, 14th December 2001, p.13.

Followed by letters on the same subject to the *TLS* from:

Edwin Moore, 21st Dec. 2001, p.15

Noel Malcolm, 28th Dec. 2001, p.15

Piers Burton-Page, 28th Dec. 2001, p.15

Judith Chernaik, 4th Jan. 2002, p.15

Noel Malcolm, 11th Jan. 2002, p.15

Earlier studies

Ernest Kaye: *Witches and Warlock (a possible interpretation of The Bayly berith the bell away)*

David Cox: *The Maidens Came (another interpretation of The Bayly berith)*

Both these essays can be found in David Cox & John Bishop (eds) *Peter Warlock: A Centenary Celebration* (1994), pp.166-70 and 171-4. [Editor's note: for the record – and for long-standing members who don't have the Centenary Celebration – both articles had been previously published in the Newsletter during John Bishop's editorship: a trawl of my archive reveals that *Witches and Warlock* was in no. 21 (November 1977) and *David Cox's piece*, originally entitled *Unbewitched!*, in the following issue (no. 22, April 1978).] Kaye believes the 14 lines set to music

by Warlock refer to a celebration of the black mass, and follows Warlock (who apparently never looked up the original MS Harley 7578) in seeing them as part of a long poem of 160 lines. He also quotes in full Warlock's reply of 28th November 1928 to a correspondent who had enquired about the meaning of the words. Among other things, Warlock wrote in this letter:

For me the charm of the fragment lies precisely in the fact that it means nothing, but suggests the loveliest images with a verbal music that foreshadows the procedure of the French Symbolistes of the nineteenth century. ... 'The Bayly' should be sung meaninglessly, as a child (but not as a grown-up!) sings a nursery rhyme.

Cox rejects the idea that *The maidens came*, as he prefers to call it, was ever part of a longer poem, and prefers to relate it to marriage rather than the black mass.

Piskie Phyl

Phyllis Vipond-Crocker, the Cornish "piskie" of Peter Warlock's *Hy-Brasil* poem, will feature in a forthcoming exhibition, *Women Artists in Cornwall: 1880-1940* at the Penlee House Gallery and Museum, Penzance, between 16 March and 27 April 2002. The exhibition was first held at the Falmouth Art Gallery in 1996 and is being remounted in Penzance now that a lengthy programme of renovations to Penlee House is complete.

Phyl Crocker was one of the most significant women in Warlock's life. They met when he lived temporarily in Cornwall in 1917 and kept in close touch, even though her marriage to Warlock's Oxford friend, Boris de Chroustchoff, caused the composer considerable pain. As a young woman, Phyl sat to several artists including Dame Laura Knight, Sir Alfred Munnings and George Spencer Watson. A head-and-shoulders pencil sketch of Phyl by Knight – together with an autograph letter from the artist to her subject – will both be displayed in the exhibition. Coincidentally, the sketch dates from 1917, the year in which Warlock and the 17-year-old Phyl were first introduced.

On moving to London, Phyl became a talented crafts-woman in her own right, working out of a studio near Heal's on the Tottenham Court Road, and specialising in decorating small wooden boxes with elaborate metalwork designs. One of these, depicting Eve and the serpent in the Garden of Eden, will also form part of the exhibition. All three artefacts are drawn from a private collection and are rarely seen in public.

Members of the Cornish Chapter – and other Warlockians who are planning to visit Cornwall for a spring or Easter break – may care to know of this exhibition. Penlee House is centrally situated on Morrab Road, Penzance, and information about the gallery's opening hours can be obtained by telephoning the main switchboard on 01736 363625.

Rhian Davies

AGM 2002

Peter Warlock comes home

The Annual General Meeting of the Peter Warlock Society will take place at Llandyssil, Montgomeryshire, during the weekend of 4-5 May 2002. This will be the Society's first visit to mid Wales since the conference at Gregynog to mark the centenary of the composer's birth in 1994.

Although Warlock – famously – was born at *The Savoy* in London, he had many close links with Wales. His mother Edith, *née* Covernton, grew up in Knighton, Radnorshire, and settled in Llandyssil on her second marriage to Walter Buckley-Jones, squire of Cefn-Bryntalch Hall, in 1903. Warlock loved the mid-Wales countryside, taught himself Welsh and several other Celtic languages, and wrote much of his most significant music when he lived permanently at Cefn-Bryntalch between 1921-24 and again in 1928.

The two-day timetable will feature lectures and an exhibition on Peter Warlock's Wales; a vocal workshop led by Michael Pilkington; and a programme of music and words written during the composer's time in Montgomeryshire. This will be the first concert of Warlock's compositions ever given in Llandyssil and celebrates his family connections with the village. (Several generations of Joneses supported the Church financially; the walls are covered with their memorials; and they lie buried in the cemetery just a short walk up the hill.) An ambitious programme to refurbish the Church – including a brand new roof and full reconditioning of the organ – has also recently been undertaken, which gives rise to a double celebration.

As in previous years, we have arranged events over the May Bank Holiday week-end to enable as many members as possible to attend without the pressure of having to scatter home immediately afterwards. This is the current draft programme:

Saturday, 4th May

1100 Coffee and opening of exhibition on Peter Warlock in Wales, Llandyssil Old School

1130 Lecture, Ian Parrott: *Peter Warlock's Wales*

1230 Lunch, *The Upper House Inn*, Llandyssil

1400 AGM

1500 Lecture, Brian Collins: *Peter Warlock's Cefn-Bryntalch compositions*

1615 Tea: possible afternoon activity

1800 Dinner, *The Lion*, Caerhowel

2000 Concert in Llandyssil Church, featuring music and words composed at Cefn-Bryntalch. The Guilsfield Singers (conductor, Suzanne Edwards); Marian Martin (soprano); Christopher Booth-Jones (baritone); Tim Mills and Malcolm Rudland (organ and piano)

Sunday, 5th May

0930 Sung Eucharist, Llandyssil Church

1030 Coffee

1100 Workshop, Michael Pilkington: *Peter Warlock's vocal music*

1300 Lunch, *The Dragon* and/or *The Bricklayers' Arms*, Montgomery

1430 Tour of Montgomery Castle, led by Ivor Tanner

1600 Tea

1630 Disperse

The concert is, of course, the main event and will be sustained largely by The Guilsfield Singers, a prize-winning local mixed choir which has championed much of Warlock's music under its conductor, Suzanne Edwards. The soprano Marian Martin and baritone Christopher Booth-Jones, both formerly of English National Opera and now coincidentally resident near Llandyssil, have kindly agreed to act as soloists, and Tim Mills and Malcolm Rudland will divide accompanying duties and organ solos. Warlock was drafted in to play the same organ in 1921 owing to the insobriety of the resident incumbent George Wroughton, and – mischievously – improvised a voluntary on T. J. Williams's hymn-tune *Ebenezer* as the congregation departed. (*Ebenezer* was nicknamed *Tŷn-y-bottel*, "the bottle tune", then as now, because it was once widely believed to have been washed up in a bottle on the north Wales coast.)¹ The composer's hilarious account of his "beautiful performance" is reproduced at length in the Cecil Gray biography.²

Speaking of bottles, all those watering holes which form part of the programme have been chosen for their *bona fide* Warlock connections. (You'll complete the set if you find time to frequent the *Waterloo Arms* in Abermule as well, although you must promise to leave room for some of the home baking which has been promised by the ladies of the Church and choir!) As in Great Warley, we have also been invited to lead the singing in Llandyssil Church on Sunday morning. Local authority Ivor Tanner will then guide us around Montgomery Castle where Warlock broke his ankle in 1924, mistakenly believing that he could fly from the battlements. The thirteenth-century castle perches on a rock 500 feet high – and commands spectacular views towards Cader Idris in one direction and several English counties in the other – so Ivor recommends that you consider packing warm, waterproof clothing as well as sensible shoes!

Now, to transport and accommodation. Montgomeryshire is renowned for its beautiful scenery and warm hospitality, but is also seriously rural. As you cross the border west into mid Wales, the market towns of Welshpool and Newtown are nearest to Llandyssil. You can alight at either one of these after catching a bus or train which is heading in the general direction of Aberystwyth via Shrewsbury, and then take taxis as necessary. Best of all, though, come by car (or think about hiring one at the Welsh end). It will be much easier to get around and you will gain so much more by the experience. If you are willing to offer lifts to those members who have no option than to arrive in Wales by public transport, that would also help to smooth the occasional couple of miles between one venue and the next. (Warlock would have walked everywhere, tankard in hand, of course, but those were fitter and more leisured times.)

Llandyssil itself is tiny and, although I gather that one property is available for rent within the village (*Rose Cottage* – contact Mrs Ralph, 01686 668364), I would suggest that as many people as possible stay

in the neighbouring small town of Montgomery. The main hotel is *The Dragon*, a seventeenth-century former coaching inn on the handsome Georgian square (01686 668359 (phone); 01686 668287 (fax); reception@dragonhotel.com; <http://www.dragonhotel.com>) If a dozen or more Warlockians form a party, the proprietors, Mark and Sue Michaels, are willing to take ten per cent off the collective bill, so please make your affiliation known when booking. Friday and Saturday evenings, 3rd and 4th May, are reasonably clear as I write this (28th February), but do book promptly because Montgomery's specialist shops, craft galleries and convenient location near the Offa's Dyke Path all combine to make it a popular stopover destination for Bank Holiday trippers.

Those of you wishing to extend your stay in mid Wales until Monday, 6th May, should know that rooms at *The Dragon* are already limited on Sunday evening, 5th, because of a wedding in town that afternoon. You may therefore care to have some other local recommendations to hand in order to secure a longer booking in one place. This list comprises a mixture of hotel and farmhouse accommodation, all of them historic properties:

* *The Lion Hotel, Berriew* – seventeenth-century inn in a picture-postcard village of half-timbered black and white houses which is regularly voted the Best Kept in Wales (01686 640452)

* *The Bell Hotel, Commercial Street, Newtown* – located in Penygloddfa, the town's old weaving quarter; mentioned in the *Good Beer Guide*; famous for its brilliant breakfasts! (01686 625540)

* *The Elephant and Castle Hotel, Broad Street, Newtown* – the largest hotel in town, situated within walking distance of all amenities where the main street meets the bank of the River Severn (01686 626271; <http://www.elephanthotel.fsnet.co.uk>)

* *Yesterday's Restaurant with Rooms, Severn Square, Newtown* – also centrally situated, just off the main street; smoke-free and a member of *Taste in Wales* (01686 622644)

* *Dolforwyn Hall Hotel, Dolforwyn, Abermule* – Grade II listed building set in four acres of woods overlooking the Severn Valley (01686 630221; enquiries@dolforwyn.co.uk)

* *Garthmyl Hall, Garthmyl, Montgomery* (01686 640550)

* *Little Brompton Farm, Montgomery* (01686 668371; gaynor.brompton@virgin.net)

* *Drewin Farm, Churchstoke, Montgomery* (01588 620325; ceinwen@drewin.freeseve.co.uk)

* *Lower Gwestydd Farmhouse, Llanllwchaiarn, Newtown* (01686 626718)

* *Lower Ffrydd, Caersws, Newtown* (01686 688269; <http://www.lowerffrydd.co.uk>)

Failing all, it may be useful to have contact details for the Tourist Information Centres at Newtown (01686 625580; newtic@powys.gov.uk) and Welshpool (01938 552043; weltic@powys.gov.uk). Sue at *The Dragon* also holds a list of B&Bs in Montgomery which she uses back-up when demand exceeds supply. Still on the subject of extending your stay, we

discussed at the last Committee the possibility of bringing the timetable backwards to Friday evening, 3 May, so as to add another lecture and/or social get-together. We could also bridge forward to Monday, 5 May, if people are interested to visit Knighton or *Ffrwd Fawr* (the great waterfall at Dylife which was one of Warlock's favourite Welsh places). Do let us know if any of this interests you. Alternatively, there are plenty of other local attractions which you can explore for yourselves such as Powis Castle and gardens, just west of Welshpool (01938 557018); Andrew Logan's Museum of Sculpture in Berriew (01686 640689; <http://www.andrewlogan.com>); and the Centre for Alternative Technology near Machynlleth (01654 705950; <http://www.cat.org.uk>)

Please be in touch if I can help with additional local intelligence (02920 488318; rhiandavies@zoom.co.uk); and, as usual, please keep Malcolm Rudland posted if you intend to come so that he has some idea of numbers (0207 589 9595; mrudland@talk21.com). Tickets for the concert will be £5 a head; charges for the lectures and workshop will be nominal (£5 the lot). £10 therefore will cover entry to all events. We look forward to welcoming many friends to Montgomeryshire – *dewch yn llu i fwynhau mwynder Maldwyn*.

Rhian Davies

Notes

1 Huw Williams, *Taro Tant: Detholiad o Ysgrifau ac Erthyglau*, Denbigh, 1994, pp. 105-9.

2 Cecil Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir of Philip Heseltine*, London, 1934, pp. 243-4.

ERRATUM

Vis-à-vis reviews in the last issue of events at the Three Choirs Festival, Malcolm Rudland wishes to point out that the song he noticed was transposed was not *The singer* but *Late summer*. Please amend your copy of Emma Marshall's report on the Julie Kennard recital (see Newsletter 69 p.15) accordingly.

STOP PRESS

Modus Music, who publish music mostly by living English composers and some of whose publications have been reviewed in our Newsletters, have a new website. You can view their catalogue and order online by going to www.modusmusic.org

Issue 9 of *The works*, the magazine of the **British Academy of Composers and Songwriters**, featured PW in their *Composers in residence* slot with a short biography (p.28). This edition also contained a tribute to our Vice-president, Sir Malcolm Arnold, in celebration of his 80th birthday.

REVIEWS

Warlock in Cardiff (1)

The Birthday Concert: 27th October 2001 – Welsh College of Music and Drama

Hard to know just how to describe this! Nice performances from the students but a very short programme and, PWS members and their guests aside, an audience of 1. Where was the publicity to attract folks in? There's obviously a demand for this sort of thing in the capital city of the Principality (see below). Cardiff, the participants and the Society deserved better. Can't think of anything else to say.

Brian Collins

Warlock in Cardiff (2)

It's small consolation, I know, to those of you who travelled long distances to attend the 2001 Peter Warlock Birthday Concert at the Welsh College of Music and Drama, but for those of us who actually live in Cardiff, last year was something of a bonanza so far as Warlock performances were concerned. Obviously, things could only get better following the short, damp squib that was 27th October, and very much better they quickly became – just three days later, in fact. For ironically, in the very same room in the very same College, Donald Maxwell, the distinguished Scottish baritone, and Bryan Davies, Wales' finest accompanist, gave a fund-raising recital for the Friends of WCMD. The performers didn't realise it was Warlock's actual birthday, of course – well, not until afterwards, anyway – but, intuitively, had chosen to include *Captain Stratton's fancy* and *Piggiesnie* as part of their programme of Mozart and Verdi arias, patter songs and narrative ballads.

Maxwell had sung *Stratton* in Cardiff earlier in the year – in the foyer of St David's Hall during a live broadcast of Radio 3's *In Tune* to celebrate St David's Day – when he shrugged off the most perfect performance of the song I have ever heard as a warm-up for his day-job down the road at the New Theatre (Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict*, as I recall). It had swagger, it had panache, and his impeccable diction and no-opportunity-too-small-to-be-missed word-painting, all delivered at breakneck speed, will remain the benchmark by which future interpretations of that song are judged.

Stratton didn't fall too far short of that mark on 30th October; indeed, the Alternative Birthday Concert was a sparkling evening altogether with both artists on relaxed top form. Maxwell interspersed his solos with a stream of hilarious career anecdotes, many at the expense of his piano-stool stooge, "the Rachmaninov of the Rhondda", and proved to be as charismatic a raconteur as he is a singer. If you are in a position to promote a concert, or persuade your local music club to do so, I would recommend that you book this outstanding double act NOW!

Bryan Davies is a good friend from my own active singing days and kindly introduced me to Mr Maxwell at the post-concert reception. Out of the blue, the singer said how interested he would be to present a whole programme of Warlock, especially if "Rachmaninov" were free to work on the project. This really would be something to look forward to, would it not? I shall keep you posted.

Scarcely had there been chance to recover from all this excitement when a fourth Warlock performance was announced as part of the annual concert series organised by the Music Department of Cardiff University. The date, for the record, was 13th November, the place the University of Wales Concert Hall, and the soloist John Mitchinson, the fine Lancastrian tenor who, until 1996, was Head of Vocal Studies at (yes, you're already ahead of me) WCMD. Mitchinson was supported by a brace of splendid accompanists in the pianist Michael Pollock and the Athena String Quartet, and all donated their services in support of The Kenneth Loveland Gift. Loveland (1915-98) was a revered south Wales music critic, and the Gift established in his name will assist young singers, instrumentalists and conductors to finance their postgraduate studies.

Following a sequence of songs by Delius (*To daffodils* and *Love's philosophy*), Quilter (*Three Shakespeare Songs*) and Ireland (*The Land of Lost Content*, including a masterly *The Lent lily*), all six musicians joined in a rare and memorable reading of Vaughan Williams's *On Wenlock Edge*. But Warlock stole the show again for me as Mitchinson and Pollock produced exquisite performances of *Sleep* and *Yarmouth fair*. The insidious venom with which Mitchinson imbued the word "sliding" in *Sleep* is something I have always longed to hear and shall never forget (talk about giving a song teeth); while his *Yarmouth Fair* was a delight from start to finish, frothy, flippant and fabulously sly. The way he chortled through "kingdom come, Ho-ho!" had the audience laughing out loud as well, and confirmed that belated birthday presents can be every bit as good as those delivered on the day.

Mitchinson's reputation may rest on his interpretations of heroic repertory by Wagner, Mahler and Janáček, but this was intimate poetic singing of effortless polish and consummate control. I noticed the name of Heddle Nash as one of his early teachers, and there was a very real sense all evening of extending an ear back in time to eavesdrop on that generation of singers which created the songs of Warlock and his contemporaries. I understand that Mr Mitchinson now runs a private practice from home in west Wales. Those who offer courses in the interpretation of British song would do well to persuade him out of retirement more regularly to ensure that something of his elegant artistry continues to be handed on to present students and future professionals.

Rhian Davies

2001 - Fall in the House of Usher

On Saturday 3rd November 2001 I set off for Felix Aprahamian's house in Muswell Hill, looking forward to the Peter Warlock Society Social Lunch. On arrival I was invited to sign the visitors book - more of this later.

Apparently there had been a committee meeting earlier but I arrived just in time for the real business of the day: eating, drinking and a free and frank exchange of views. On entering the kitchen I witnessed a tasteful arrangement of pork pies and cans of beer cunningly combined to form the initials PW: this survived for about ten seconds before being demolished by the ravenous hordes. The last time I had visited Felix's house, for an AGM some years before, my abiding memories had been of the Chinese garden and the organ in the Music Room. This time I noticed a few other things, including a wonderful collection of drinking glasses and a display of metal fish on the walls (including one consisting of simply the skeleton, labelled "memento mori").

After most people had left a few of sat down in the kitchen for tea and chocolate biscuits and were treated to a memorable couple of hours of Felix's reminiscences about everything under the sun.

Felix announced he would be fetching out a book that only appeared on special occasions. This turned out to be an original edition of "L'Art du Facteur d'Orgues" by Dom Bedos, which Felix had once bought for £30 - a reproduction is currently being offered on the Internet for \$600.

The highlight of the afternoon was a guided tour through Felix's visitors book from its beginnings in the late fifties to 1986 (to be continued next time?). This contained the signatures of anyone you cared to name (and a few you might not) but a few that I remember were:

The Crouch End Festival Chorus (well, not all of them)
Eric Fenby (with the first few bars he took down for Delius appended)
Olivier Messiaen
Ernest Ansermet
Stanley Sadie
Yehudi Menuhin
Miriam Karlin (remember *The Rag Trade*?)

and even our very own, Malcolm "2 Bottles" Rudland. (You should understand this if you were at John Bishop's birthday/memorial concert).

As Felix said more than once: "If only I'd started it in the thirties!" If only he had.

Chris Sreeves

A Warlock archive at Eton

When the history of the Peter Warlock Society comes to be written, 22 February 2002 will figure as an important date in its calendar, for this was the date

of the acquisition of the Felix Aprahamian Warlock Collection by Eton College Library, and on that occasion the College did the Society proud in ways that far exceeded the call of duty.

Felix, a senior member of the Society's committee, is an eminent musician in his own right, a distinguished writer and journalist and a friend of almost every composer of note. His amusing stories of encounters with, for instance, Delius and Poulenc, mask a fundamentally serious and dedicated attitude to music, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the splendid music archive to be found at his home - affectionately known as "The House of Usher".

The BBC has inevitably led the way in the guidance of musical taste over the past seventy years, and for the most part this influence has done nothing but good. However, with the appointment of William Glock as Controller of Music in 1959, an important period of British music seemed to find little favour. The English pastoral tradition in particular was largely ignored and the music of Peter Warlock, one aspect of this genre, was thrown out with the bath water.

The advent of Classic FM brought a healthy form of competition to Radio 3 which has been forced to reduce its promulgation of the avant-garde. As a Radio 3 producer myself, I was able to take advantage of Glock's recent departure to mount in 1984 a series of almost all the Warlock songs. He is now taking his place as a composer of significance with the general public rather than within the confines of a small group of enthusiasts. The establishment of the archive at the composer's old school can only hasten this process, and the Society recognises with gratitude its debt to the College.

Making our way to the College Library we were impressed by the grandeur of the quadrangle adjoining the chapel, which brought to mind Tom Quad in Christ Church, Oxford. In the Library, the material donated by Felix was laid out in exemplary fashion. The original manuscripts displayed Warlock's exquisite penmanship, even extending to careful spacing along the staves thus avoiding blank spaces. In addition there was on display music already in the College Library with Warlock associations. He had taken part as a schoolboy in a performance of Parry's *Eton, an Ode* conducted by the composer.

We were then entertained to a reception in the Provost's Lodge, where we had the opportunity to talk to members of staff and to find out more about the school. It emerged that music scholarships are on offer, which pay school fees in their entirety, and the school also now accepts girls.

When the acquisition of the archive was first raised with the librarian of Eton, Malcolm Rudland and the school's Director of Music, Ralph Allwood, had the idea of a Warlock concert given by the boys. This took place in the Election Hall after the reception and even though I had already been told that much time was spent choosing visiting singing teachers, nothing could have prepared us for the high standard that we heard.

The programme consisted of some two dozen soloists (who also formed an SATB chorus) in a corresponding number of songs, together with five accompanists. It is impossible to describe every performance in detail; suffice it to say that every voice (whether treble, tenor or baritone) showed evidence of careful training and of considerable potential. Voice production was at a high standard and intonation in the more chromatic songs was always true and accurate. Even Felix, the professional critic, confessed to being overwhelmed by the performances. He also noted, as a sign of the times, a concession to contemporary sensibilities. In *Mr Belloc's Fancy* the poet JC Squire had written "a very fine taste the Jews have not"; this became "a very fine taste some Jews have not". [Editor's note: I don't think that we should get too upset about this. Squire's verse satirised Belloc's own anti-Semitism and, at the end, the latter's predilection for gratuitous Latin interpolations. On these grounds one should stick with the original words and offer an explanation afterwards if needed.]

An interesting link with musical history arose in the case of Edward Bainton, singer of *Rest Sweet Nymphs*. He is a direct descendant of Edgar Bainton who, though London born, became Director of the Sydney State Conservatorium of Music and met Felix in 1953.

The programme had been skilfully arranged so that groups of songs alternated with ensemble pieces and, rather than list every song and every singer, both songs and performers were listed in groups, so that it was not always possible to tie song to name with certainty. Those songs that called for mature imagination were no less effective for being sung by young people and I was particularly impressed by the treble, Christopher Rees, whose sense of line and phrasing displayed the instincts of a true performer and by Tim Dickinson, soon to join the choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, awaiting only A-level results. We wish him the best of luck. One of my daughters is reading music at Oxford, and she tells me that there it is recognised that tenors and basses from Eton can be relied upon to be of the highest standard. Two of the excellent accompanists also performed solo songs and we cannot commend their versatility enough.

The concert began with the soloists singing, in chorus and without a conductor, *Benedicamus Domino*, and it was clear that we were in for a memorable evening with tone, blend, intonation and ensemble at a high standard. After the concert I enquired who had rehearsed them but, it appeared, "they just got it together themselves".

Two movements from *Capriol* in its piano duet version showed fine judgement in choice of tempo, *Maltworms* was given an uninhibited and (apparently) semi-inebriated performance, and the concert ended with a quite hypnotic performance of *Bethlehem Down*.

The overall impression was of a group of young people who had been trained not only in the art of singing, but also in the art of performance. Even more impressive was the vocal maturity of tenors and basses who cannot have been in possession of their

voices for more than five or six years. They showed not only poise and confidence but could enter unreservedly and unselfconsciously into the feeling of each song and, furthermore, convey their feelings to us without ostentation. They were greatly helped by a group of sensitive and able accompanists who dealt in summary fashion with the sometimes notoriously difficult piano parts.

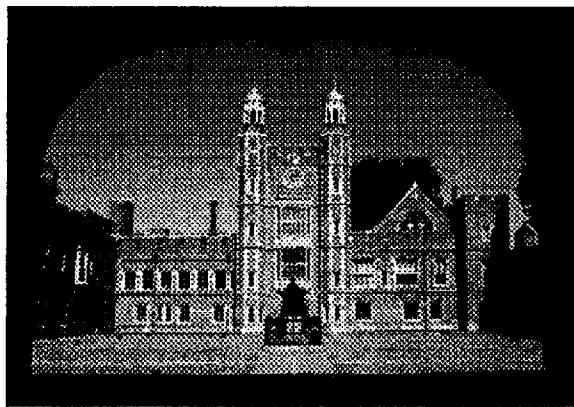


Photo courtesy Eton College Photographic Archive

Malcolm Rudland tendered a vote of thanks [see below - Ed.] for the hospitality accorded to the Society acknowledging, in particular, the work of Ralph Allwood, and those responsible for the high standard of singing - Margaret Humphrey Clarke, Anita Morrison and Robert Rice.

Re-reading this article, I find that it contains many superlatives. I would not wish to change one of them.

Eric Wetherell

The singers were: Edward Bainton, Tim Dickinson, Jack Ellison, William Haggard, John Haworth, Edward Jones, James Kanagasooriam, Tim Lowe, Nicholas Ovenden, Rashmi Patel, Michael Phillips, Christopher Rees, Nicholas Richardson, James Sherlock, Robert Shorter, Patrick Stobbs, Edward Warrick, Ben Winpenny

The pianists were: William Haggard, Michael Phillips, James Sherlock, Paul Wingfield, Ben Winpenny

(Malcolm Rudland's vote of thanks recalled Julian Nott, then a 17 year-old Etonian, who put on a very enterprising all-Warlock concert in 1978. After announcing that events of the day would feature in a forthcoming edition of BBC Radio 3's *Music Matters* he went on to thank Margaret Humphrey Clarke and her two singing teacher colleagues, Anita Morrison and Robert Rice, for all the hard work needed to present an event like this. Those who knew every note and every word of every item performed that night recognise that it just doesn't come easy.

He went on to make a personal presentation to Eton from another of Felix Aprahamian's archives, his vast collection of organ music. He said that he could not offer Eton the real thing as the collection is destined for the Royal College of Organists, but he gave a performable photocopy to Ralph Allwood. It

missed a direct Warlock connection by two months: the composer was on the music staff at Eton from 1900 to the summer of 1908 but Warlock did not arrive until the autumn of that year.

Ralph Allwood identified it as a piece by Thomas Dunhill called *In Weston's Yard (An Eton Picture)* and he knew that Eton didn't possess a copy "as Alistair (Sampson – the Eton organist) was looking for a copy this morning!"

Sacred and profane

Holst Singers/Stephen Layton
St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge
2nd March 2002

Writing the first part of this review is easy and shouldn't take long: I went to hear the Warlock, of course, a rare performance of *The full heart*. The note told us – something I'd not picked up before – that a performance of it by the Newcastle Bach Choir half a century ago needed 36 rehearsals spread over more than a year; and it is still a formidable piece 80+ years after its composition. The Holst Singers gave no hint of its real difficulties. Every note was in place, every nuance was expressed; but this was no dry, technical delivery, it throbbed as only a living organism can do. I could describe all of the evening's performances in the same terms.

That covers about five minutes of the programme; what of the rest? The juxtaposition of the items, what was associated with what else, was itself stimulating, even provocative. And the way that the Warlock piece fared against and related to its fellows, the competition so to speak, kept my brain cells moving – an occurrence for which I'm becoming increasingly grateful. Perhaps I should list that competition. The proceedings got under way with *The evening watch* by the composer whose name has been appropriated by the choir. There followed works by Hubert Parry (*There is an old belief*), Jonathan Harvey (*Come Holy Ghost*) and, to close the first half, Morton Lauridson, a name new to me (*Five "Fire madrigals"*). The second half began with the Warlock; it prefaced pieces by Frederick Delius (*Two songs to be sung on the water*) and Benjamin Britten, whose cycle *Sacred and profane* lent its title to the whole event.

There were lots of chords, scrunchy ones, the sorts of delicious dissonances that make British – dare I say English – music so exciting and sensuous, sensual even. The logic behind Gustav Holst's piece, chords built on 4ths, may have lain outside Warlock's technique in *The full heart* but it produced some results remarkably akin to those elsewhere in his *oeuvre*. One of Warlock's compositional features is the use of pentatonic shapes; they may have derived from Delius or they could come from his knowledge of folksong (perhaps *via* Bartók). But Warlock doesn't just use pentatonics melodically; he includes chords based on them in his pieces and inevitably this produces the same sorts of sounds found in the Holst piece.

Even though they sound different from one another, there's a chronological link between Parry's *There is an old belief* and *The full heart*. Parry's piece was published in 1916 but Jeremy Dibble conjectures that the undated manuscript was completed early the previous year following "extensive revision" of a piece first performed in 1907.¹ So it was coming to fruition, not without difficulties, around the time that Warlock was beginning a piece that he too would find troublesome. Their proximity in time, then, only emphasises the contrast in vocabulary between the generations.

I never thought that I would describe a piece by Jonathan Harvey alongside one by Warlock. I don't mean that unkindly, far from it. Harvey abstracts his initial sonorities in *Come Holy Ghost* in a way that Warlock, his open-mindedness towards new music aside, could never have imagined; but the former's starting point, monophonic plainchant, chimes with PW's practice in that the modal element at the beginning of Harvey's piece evokes references heard all over the place in Warlock. (And modality is such an essential element of English music . . . but that's another story.)

The programme-notes sought to establish a connection between devices employed in Lauridson's *Madrigals* and the Gesualdo association with *The full heart*. I find this forced: although Warlock's piece is an act of homage ("To the immortal memory of the Prince of Venosa") it is not in any sense a pastiche or, as is the case with the Lauridson pieces, a reworking of elements found in Italian music of the late renaissance. Warlock was fascinated by Gesualdo and cites him, first in his perceptive essay on chromaticism and, later, alongside Delius and Wagner.² He was one of the first writers in the twentieth century to recognise Gesualdo's significance: his and Cecil Gray's joint effort would be the only extended study of the composer until Glenn Watkins's book³ which appeared over 40 years after Warlock's death. But these facts themselves cannot suggest any similarities between Warlock's and Gesualdo's music. In fact the only credible composer-influence behind *The full heart* must be Delius. The piece suffered from the identity-crisis that Warlock was experiencing in his early twenties; he thought that the way forward lay in emulating his hero and the evidence is all over the early songs (*A lake and a fairy boat*, *The cloths of Heaven*, *The water lily*, *The lover mourns for the loss of love* and more). It wasn't until he worked out a way of insinuating his own thought-processes and ideas that he declared a viable and distinctive methodology. *The full heart* was only delivered after a long gestation; it was completed in 1920 but had been started some five years earlier when PW was still compositionally insecure. It contains chordal and linear devices which anticipate the mature, developed, Warlockian style of a few years later but still screams "Delius" in places, especially at the climactic setting of the words "O my companions . . ." where the appoggiaturas in particular give the game away.

To prove the unmade point, a Warlock was followed

by a pair of Deliuses, the first of which demonstrated Warlock's starting point so adeptly. There are similarities in the chordal language of the two composers (not all the time, admittedly) but Delius's chorus, sans text, has echoes in the wordless figures given to the solo soprano in Warlock's piece and, by extension, to its (many, occasionally long) melismas – these from a composer who used melisma very rarely.

The final set of pieces provided the opposite context of Parry's part-song. Britten's cycle, written at the end of his life, came from a composer who had been born around the time that Parry was beginning his reworking and only a couple of years before Warlock began *The full heart*. So, if Parry and Holst can be seen to represent two earlier generations of British vocal music than PW's, Britten and Harvey can stand for the next two; in this way much of the twentieth century was spanned by this imaginative programme.

Brian Collins

Notes

1 Jeremy Dibble *C Hubert H Parry: his life and music* OUP 1992 p.478

2 Philip Heseltine "Early chromaticism in the light of modern music" *The Chesterian* Sep. 1922 pp.5-10. See also Cecil Gray and Philip Heseltine *Carlo Gesualdo Prince of Venosa: Musician and murderer* Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd 1926 pp.118 et seq.

3 Glenn Watkins *Gesualdo: the man and his music* OUP 1973/1991

A Medical Curlew

On 1 October last year in Leighton House, Holland Park, Kensington, I heard a performance of *The curlew* promoted by a team of doctors and their friends. The occasion was the brain child of Dr Nick Rhodes of the South Kensington and Chelsea Mental Health Centre, who raised £1,350 in aid of The Nightingale Project, a charity he set up to promote a healing and life-affirming atmosphere in his unit through music and art. Any other Warlockians who care to support this project further, please contact Dr Rhodes on 020 8746 5848, e-mail n.a.rhodes@virgin.net. All the ticket sales from this performance went to the charity, as the venue and promotion costs were supported by another doctor, and all the performers gave their services free.

These Dr Rhodes organised under the imaginative name of the Rossignol Ensemble, suggesting his Nightingale Project was more to do with birds than the Crimean War heroine nurse, Florence. The performers were young medical colleagues and their friends, Mark Millidge (tenor), Caroline Ardron (flute), Alison Atkinson (Cello), Kathy Bamber and Simon Brown (violins), Sarah Watson (viola), Tess Nicholson and Marco Rossi, (piano) and Nick Theobald (oboe/cor anglais).

Imaginatively, the rest of the programme was from

the byways of music rather than its highways: Symanowski, Grovlez, Bozza, Keenan and Hahn, with all of whom Warlock made good company. Mark Millidge sang with assured pathos and melancholy and, although there was no conductor, the ensemble proved they had rehearsed well enough to offer a committed rendering.

Further performances of *The curlew* with Mark Millidge are planned on Saturday 21st April at 7.48pm, at which time all concerts start at Pigotts, Northdean, High Wycombe, Bucks. More details from Nick Wheeler Robinson on 01494 562167.

This will be repeated on Tuesday 23rd April at 7.30pm at Leighton House; more details from Hugh Rossenbalm on 020 8883 6729.

Malcolm Rudland

Felix around Warlock

On 3rd October 2001, Felix Aprahamian gave a talk at his home for the Haringay Music Society with the title *Around Warlock*. It was a wonderful pot-pourri of works by British composers whom Felix had either known or who knew him well enough to wave at (see Newsletter 45, page 1), and his erudite impromptu linking speeches were always full of depth and wit, but the evening started with the haunting voice of Felix's one-time boss, Sir Thomas Beecham, in which Beecham described his views on Delius. There followed that wonderful opening of Delius's *A Mass of Life*, which led to a haunting part of Warlock's *The curlew*, but any melancholy was quickly dispelled by *Mr Belloc's fancy*, and the *Serenade* (to Frederick Delius on his 60th birthday) by the same composer.

Warlock's friend and one-time house-mate, Ernest Moeran was represented with his *Sinfonietta*, and there was a pastoral section with Shepherd's Hey (Grainger) and *Shepherd Fennel's dance* (Balfour Gardiner). The evening closed with three Elgar pieces, part of the "*Enigma*" variations, Elgar himself improvising on the piano, and his orchestration of Bach's organ *Fantasia and Fugue* in C minor.

In the manner of a Victorian *soirée*, we all left feeling that our lives had been enriched and enhanced by contact with an extraordinary musician whose roots are in a bygone age.

Malcolm Rudland

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Paul Martyn-West gives a recital at the London School of Economics on Thursday 27th June, commencing at 6.45pm. In addition to pieces by Moeran and Vaughan Williams he will sing a number of Warlock's songs: *The lover's maze*, *After two years*, *Robin Goodfellow*, *Fair and true*, *Roister Doister* and *Rutterkin*.

NEWSBRIEFS

There will be a social gathering of the PWS – for as many as will – on 14th April (Sunday) at *The five bells*, Eynsford, Kent (PW's old local). The Society has not visited Eynsford for a few years now, not since our AGM weekend in 1998 as I recall. Although the pub does not do full meals on a Sunday other snacks and refreshments will be available. Entertainment (how the English language slips into decline!?) will be by the North Wood Morris Men, worthies all; lovely chaps; know them well.

The PWS committee meeting on 15th June will be followed by another Social Lunch. It starts at the usual time (12.30ish) at the usual venue (*The Antelope*, not quite in Chelsea but very near to Sloane Square, which is). If you've not been before it is easy to find: on leaving Sloane Square tube station turn right and then right again into Cliveden Place. About 200 yards along turn left into Eaton Terrace and you will immediately see the pub. Come and meet the gang.

As we go to press we are hoping that the London College of Music will host this year's 108th birthday concert for Peter Warlock on Tuesday 29th October at 1pm. This is to be confirmed but full details will, as usual, be posted in the Autumn edition of the Newsletter.

John Merrick of the Gloucestershire Chapter [*Hell's Angels? – Ed.*] has been trying to find the source of another Warlock anecdote, which he's sure he read about once, but which he says he could easily have imagined (*Anno Domini* he suggests.) It's about an occasion when PW and Jack Moeran were out on a motor bike (PW) and sidecar (EJM). The brakes failed as they were going down a hill but, fortunately for them, there was a pub at the bottom of the hill which they reached just at Opening Time – the pub doors duly opened and the bike came to rest in the bar! Any elucidation would be gratefully received both by John and the Society. (But we shan't tell Malcolm Rudland otherwise . . .)

Those who may remember the rave review Darren Jeffrey received for his contribution to the RNCM's 106th Birthday Concert in 2000, may like to know he stood in at short notice as Masetto in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at Covent Garden in February. Nor was this his debut: that was in *Tosca*. Malcolm Rudland witnessed his strengths anew: this time he was able to carry his Zerlina off stage as if in the cup of his hand! Other notable Warlock singers were in the cast: John Mark Ainsley was Don Ottavio and Simon Keenleyside was Don Giovanni. And Sir Charles Mackerras (remember our Centenary Lunch and concert?) conducted in his usual sprightly manner.

Two photographs taken in the library at Eton College where, just before the concert reviewed by Eric Wetherell (see pp.11-12), we were able to view the archive itself. Here (right) Felix chats to Ralph Allwood, Director of Music at Eton College. The photograph was taken by PWS Webmaster Richard Valentine . . .



. . . while this time Felix sits between Richard himself (left) and Malcolm Rudland. The editor is unsure of just who took this photograph but suggests that it was Richard's daughter. Mechanical restrictions mean that photographs do not reproduce too well but Richard is hoping to be able to put the colour versions of the pictures shown here on to the website.

Crickley Hill revisited – a reflection by Andrew Bax

(Pressure on space prevented publication last time. Should an explanation be needed see Newsletter no. 69)

