



The Peter Warlock Society

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EDITORIAL

You'll see within that my Chairman's report looked to raise the profile of the Society by increasing our financial base so that the schemes that we wish to effect in order to promote our composer and his output can be brought about. I asked the membership to be as active as they can in this respect. But, after further thought and discussion within your committee I think it important to say what the Society as a body can do. We have had considerable success in providing a kind of back-up service for individuals or groups who wish to promulgate Peter Warlock and his music. There is a huge pool of knowledge and expertise within the PWS, a team of individuals who, through their research, knowledge and practical experience can support ventures initiated by local organisations – musical societies, performance groups (choirs, orchestras etc.) who would like to organise an event in which Peter Warlock's music or influence plays a significant part. We have extensive access to printed materials; we have speakers; we might be able to put organisations in touch with individual performers and directors, should they be needed; many of us will help small-scale, local groups on an expenses-only basis although this must be subject to negotiation with individuals. In the past our emphasis has been on events instigated by the Society; our AGM weekends (similar to that reported in this issue) are cases in point. Given the experience we have gained in effecting and supporting workshops, concerts and lectures, we now feel able to move outside what we have generated within the Society and offer support to other musical organisations that seek it.

The impetus is likely to be generated by our own members or their friends. We can only offer the service described above if people know about it and so we rely heavily on the activities of our membership in bringing it to the knowledge of organisations with which they are associated, directly or indirectly.

We await your requirements. Please get in touch.

Brian Collins

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AGM 2002

Chairman's report

Looking back over the past twelve months is not something I like to do in Chairman's reports. It duplicates what you probably already know because you've read about it in the Newsletter or, better still, you were actually present yourself at one occasion or another and don't need my commentary. Yes, Warlock has been out on the road, in Gloucester, at Eton, in Cardiff *Et cetera*.

But I think that the last year has been one for taking stock of the situation. It certainly has for me. Last week I was in Oxford for a few hours meeting my daughter. The previous time I had been there was in 1995, when I was elected to the Chairmanship of the Society, and I found it hard to realise – as one always does at such moments – that so much time, seven years in this case, has passed. So I began to contemplate what had happened in the intervening years. Again, I'm not going to make a list because that would be another duplication of what you already know.

This report, then, finds the Chairman in introspective mood. I intend to keep the thing short and, unencumbered now of the need to describe a sequence of events, it will also be my personal view. And it is mostly in longhand – very rare these days!

Lots of things are in place, of course – printed scores for the most part. There is a lot more recorded Warlock too than was the case seven years ago and there are some very high-quality performances amongst it, although whether this availability is anything to do with us must be a matter of opinion. There are also several books that can be accessed by anyone wishing to learn more and, in this case, it's true to say that they have actually been instigated by the Society or written by Society members. Research, largely of a biographical nature, continues and is recorded in the Newsletter. And the pictorial biography, a major undertaking, continues apace. This last-named project, while referred to several times in the Newsletter and past reports, may not be uppermost in the consciousness of the wider membership. But new material continues to surface and we should be very grateful to Dr Rhian Davies for her work not just in terms of gathering and assessing material but also in taking on the mechanics of moving it towards the eventual printing.

Nevertheless, however good and healthy all of this is, questions continue to arise. They don't keep me awake at night but they occasionally niggle.

Is the PWS any different from the way it was seven years ago? Our membership is about the same and may have declined a little; we reached a peak in the Centenary Year and it has fallen back somewhat since. I do think that our membership is a more cohesive unit socially. Events such as those taking place this weekend see to that and I think it is significant that since 1994 only two of our AGMs have taken place in central London and this is the third one in the same period that has been extended to take in other, related activities. I would encourage

and support all events that go out and confront not only our membership but other interested groups or individuals in a geographically diverse way.

But are we happy to carry on with a membership of about 250 and the financial constraints that creates? The biography aside there are still publishing projects that we ought to be considering – that the committee is considering in principle – but which are financially inaccessible at present. We must always bear in mind that the primary aim of the Peter Warlock Society is to promote his music and work and to make – and keep – it accessible. I think we restrict ourselves to publishing as our principal activity: we don't go near putting on concerts on the South Bank and at similar venues; we've had our fingers burned in the past. But that doesn't get away from the fact that we are not in a position to reissue, say, PW's transcriptions or to support Barry Smith's complete Warlock correspondence.

We are, in fact, ticking over. I'm not suggesting that is, *ipso facto*, a bad thing. But could it be better? Thinking about the role of the committee and its oversight of the Society's interests I have to say that I miss the input – however provocative – of John Bishop. I wonder if I'd be writing in quite this way if he were still with us.

So I am asking you, the membership, those of you here this afternoon and those who will be reading this in the Newsletter, to do two things. Firstly I'd like to know – we'd like to know – what you'd like to do differently in the Society. I know that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" but I'm not sure that there isn't a little fracture here and there. Secondly I'd like you to be aware of promoting the Society and encouraging, where it is appropriate, people to join. We have tried various methods in the past, including taking out adverts in the musical press, but they have yielded little. The technique most likely to achieve results is personal contact. Let other people know of the work the Society does, bring them along to our social events, and if you need publicity materials ask Malcolm Rudland or myself. I'm not asking you to do anything as banal as coercing at least one friend into joining – theoretically that would double our membership but it's so tasteless. And I'm not going to call this "The Chairman's Challenge" – that's far too corny; but I am asking you to promote the Society where you can – local music societies and performing groups – and we'll try to raise our profile a bit and, hopefully, raise our income too.

Brian Collins

The weekend – in and around Llandyssil

1 – Saturday

The Peter Warlock Society came home again to Wales on the 4th and 5th May, specifically to Llandyssil, Powys, and nearby Cefn-Bryntalch; and we certainly were given a welcome. The composer wrote some of his finest songs when living in mid-Wales from 1921

to 1924 and again in 1928. He taught himself Welsh and other Celtic languages, played the organ at St Tyssil's Church and went for long walks in the beautiful surrounding countryside.

Arriving at Newtown on Friday, 3rd May, and well used to the glories of the south-west of England, I could understand Warlock's love of this part of Wales. The next few days were to confirm my first impressions. The whole programme was brilliantly organised by Dr Rhian Davies, vice-Chair of the Society, who has strong links with the area, and the hospitality in Llandyssil was kindly provided by the Rector, his wife and many parishioners.

Proceedings began on Saturday morning with an exhibition of Warlockiana and a bookstall in the Church Hall. From there we moved into the Church, where Dr Brian Collins, our Chairman, began with a surprise: a previously unknown photograph of Warlock's friend, the poet Robert Nichols, had been discovered at Cefn-Bryntalch by a subsequent owner of Warlock's family home. Mr Christopher Halliday, son of the family who bought the house, lock, stock and barrel, from the Buckley-Jones estate, generously donated the picture to the Society. Brian immediately handed the photo to Rhian, who is preparing the pictorial biography of PW.

Brian then introduced Ian Parrott, Professor Emeritus of the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. His topic was *Peter Warlock in Wales*. In a wide-ranging survey, Prof. Parrott touched upon Warlock's perambulations into Shropshire in search of a drink, the Buckley-Jones family's effect on the parish, Warlock's interest in psychic research, his meetings with Bartók and the influence of Cyril Scott.

Prof. Parrott also pointed out that by his very nature Warlock quarrelled with everyone and rejected so many conventions. Thus, because his background was English-speaking Welsh upper-class he turned to Celtic languages; he rejected the shooting of animals in favour of pacifism; respectable religion in favour of atheism; respectable love in favour of free love; restraint in favour of strong drink; even the obedience of dogs in favour of cats! This was a refreshing excursion into familiar Warlock territory but without the slavish approval of everything Our Hero did.

After a splendid lunch at the *Upper House Inn* in Llandyssil, we returned to the Church School for the Society's AGM after which our Chairman, Brian, gave a lecture on *Peter Warlock's Cefn-Bryntalch Compositions*. Those who have purchased Brian's book, *Peter Warlock, the Composer*, will have known what to expect: a well-argued, learned account. Nor were they disappointed. Brian began by pointing out that Warlock's arrival at Cefn-Bryntalch occurred at the end of a very exhausting period in his life and that the years 1921-4 represented a period when Warlock produced some of his finest works. Four works were treated, firstly *The curlew* begun in 1915 but virtually abandoned in 1920. Warlock comes to Wales, is in the right frame of mind and "the tap is turned on." In *The withering of the boughs* there is reference to earlier, Delian influence but we see more strongly the result of his meeting with Bernard van

Dieren. The active string writing, reminding the listener of the *scherzo* of Schoenberg's 2nd String Quartet, becomes more frenetic in the second verse. Brian spoke also of the later use of two pentatonic modes and the *sprechgesang* of the third appearance of "No boughs . . .". Because of its intensity this passage has become almost impossible for me to listen to over the past 50 years.

Turning to *Lillygay*, the speaker mentioned the style changes within this cycle and revealed that Warlock had the copy of Bartók's 1st Quartet sent to him in October 1921. *Candlelight*, a particular favourite of mine, followed – what a contrast! Brian saw a Bartókian influence in *I had a little pony* and pointed out the "sheer nerve" in writing *Suky you shall be my wife* with its big circle of 5ths, beginning on the flat side of the tonic and ending in a perfect cadence – and then repeated!

Finally, Brian had only limited time to talk about *Autumn twilight*, which he described as difficult to assess because Warlock had turned a new artistic corner; it has a romantic element, reminiscent of the earlier *Saudades* songs.

Society members had been kindly invited to tea at Cefn-Bryntalch by the Nelson family, the present owners. For a number of us it was the first time we had had the opportunity to visit this splendid site with its Grade II*-listed, Victorian house set in an ancient environment.

But the day was not yet complete for, at 8pm, after dinner at *The Lion*, Caerhowel, we enjoyed in Llandyssil Church a "Celebration of the composer in Montgomeryshire". The performers were the Guilsfield Singers (conducted by Suzanne Edwards), Marian Martin (soprano), Christopher Booth-Jones (baritone) with Alwena Nutting (piano) and Tim Mills and Malcolm Rudland (organ). Dr Rhian Davies introduced (in Welsh and in English) the singers and players and spoke of Warlock's love of the area. Interspersed with Warlock compositions, we heard five organ pieces from *A paeon for Peter Warlock: Mirth and play (a jaunt through three green arbours)* by John Mitchell, *Fugue on "Fair and true"* by Eric Wetherell, *Toccata* by Brian Collins, *An old tyrley shepherd song* by Ian Parrott and *Song-tune prelude on "Sweet and Twenty"* by Trevor Hold. Most intriguing, though, was an anonymous horn *obbligato* that Julian Baker played in the last chorus of *Peter Warlock's fancy*, where did it come from? At the end of the concert the audience was invited to join in the performance of some of Warlock's *Sociable songs* – *Maltworms*, *Twelve oxen*, *Fill the cup Philip* and *One more river* – a slight but jolly end to what had been a day packed with profound and stimulating events.

Brian Hammond

2 – Do you want the long one or the short one?

The Abbot Tysilio, patron saint of the church and after whom the village in which we were gathered was named, was reputed to have ended his days at Saint-Suliac in Brittany where later a Benedictine

monastery was founded. It was therefore a happy coincidence, although perhaps not entirely a coincidence, that we had Father Anthony OSB, nothing if not a communicator, to conduct the service and speak to us.

When the present St Tysilio's was built, it was doubtless more easy to persuade small boys to sing in the choir than it is today. My father was a church organist all his adult life and was often observed tearing his hair out – he had very little left even by the age of 30 – when confronted by regular pre-pubescent Friday evening absenteeism. On 5th May however, our mostly well-balanced choir of volunteers had been rehearsed, was (for the most part) enthusiastic, and sang with panache.

In order to recreate in some way the service at which Warlock played the organ on 13th November 1921, suitable music for it was cleverly arranged around that which we know was given that day eighty years ago. Clues had been provided by the composer in his letter written to Cecil Gray the Saturday following the service. In this way we had some of the right music but yet even more music that was in a different sense “just right”. Malcolm Rudland, resplendent in cassock and surplice as Warlock had been all those years ago, played in his usual stylish manner, although not helped by an instrument part of which seemed temperamentally somewhat challenged. We hear that, after the service, the vicar (so impressed had he been with the playing) was moved to count Malcolm's fingers to his regular organist, confirming only the conventional number on each hand.

Mr Cyril Mountford, still a regular attender at the church, was most certainly present that late autumn day. He was baptised only 3 years before in 1918, and, military service apart, has never missed worship since. Whether he was old enough to be impressed by the subtleties of the improvisation at the end of the service we are not told.

I was brought up on Caleb Simper in the same way that some people are raised on porridge but long for eggs and bacon. I mean no disrespect. He was famous in his long lifetime and some of his music is still published by Stainer and Bell, as is Warlock's (at least they have that in common), and his *Melody for organ* is available on CD. I suspect, however, that modern trends mean that music shelves in many a song-school and vestry have been “rationalised” and not to his advantage. But his music gave the intoning of the ten commandments solemn emphasis, and the rest of the Eucharist setting was a reminder, if one was needed, of the weekly fare enjoyed (some would say “endured”) for so long by congregations for whom it was “sung throughout the civilised world”, the title of Christopher Turner's biography (Devon County Council 1992).

Celebrations of the life and music of composers were not the only way to fill the church in those days, and I am sure that this is still true in parts of Wales. But it has to be admitted that the church in this more questioning age often needs imagination to attract a congregation. For this captive audience on Sunday the 4th of May a symbolic bribe of a bag of boiled

sweets [*my recollection is chocolate eclairs – Ed.*], and the enquiry as to whether we wanted “the long one or the short one” were certainly worth trying. Personally, this perplexed Christian needed neither in order to enjoy such an energetic and thought-provoking address. Intellectual it was not, but neither was it aimed, as so many are, at merely the lowest common denominator in the pews.

Linking his words to the meaning behind Rogation Sunday and Ascensiontide, predictably enough the subject was the only possible one relevant to the occasion: of God, as creator of all things artistic, and the expression of beauty and emotion through unlikely conduits. How so often greatness (the quality Fr Anthony himself attributed to Warlock), as perceived by others, is directed through an unlikely subject. The more individual, often even tortured, the character, the more unique (if I may admit to tautology, on top of waffle, among my literary flaws) the work which emerges. Fr Anthony quoted a guerrilla fighter and a particularly unethically motivated tax-collector as being amongst the followers of Jesus. “Skimming off the top” was the expression employed describing the latter, although perhaps in Warlock's case that never went further than blowing the froth off a pint.

While we know that he could be mercurial in his personal relationships, his complex motives were based on strong, even headstrong, principles, which were always his own and not based on rules laid down by another man, whether on this earth or beyond it. The mystery of all this reminds this writer of a favourite limerick, (I think written by Ronald Knox) too clean for Warlock's taste perhaps:

O God, for as much as without Thee
We are not enabled to doubt Thee.
Help us by thy grace
To convince the whole race
We know nothing whatever about Thee.

Richard Valentine, no doubt proud of his sharing the profession of piano-tuner with Caleb Simper, has written eloquently in a previous Newsletter of the inexplicably emotional impact on him of the harmonic line of Warlock's music. I agreed with him that it had always affected me in the same way and we both decided that the whole thing was something impossible and probably unnecessary to analyse. This has been put down by one writer to the influence and ever developing use of the appoggiatura over the ages (discuss, in not more than 2 500 words).

However I would like to think that Fr Anthony was referring to what he would no doubt call simply the spirituality of this “otherworldly” feature of his music in his sermon, although he did not go so far as to specify this. But this aspect of his work that Warlock shares with so much of Delius's, even when – especially when – far away from the latter's influence, was sharply illustrated later in the afternoon. Back in the church, Michael Pilkington conducted an illuminating workshop with Kathryn Turpin. They discussed, among other fascinating things, the setting of words in *Sleep*. Occasionally this discussion extended to the audience, and a gentle

duel with Brian Collins over Warlock's intention over the word "little" ended as a one-all draw, I felt. Although a seemingly trivial moment, it was for me a sudden, clear insight into the quality of a composer, defining the "greatness" referred to by Fr Anthony. It points to something beyond the apparent meaning, stressed or not, in a particular way or ways. The words magically complement the harmony and add up to much more than the sum of the two.

Fr Anthony looks like anything but the picture of any Church of Wales vicar/rector I have known. I tried to persuade one to marry me once (in his capacity as a man of the cloth, of course), and he turned me down like a bedspread. But here I feel is a man who can look through a pint – or Benedictine – glass darkly, and on to the essential humanity within the man. I could have put up with far more than the mere 13½ minutes he gave us, even at the expense of a commandment or two and the foregoing of a little of *Simper Fidelis*. Perhaps when the Honorary Chaplaincy of the PWS becomes vacant . . . ?

What with the sermon, *Ebenezer (Tôn-y-botel* – in addition to Prof. Parrott's arrangement for organ played by Tim Mills), two Warlock chants based on the *Pavane (Capriol)* and *The cricketers of Hambledon* (see Newsletter 53, p.6), Stanley Roper's organ arrangement of *Pieds-en-Fair*, and the shorter of Warlock's two Cornish carols, *Kanow Kernow*, this was a moving service. The well-balanced choir of volunteers was conducted by Michael Pilkington and they sang the carol in the original Cornish, coached by the President of our Cornish Chapter [*There is no constitutional documentation of the validity or existence of such a sub-group, much as I like the individuals who might be involved or the locations that it could include – Ed. & Chairman*], Brian Hammond.

Before the service Malcolm played some pieces from *A paean for Peter Warlock*; a Warlockian touch did not go unnoticed when Betty Roe's *Leave me at the Fox Inn* came just before the Rector arrived.

This weekend was the first of its kind for this very new member of the PWS. There were the added bonuses of enough time beforehand to read the wittily eccentric, yet comprehensive *Parish Magazine*, not to mention the good food, drink and company throughout the weekend.

Although one swallow does not a supper make, the one nesting with its young in the porch was a nice touch, too.

Julian Baker

3 – Montgomery Castle

Why should adherents of a British-composer Society want to spend the last afternoon of their busy AGM weekend wandering around the ruins of a mediaeval castle? Would it not have been more sensible to use the time to catch an earlier train back to what passes for civilisation these days? After all, journeys from mid-Wales to (in my case) south London take hours. And hours. The British answer, I suppose, is "because

it's there" and there may be some truth in that. One cannot be in Montgomery (many of us had had lunch at *The Bricklayer's Arms*) and ignore the edifice. But this is about the Peter Warlock Society, after all, and like their hero, its members can be wayward. PW's demonstration of that quality was the belief that he could fly. It must be said that his mind was fuddled on that occasion, the result (allegedly) of a drinking spree with the infamous Dr Phillips of local legend. So, there was our excuse: himself jumped off the walls and, surprise surprise, broke his ankle.

Our guide was the extraordinary Ivor Tanner. His knowledge of the castle, its history and construction, is as deep as the well he cleared when the castle was subject to extensive archaeological examination. Mr Tanner suspects that the well is more extensive than his team was able to discover; I am equally sure that Mr Tanner's knowledge of the castle is greater than he was in a position to convey to us in a couple of hours on a Sunday afternoon. He was even able to speculate upon where it was that Warlock attempted his flight. At the time of the incident there would have been a considerable amount of rubble beneath the walls (now shifted, another part of the remit given to Mr Tanner and his workers) and so the drop would not have been as great in the '20s as it is now. A broken ankle then was likely; today, with the site cleared, injuries would have been far more serious.

So there we were. Cameras clicked and whirred. They may not have been able to record the copies of documents that we were shown afterwards or, indeed, the artefacts that Mr Tanner produced from the back of his car. The weather had been kind to us and we were feeling the benefits of a sunny day and a benevolent breeze. But we all felt grateful for the equal benefits of the information we had been given and the atmosphere that had been evoked. It was an appropriate *envoi* to a memorable weekend.

Brian Collins



PWS Chairman Brian Collins (right) with Mr Cyril Mountford outside the church in Llandyssil. Mr Mountford, who remembers the Buckley-Jones family well, was probably at the service at which PW deputised for the indisposed regular organist.

ARTICLES

Peter Warlock, Magic & the Anti-Self

I call to the mysterious one who yet
Shall walk the wet sands by the edge of the stream
And look most like me, being indeed my double,
And prove of all imaginable things
The most unlike, being my anti-self . . .

W B Yeats: *Ego dominus tuus*

Peter Warlock, both during and after his lifetime, has been an enigmatic figure surrounded by pervasive rumours and strange tales of 'split personality'; some have traced this controversial notion of a dualistic dichotomy between the gentle, sensitive and scholarly Philip Heseltine and the roistering, mephistophelean and charismatic Peter Warlock to Cecil Gray's 1934 memoir of the composer. I want to focus here on another and perhaps hitherto unsuspected dimension to this Philip Heseltine/Peter Warlock dualism – it is my contention that beneath these rumours lies a deliberate magical and artistic strategy on the part of the composer, a means both mysterious and vital which he intentionally cultivated to forge a link with the unfathomable sources of creative genius and inspiration . . .

I am sure that I am not alone in finding it near-impossible to read certain poems of W B Yeats's 1899 collection *The wind among the reeds* without inwardly hearing the spellbinding and deeply melancholic strains of Warlock's musical settings from *The curlew*. The composer had first met the Irish poet and occultist in April of 1918 when the latter invited Warlock to speak on music at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. It is clear that Peter Warlock was enthralled by the older man's ideas describing him as "a golden and blessed casket" and recording that they had "talked for several hours about the moon – and the talk was as beautiful as the moon of the 14th night itself",¹ an allusion to the lunar typology articulated in WB Yeats's *A vision*. It was during this time that Philip's interest in the recondite arcana of the Magical tradition became very intense; the composer's engagement of these matters began to move well beyond the merely theoretical – Cecil Gray wrote regarding the Irish sojourn that he was certain that

. . . at this time, and for some time after, perhaps always, Philip was an ardent believer in the objective reality of the phenomena of the magical arts, and . . . he practised them assiduously during this period of his life.

Gray cites Philip's notebooks from the year in Ireland, notebooks

filled with extracts and comments upon works dealing with every aspect of the subject, from . . . technical aspects of astrology to the method of divination by means of the tarot, and from the purely philosophic and theoretical side of magic, as found in the writings of Eliphas Levi, down to its actual practice according to the formulas rituals and incantations contained in such works as *The Book of Abramelin the Mage* and the writings of Cornelius Agrippa.²

So it is clear that Philip's researches were of no

superficial cast but constituted a systematic study of the deeper aspects of Western Magic.

It was in 1918, the year that he and Peter Warlock associated with each other, that W B Yeats published his curious work, part spiritual autobiography, part exposition of magical poetics, *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*. Consideration of this work may well give some idea of the esoteric concepts he was imbibing from WB Yeats at this time. (Remember that Yeats was an accomplished, inspired and deeply learned practitioner of Magic as a high-ranking Adept of the Stella Matutina, a later incarnation of the famous Victorian occult sodality the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.)

The essence of Yeats's magical poetics lay in invoking the Daimon, the higher Spirit-Being attached to an individual as conductor, guide and guardian in this life; this is a Neoplatonic concept, of great antiquity, which is perhaps best known from the example of Socrates' "Good Daimon" who inspired him with wisdom and counsel, the ideas expounded by Plato in his *Republic X* and *Timaeus* and in the tractate of Plotinus in his *Ennead III.4* entitled *On the Daimon allotted to us*.³ Plato defined the Daimon as "the power which consummates the chosen life" and Heraclitus had also taught that "The Daimon is the Destiny" of an individual. In his work *The God of Socrates* the Middle Platonist Lucius Apuleius remarks that the "Daimones" are

certain divine powers holding a position and possessing a character midway between gods and men, and that all divination and the miracles of magicians are controlled by them.

Gaining contact with one's Daimon remained an important Magical objective well into the mediaeval and Renaissance eras;⁴ various techniques exist in traditional astrology to determine the nature of one's Daimon from the natal chart of a person.

For W B Yeats, at the time Philip was associating with him, this Neoplatonic concept of the inspiring Daimon as the source of creative energy and genius had become pivotal: he believed firmly that artists and creative people were informed by the numinous influence of perfected Spirit-Beings who descended to "possess" them in the trance of creative ecstasy. In his book Yeats expressed the doctrine that artistic genius depended upon a basis of Daimonic communion as the true source of creative power. In particular WB Yeats expressed his creative ideology via three symbols or themes – the Mask, the Antithetical Self and the Daimon. In the poet's view the Daimon is opposite to the earthly person to whom it is linked. The task facing the artist is to fashion a "mask" which expresses those qualities most remote from his mundane personality and which encapsulates the "other" most powerfully, the "Antithetical Self" or "Anti-Self". When the artist assumes this "mask" and identifies with the "Anti-Self" the Daimon is attracted and invoked; the illuminative influx can then occur which invests an individual with divine inspiration. As WB Yeats puts it:

the Daimon comes not as like to like but seeking its own opposite, for man and Daimon feed the hunger in one another's hearts . . . they are but knit together when the

man has found a mask whose lineaments permit the expression of all the man most lacks, and it may be dreads, and of that only.

Hence Yeats had chosen the suggestive motto *Daemon est Deus Inversus* as an initiate of the Golden Dawn.⁵

Can it be coincidence that Philip, after spending much time conversing with WBY at this period of esoteric incandescence, seems to have begun to formulate closely related ideas concerning Magic, Art and the creation of a mask whose qualities are wholly oppositional to the everyday self? Certainly Philip expressed his conviction that communion with spiritual beings and the realisation of creative power are intimately intertwined. In a letter to Colin Taylor written in August 1918 he states his beliefs with clarity:

individuals in artistic matters (as elsewhere) are but the tools of certain tendencies and forces. One allies oneself with a certain force or direction and the more one effaces oneself, the more strongly can this force operate through one: that is the actual fact - yet it appears to the world that one's power is a personal thing . . . whereas in truth in all matters of art and spiritual things "every good and perfect gift cometh from above", that is from within and yet from beyond one's self - "he that loseth his life shall find it", the truer, higher self, the force which works through the phenomenal puppet the world calls the person.⁶

The composer here seems to be indicating the idea that musical inspiration could be invoked through communion with the spiritual world, that creative energy and direction could be drawn upon via contact with the 'other side' of existence. One cannot but be reminded of William Blake's assertion concerning his own images: "Tho' I call them mine I know that they are not mine."

One of the visible surface manifestations of this formulation of an oppositional Mask for Peter Warlock appears to have consisted in developing a new image or personal appearance. Barry Smith in his biography of PW has commented on this change of appearance in 1918 saying

It is also significant that during this period Philip grew a beard for the first time, his "fungus" as he liked to call it.⁷

And in a letter to Colin Taylor PW says that he had done so

for a purely talismanic purpose: as such it works, and this is more important to me than mere appearance . . .

Cecil Gray also finds PW's adoption of a new image more than superficially significant, calling it the composer's

first decisive step towards the assumption of the elaborate mask which he was ultimately destined to adopt permanently.

This change of personal image coincides with a particularly intense phase of magical and spiritualistic experimentation on Warlock's part. Also a surge of creative force seems to have indeed possessed PW as he composed 10 songs within a fortnight, of exquisite inspirational quality. In another passage from the same letter to Taylor he says:

It is not for no purpose that I have been drawn to the study of the things that lie beyond the confines of our narrow sensuous world: and I will tell you, in strict

confidence, that I have already received very definite and detailed communications concerning music from sources which the ignorant and unheeding world call supernatural: and that there is unlimited power behind these sources.⁸

The Yeatsian biographer R.F. Foster traced influences upon the poet's ideas from the writings of James Clarence Mangan citing "Mangan's idea that the artist of genius must wear a mask at will"⁹ and one review of *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* which appeared in the May 1918 issue of *Current Opinion* was headed "Yeats' Justification of the 'Dual Personality' of Artists". If the myths of "split-personality" surrounding Philip Heseltine/Peter Warlock do indeed partake of the character of the concepts explained above they belong to a well-established tradition: the "Stella Matutina" which Yeats led for a period adhered to the practice of its member taking on a new name or motto at their initiation, a name encapsulating the deepest aspirations of the soul; in Western Magic the assumption of a new name is part and parcel of the building up or realisation of a "magical self", a modality of being remote from the everyday world and persona, through which a truer Selfhood can be experienced; it is via this 'Magical Self' and its intensification that consciousness is exalted beyond the limitations of the mundane identity and actions become efficacious at levels usually unattainable. Of course Philip through his explorations of Magical lore would have been well acquainted with these notions.

Perhaps it is in this light that we may consider the riddle of the "dual personality" of Philip Heseltine and begin to understand the mysterious spiritual powers which he sought to attract and express in his assumption of the mask of the Warlock.

Nigel Jackson

Notes

1 Barry Smith: *Peter Warlock: the Life of Philip Heseltine*, Oxford 1994 p.135

2 Cecil Gray: *Peter Warlock: a Memoir of Philip Heseltine*, London 1934 p.163

3 Plotinus: *The Enneads* (trans. Stephen Mackenna), London 1991 p.166

4 Cornelius Agrippa: *Three Books of Occult Philosophy Bk III*, St. Paul 1993 ch.21 *Of obeying a proper genius, and of the searching out the nature thereof* and ch. 22 *That there is a threefold keeper of man, and from whence each of them proceed*. S L Mathers (trans.) *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*, Wellingborough 1976.

5 For a good overview of Yeats's magical poetics and inspirational techniques see Susan Johnston Graf: *W B Yeats - Twentieth Century Magus*, York Beach, 2000.

6 Smith *op. cit.* p.135

7 *ibid* p.153

8 *ibid* p.155

9 R F Foster: *W B Yeats: A Life, 1 The Apprentice Mage*, Oxford 1998 p.90

Two Clews to a Maze

The anonymous poem of *The lover's maze* was transcribed by Warlock from a manuscript in the British Museum. Whilst it would be interesting to know whether the reasoning behind his ascription of the authorship to Thomas Campion would be anywhere near sufficient for a modern musicologist, I question just one word in the last verse: "Cull and clip and kisse"? Really?

Admittedly, taking *cull* to mean *gather*, one can read some kind of meaning into the phrase. Change a single letter, however, and you have *coll*, an obsolete verb for embracing by, as older dictionaries will tell you, 'taking around the neck'. There is no tautology, for the embrace of *clip* carries the normal, more general meaning.

"O but when I *coll* and clip and kisse . . ." is very close indeed to the refrain of Thomas Morley's *Mistresse mine well may you fare*: "Coll mee and clip and kisse me too . . ." Could this be one text quoting the other? Or a standard phrase of the time? Further corroboration of the suggested reading is given by the use, by Latimer, of: "but in heart and work they coll and kiss him".

I have not seen the manuscript but it must be unlikely, given Warlock's experienced eye and high standard of scholarship, that he would have made an error in transcription. Perhaps, when updating the orthography of the original to use in his own song, he simply did not think to alter a word that appeared to read adequately?

On the subject of another mistress mine:

In delay there lies no plentie

Then come kisse me sweet and twentie

A straightforward comment as Feste sings charmingly about his delightful young lady-friend? Well, no, not really. For a start, he is singing to Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek. The approbation of two such oafs suggests the song to be appallingly – and deliberately – bad and the scene a set-piece to be played for laughs, intended to hold the two of them up for the audience to ridicule. Am I alone in thinking the entire poem reads like a load of old clichés just strung together, as if improvised without too much concern about whether the whole is coherent?

Does "sweet and twentie" refer to the kissing or the girl? Twenty is not necessarily twice ten: it can be an indefinite number and would then, one assumes, refer to the kisses! Yet it need not be a number at all, but an adverb that intensifies the "sweet". Is "sweet" used here as adjective, adverb or noun; and which of its myriad meanings is intended? I imagine not all of the following were current around 1600 – some are undoubtedly later whilst others reflect Middle English usage – but, for example, there is: "sweet" as in "sweetheart"; as in "pleasing(ly)" or "charming(ly)"; as in "beloved"; as in "reasonable"; as in "sweetness"; as in "sound" or "wholesome". There is even "sweet" as another sort of intensifier.

For what it is worth, looking at the balance of the entire verse, my instinct is that Feste was singing about the kissing and in a way that boils down to

very thoroughly indeed – with, no doubt, colling and clipping *ad lib.* should "Loves flames require more fuell".

Jennifer Bastable

The Bayley Berith the Bell Away

A further note

In Newsletter no. 70 (Spring 2002, pp. 6-7) I reported on an article by Judith Chernaik in *The Times Literary Supplement* on the meaning of the ancient poem Warlock set to music so evocatively, and on the heated correspondence on the subject that followed in the pages of the same journal. It seems there may be at least one aspect of the beautiful, mysterious lines

And through the glass window shines the sone

how shuld I love and I so young.

that even Chernaik and her correspondents overlooked. A recently-published reference work¹ notes that paintings in the Middle Ages compared the Virgin Mary's hymen to an unbroken pane of glass:

Mary's virginity remained a model for Christian women . . .

Paintings representing scenes from Mary's life, and in particular the Annunciation, often drew on [such] metaphors. They were especially popular with Northern painters of the fifteenth century, as, for example, in Jan van Eyck's *Annunciation in a Church* (c1428: National Gallery of Art, Washington DC) or in Roger Campin's *Mérode Altarpiece* (c1426: Cloisters Collection, New York). In each of these works the artist shows the Virgin placed near light rays, depicted as golden shafts, passing through a glass at window pane.

In her *TLS* article, Chernaik detected "a distinct edge of protest" in the two lines quoted above: rather than praising marriage, the maidens may be celebrating the gaiety, freedom and self-sufficiency of youth, with special reference to the Virgin Queen [Queen Elizabeth I], their protectress and champion.² But perhaps the maidens are not so much celebrating free love as experiencing some sort of fear or conflict at the thought of the irrevocable nature of marriage; they long for the rose and red gold of sexual love that marriage will bring, but at the same time are terrified at the thought of leaving behind for ever the security and familiarity of the only life they have so far known (in their "mother's bower", with the marriage robes still "lying in fold"): the safe haven of the lily, of the white silver, and of the glass pane through which the sun shines, symbols of the holy maternal virginity they have been brought up to revere, but will no longer be able to emulate once they are married. This interpretation also places the origin of the first stanza of the poem (the only part Warlock set to music) firmly in the pre-Reformation era rather than just after the Armada.

Silvester Mazzarella

Notes

1 Mary D Sheriff: *Hymen* in Blakemore and Jennett (eds) *The Oxford companion to the Body* OUP 2001

2 Judith Chernaik: *We be maidens fair and free*, in *TLS*, 14th December 2001, p.13

REVIEWS

David Mellor: Unholy Trinity – Constant Lambert, Peter Warlock and William Walton

Putney Music, 22nd April

There are good reasons for grouping these three composers together. Lambert was the link between the other two although Heseltine the critic spotted early the potential of the young Walton who, for the benefit of newer members, would later achieve fame as the President of the Peter Warlock Society. . .

So, in WW's Centenary Year, it was hardly surprising that he got the lion's share of the evening – an hour, the whole of the second half. Before the break Lambert had 40 minutes devoted to him and PW 20. I thought that, while Walton was treated fairly, and represented by some well-considered and not always predictable recorded examples, the real hero of the evening was Lambert whom Mellor spoke about with infectious enthusiasm. We were treated to Lambert both as composer and conductor (and this latter aspect overflowed into the Warlock and Walton sections too).

But the discussion of Warlock was disappointing and not what I would have expected from the speaker whose homework always seems to have been done thoroughly. Some of his comments and observations were misplaced and showed what I can only describe as a lack of understanding. So while Mr Mellor acknowledged that Warlock "should be better known", he "never really settled into anything" and possessed "no depth, no originality". I pass over that last comment because it could be used to sum up this gloomy appraisal which appeared to have been culled from other, similarly myopic analyses. Does Warlock really deserve no more serious evaluation than that he "reached out to the drinking classes" (the old chestnut) and that (I had to précis this one because the pearls of wisdom were coming thick and fast) his greatest artistic achievement was the creation of his own personality.

Come off it! I really have to question how much of Warlock's output was considered. Only three examples were played: the *Pavane* from *Capriol* (which could hardly have been unknown to many in the audience); *The cricketers of Hambledon* (not a piece that represents the majority of Warlock's output); and an extract from *The curlew*. This last was actually a good choice because it was from the performance directed by Constant Lambert shortly after Warlock's death; But why did David Mellor imply that it was only an arrangement, having been written initially for more extensive resources?

I could go on: he mentioned Lambert's sole major literary effort, *Music ho!*, in positive terms but completely ignored Warlock's books, even the groundbreaking ones like *Gesualdo* and *The English ayre*. No, this was no eye-opening introduction to a composer who was probably little-known to the majority of the assembly and who could have

benefited from a more sympathetic approach. After all, hasn't one of Mr Mellor's radio programmes actively encouraged listeners to listen to material which they might not otherwise have considered? It is very sad that so many people (and the hall was packed) will have gone away with such an erroneous impression of the composer and what he stood for.

Brian Collins

Paul Martyn-West

If ever there was a voice perfectly attuned to the dramatic contrasts in mood of Warlock, it is that of Paul Martyn-West. A tenor who specialises in English song and whose student thesis was on the works of Moeran, he proved a most eloquent advocate of English music at his recent recital in the Shaw Library of the London School of Economics. Perhaps inspired by Epstein's famous bust of Vaughan Williams, which the Library now houses, he gave a spirited performance of VW's *Songs of travel*, establishing not only his impressive vocal range and intense musicality, but also his ability to convey the inner meaning of each of the nine texts. We were all "on the road" with him. There followed three of Moeran's settings of *Songs from County Kerry*, and any "Kitty" in the audience could have been easily seduced into thinking that Martyn-West was, indeed, "in love with" her. After the interval came a most moving account of Moeran's rarely heard setting of *Six poems by Seamus O'Sullivan* – a late masterpiece which, as Martyn-West's passionate testimony reminded us, deserves to be much better known.

If Moeran was admirably served by this mellifluous high tenor, Warlock was scarcely less so. Whether it was the complex polyphony of *The lover's maze*, the cheerful lilt of *After two years*, the haunting lyricism of *The night*, the magic and mystery of *Robin Goodfellow*, the allure of *Fair and true* or the rumbustious ramblings of *Rutterkin* Martyn-West was in character, demonstrating mastery of the idiom, while his pianist, Nigel Foster, proved throughout a most able accompanist.

Geoffrey Stern

Warlock returns to Chelsea

On Sunday 16th September, our very own Renaissance Man, Danny Gillingwater sang four Warlock songs to the Chelsea Arts Club. Recently, he has been accepted as a member there. The Club lies not a stone's throw from Dovehouse Green, the site both of the Registry Office where Warlock's marriage took place and the mortuary where he was taken from Tite Street, and where Danny has performed at our Chelsea Crawl concerts. [*Dovehouse Green, that is, not the mortuary – Ed.*] When Warlock lived with Bruce Blunt at 3 Bramerton Street, he would have been less than five minutes walk away.

Founded in 1891, the Chelsea Arts Club was initially

a male-only club for visual artists, such as Warlock contemporary, Augustus John. Although musical soirées were held from time to time, it was not until 1958 that musicians and writers were admitted as Associate Members. Among the first of these were Norman Tattersall and Laurie Lee. Now, the Chelsea Arts Club events often feature Chelsea celebrities (the next one was on Quentin Crisp!) but this one was billed as "*The Schizophrenic Vocalist: Dan Gillingwater with James Pearson at the piano and guest screamer Sarah Redmond – an evening of English Art Song, Popular Song and Standards*".

The vocal ease with which Danny projects words and melodies is exemplary, and his almost casual command of his audience is equally gripping and relaxing. James Pearson's secure accompaniments for Warlock, and his fluent relaxed improvisations around the popular songs were a joy to behold.

Danny offered a tender *Rest sweet nymphs*, a prim *Piggies*, more sedately Victorian than coquettishly Elizabethan, a haunting *Late summer* in which James milked all the juicy chords to their limit, and *Passing by* where one could feel the kindness of the lady. In Warlock's company Danny also sang Richard Rodney Bennett's *Dream songs*, and others by Vaughan Williams, Gurney, Finzi and, in Warlockian style, a song by himself. Danny concluded this group by referring to the Baron of Muswell Hill (see the later review in this section), who had suggested he sing two different settings of the same words: *Now sleeps the crimson petal* by Eric Thiman and Roger Quilter. The second half included songs by Harold Arlen, George Gershwin and Stephen Sondheim.

The venue was apt for both Danny and Warlock. Beyond my view of the performers was a billiard table supporting only wine glasses, and a bar (closed) supporting only pretty girls. The meal afterwards was equally memorable.

Did Warlock ever visit or perform at the Chelsea Arts Club? We know he was on the committee that gave John Barbirolli his first conducting job with the Chenil Chamber Orchestra, based at the Chenil Galleries on the King's Road, where the Chelsea Arts Club sometimes hosted events. The Chelsea Library houses all the archives of the club and, although there are scant references to the mammoth Arts Balls at the Royal Albert Hall in the 1920s, these archives reveal nothing about Warlock.

Malcolm Rudland

Roger Quilter: his life and music

By Valerie Langfield
Boydell Press – £40

This superbly presented and convincingly written book fills a substantial hole in our knowledge of English song. Apart from Dr Trevor Hold's book (*The walled-in garden* Triad Press, 1978), Quilter has received little serious attention beyond passing

references. Perhaps, given the shy and personally unforthcoming nature that is the constant persona of the figure described by Langfield, that result may be inevitable. He could almost have been a composer by accident rather than design, an imaginative and deeply sensitive man who happened to find himself writing music. That sensitivity is exemplified by the account of Quilter's devastation on hearing of the death of his nephew, Arnold, murdered by a German officer for escaping from a POW camp; but he was also distressed by the news that the officer had later been executed as a war-criminal for his action.

The first hundred pages or so of this book, then, are devoted to a biographical investigation. Warlockians, of course, will want to know about the famous connection between RQ and PW and its associated quotation. Alas that aspect remains unresolved and, although it has been referred to in the pages of this Newsletter (see issue 58 p.4, for example) no further light is shed on it. But, in a very thorough examination of Quilter's life and the people with whom he came into contact, Warlock features hardly at all. Indeed, except for Percy Grainger, hardly any other major composer seems to have been within Quilter's circle of friends and associates, another manifestation, perhaps, of his reserve. Langfield remarks that Quilter is missing from the collection of limericks and other, scurrilous verse; Warlock reserved his vitriol for those who had offended him personally or aesthetically and also felt able to write robustly about friends who were close enough to him not to take too much offence. We must assume that Quilter came into neither category.

In fact, it is intriguing to know what contact there could have been between the two men. Only a couple of occasions on which the two met – or could have met – are referred to; otherwise, and this despite PW's admiration for the older man's music, there seems to have been nothing. And, in Valerie Langfield's description of Quilter's output, there are no further clues. If Warlock's music may occasionally sound like Quilter's (in *Consider*, for example) there is no suggestion of a reciprocal relationship.

Nevertheless Warlockians should not be dismayed or disappointed by these absences. Other individuals common to the lives of both frequently pop up and so this book adds more pieces to the great jigsaw puzzle that is British music in the first half of the twentieth century. The musical analysis, which is both penetrating and accessible, greatly assists in this respect.

A real bonus is a fascinating CD, glued in its plastic sleeve to the inside back cover. It comprises vintage recordings featuring Quilter himself. Inevitably the recording quality varies but it enhances the volume considerably.

There are extensive appendices and a collection of pictures that enhance the presentation. Particularly interesting are those of Quilter himself who, because of his diffidence, disliked being photographed.

Brian Collins

Operation "Sociable Lunch"

7th September 2002 – somewhere in Muswell Hill

In former times the Peter Warlock Society arranged jaunts to Ruddles' Brewery in Langham, Rutland (no longer in Leicestershire). The brewery sponsored the Thames Publishing editions of Warlock's *Sociable songs*, and so we sang these while enjoying the local delicacies of Stilton cheese and Melton Mowbray pork pies, accompanied by lashings of Ruddles' *County Ale*. See Newsletters 42 (March 1989, p.11), 46 (March 1991, p.13), and 48 (April/May 1992, p.7). Now that the brewery and the associated trips are sadly no more, the well-known misprit Mr Malcolm Rutland has been attempting to recreate the atmosphere in North London. Ruddles' Brewery has now relocated to the residence of Felix Aprahamian, cunningly disguised as a suburban terraced house in leafy Muswell Hill. It does actually house a few Ruddles archives from those halcyon days.

This experiment at Felix's with Ruddles' food and drink was first performed on 3rd November 2001. See Newsletter 70 (Spring 2002 p.11. However, the original trial was restricted to Warlockians. With Felix being President of the Delius Society and an honoured, senior member of the committee of the Peter Warlock Society, he had the idea of hosting a social for both Societies. Could the experiment be successfully replicated with the addition of Delians? I was assured the invited subjects were carefully selected to blend the separate but complementary worlds of Delius and Warlock, and to this heady gathering were added a few especially significant civilian Warlockians. The codename for the exercise was *Operation "Sociable Lunch"*.

My task was to observe the interaction of the participants, to comment on their behaviour and to invent things that they might well have said. Further observations were provided by Malcolm and Felix himself.

Some guidance on etiquette was called for. Ian Partridge arrived clutching a bottle of red wine on the grounds that he "didn't drink beer" – he was reassured by PWS chairman Brian Collins that he had probably made a wise move. Brian himself bravely persevered with the beer. [*Only out of a sense of duty, you understand – Ed.*]

Others recalled guidance they had received in the past: Diana Lee-Brown, wife of the Chairman of the Three Choirs Festival, confided that, although Warlock's music had been considered suitable fare at her school, the habits of the man himself were not quite the thing for the young ladies.

The conductor (and a neighbour of Felix's) Howard Williams wondered what the difference was between a Social Lunch and a Sociable Lunch. [*The first is shorter, I think. This was definitely sociable – Ed.*]

Anthony Payne sandwiched his appearance in Muswell Hill between attending morning and afternoon sessions at the Test Match at the Oval. He revealed to us that he had no intention whatsoever of completing Elgar's Symphony No 4. Malcolm

Rudland was able to show the composer a page from the current *Elgar Society News* showing a photo Jane Manning had taken of Mr Payne (her husband) shaking hands with the new statue of Elgar in Malvern. But what Mr Payne hadn't seen was the Elgar Society's caption: "I'll take my percentage now, thank you", said Sir Edward, his left hand making surreptitiously for Anthony Payne's pocket.

Our Hon Secretary confirmed one definite outcome of the experiment. Mr and Mrs Anthony Rolfe-Johnson arrived as "civilians" (Malcolm's word), but went home as members of the Warlock Society.

Before approaching Dr Lionel Carley (Adviser to the Delius Trust), I remembered our Newsletter Editor's warning: "Don't mention the soup." Foolishly, I did once mention the common weed (*Urtica*) with stinging hairs, but I think I got away with it. Dr Carley introduced a note of controversy by professing his belief that "It is a truth universally acknowledged that all members of the Peter Warlock Society are totally mad." He then indicated that this had of course been a joke and that he was thoroughly enjoying the occasion, especially when Felix unlocked his special chained library to Lionel's sister. This revealed a book on the Gloucestershire gentry giving photographic and documentary evidence of his ancestry to 1540, and proving his entitlement to be called not only "The Squire of Sheepscombe", but "Lord Carley of Wightfield".

Brian Radford produced, as an example of eclectic, Rudlandian behaviour, the revelation that he was once disturbed from a tranquil moment in Prinknash Abbey by finding Malcolm practising on the Abbey organ with a Hungarian lady cimbalom player! [*Is this what they call a "vile practice"? – Ed.*]

Barry Ould, of the Percy Grainger Society (but also a Warlockian), very kindly gave me a lift back to West Wycombe and mentioned that he recalled Bernard van Dieren's ashes had been scattered on the hill behind the village. My dog and I have made a preliminary search, but I think we'll need assistance. It is outside my brief to comment on whether the experiment could be considered successful: I will leave the statistical analyses to Malcolm. However as far as I could see everyone had a good time. Thanks to all those who attended, and thank you, Felix, for your hospitality.

Chris Sreeves

Some statistics and post-match reactions

When observing the eating habits of those present, it was noted that Delians *sat* around Felix's dining table, whereas Warlockians *stood* in Felix's kitchen!

Pure Delians present	8
Pure Warlockians present	14 (8 on committee)
Crossbreeds	4
Pure civilians	6
Staff	3
Total present	35

Although this shows nearly twice as many pure Warlockians than pure Delians present, the reverse

was the case as the bails were lifted for the close of play at 7.30pm, when those not out were :

Pure Delians	3
Crossbreeds	3
Pure Warlockians	nil

Felix himself was warmed and heartened by the occasion and writes: "I have long been a stickler for authentic archives and for my *Visitor's Book* to be an accurate record of who came when, and whom they may have met in my home. I am now delighted that 7th September worthily occupies a whole page."

Later, Martin Lee-Brown wrote to thank Felix for collecting the *crème-de-la-crème* of the best musical circles and, he said, "It was such fun!"

Brian Radford wrote of his enjoyment investigating the wide variety of plants and trees in Felix's garden and reported that his Solano Grove one-day-lily (*Hemerocollis*) has flowered very well (Felix gave each of the Delius committee a Delian lily from Florida last year.

When will the Delius Society offer a replay somewhere – with champagne and canapés?

LETTER

[This letter should have appeared in Newsletter no. 70 but was held over for lack of space – Ed.]

I greatly enjoyed reading Rhian Davies's article *Warlock Down Under* (Newsletter no. 69 pp.7-8) and especially the references to Sorabji's poor opinion of F S Kelly's qualities as a pianist. 65 years later, Sorabji was still grumbling about pianists: in December 1979, in discussion with Ronald Stevenson and Alistair Hinton, he complained that "nowadays you seldom ever hear a decent tone produced, they go clean through to the wood, you see, or rather to the metal".

His great heroes, Medtner and Busoni, of course, invariably produced a "lovely rich sound". In this respect he was full of praise for Malcolm Binns whom he had recently heard on Radio 3 playing Medtner's *Sonata Triad* – "I was enormously impressed with him" he said. Schnabel he had obviously detested, describing him as "unspeakable".

In a unique interview with Russell Harty seen on BBC TV in 1977, Sorabji expressed his view of "modern pianists" in similar terms – complaining then that they "go straight through to the wood". He explained that Yonty Solomon, whom he had recently authorised to perform his music in public for the first time in over 40 years, did not do this. "He does not bang, he caresses the music".

Music less likely to be caressed than Sorabji's is sometimes hard to imagine. Take as an example the coda of the *Fantasiottina sul Nome Illustre dell'Egregio Poeta Hugh MacDiarmid ossia Christopher Grieve*. This passage actually appears considerably less daunting than other similar examples in Sorabji's music. The composer has marked it *Vivace, staccato marcato, ruvido, brusco, ff, quasi una eruzione volcanica (siciliana)*. Ronald Stevenson recommends that these chords should be "taken" in the air and "attacked" from a height of about a foot above the keyboard. However, Sorabji's writing for piano, no matter how complicated and difficult to play, generally has a sensuousness that should be expressed with caressing phrases and with the "gorgeous tone" that Sorabji idealised. He clearly expected the same treatment for those composers whose music has the closest affinity to his own – Scriabin and Szymanowski especially. Did F S Kelly possibly have the distinction of becoming the first pianist in the twentieth century to "get clean through to the wood?"

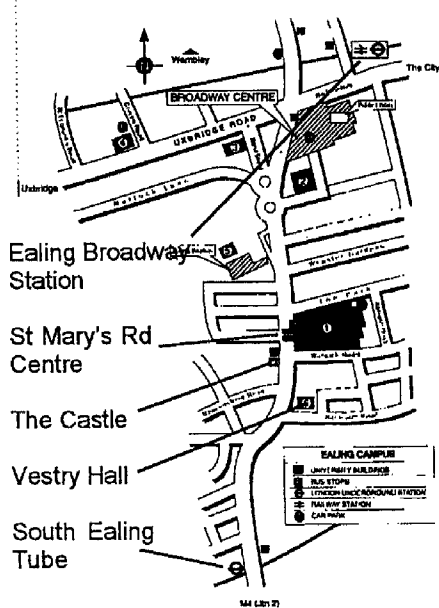
Keith Davies Jones

Peter Warlock Birthday Concert 2002
London College of Music and Media
Thames Valley University
29th October 2002
 in the
Vestry Hall
 at 1.15pm

Peter Warlock: *The curlew*
 Warlock/Moeran: *Maltworms*
 Peter Warlock: *Folk-song preludes*

Paul Thompson (tenor); Sarah Royle (flute);
 Emma Gorlay (cor anglais); The Solaris Quartet
 LCCM Chamber Choir
 Francis Pott (piano)
 Patrick Bailey (conductor)

Afterwards: in *The Castle* opposite St Mary's Road Centre



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

A Wimbledonian Warlock Workshop will be held on Saturday 12th October at the Community Centre, 28 St George's Road, London SW19. It will be led by Brian Collins with Hazel Morgan (soprano) and a small vocal ensemble directed by Andrew Earis, Director of Music at St Sepulchre-without-Newgate, Holborn Viaduct. The accompanist will be Dr Robert Manning who is also the organiser of the event. Although primarily for an adult education class, a small number of places may be available for "outsiders". If you wish to go please contact Dr Manning as soon as possible on 07956 578602. The workshop will run from around noon until about 6.00pm and costs £10 plus a contribution to a shared lunch.

Malcolm Rudland sent the Chairman a lovely brochure from the Waitrose supermarket chain about a British Cheese Festival. On closer inspection of the reverse it also advertised evenings of Cathedral Classics including three performances of *The curlew* alongside music by Borodin, Mozart and Mendelssohn. Concerts will be in the respective Cathedrals of Gloucester (24th October), Ely (29th October) and Guildford (31st October) and the tenor soloist will be Richard Edgar-Wilson. The instrumentalists will be drawn from the London Festival Orchestra. Members may recall that their CD of Warlock pieces, which includes a performance of *The curlew* with Martyn Hill as well as the rarely heard transcriptions of English and Italian dance tunes and an excellent reading of the *Serenade* by their conductor, Ross Pople, received a very favourable review in Newsletter 60 (p.14). The CD is still available in the UK on the Arte Nova label no. 74321 37868 2. Availability elsewhere in the world is not known but, should anybody out there have the details, we'd love to know. The tickets are theoretically restricted to Waitrose account card holders but the LFO have assured us that PWS members will be able to attend. Please phone 020 7928 9251 saying that you are a PWS member.

In addition to these concerts, please note that the Birthday Concert performance of *The curlew* (see p.12 of this issue) will mean **four performances in a week, two of them on the same day!** Has this happened before? And in PW's birthday week as well!

On Sunday 9th February 2003 at 2.30pm, the Association of English Singers and Speakers presents, at St Andrews Hall, Royal Over-Seas League, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR: **THE WONDERS OF ELGAR, VAUGHAN WILLIAMS, WARLOCK AND FINZI REVEALED BY THEIR EXPERTS.** The Warlock contribution will feature Brian Collins, Danny Gillingwater, Paul Martyn-West and Malcolm Rudland. Details are not yet finalised but members who have notified us of their e-mail facilities will be notified nearer the time

and details will also appear on the PWS website (details on the front page). Supper will be available afterwards. Tickets are £10 at the door or from Mary Mogil, 77 Westmoreland Terrace, London, SW1V 4AH Tel 020 7834 2344 (e-mail Mary.mogil@talk21.com)

NEWSBRIEFS

Following on from an aside about the "Chanoine Docre" in the last Newsletter I had an interesting e-mail from Nigel Jackson, though not related to his article in this issue. He identifies the chanoine as Canon Docre, the sinister priest who officiates over a Black Mass in J K Huysmans' classic novel *La Bas (Down There)*. The French "chanoine" corresponds to the English "canon" (in the ecclesiastical sense). Nigel Jackson went on to say, "Canon Docre was apparently based upon a defrocked Belgian priest called Haecke who had crucifixes tattooed upon the soles of his feet. It's so interesting decoding PW's allusive literary references!"

One of our members is trying to acquire a copy of the 1989 CD *Sweet Echo*, songs and carols by Elizabeth Poston and Peter Warlock, sung by the Finzi Singers under Paul Spicer (Abacus 604-2). If you can help please get in touch with Malcolm Rudland on 020 7589 9595.

Leo Ornstein, a composer probably little known (if at all) to most of you, has died. Interestingly enough he is also mentioned in the book about Roger Quilter reviewed in this issue but the Warlock connection is that his music was commented upon favourably by PW in one of his letters to Colin Taylor, mentioned in the same sentence as Arnold Schoenberg – actually described as being more radical (and even more interesting, therefore) than Schoenberg.

I always want to put more pictures into the Newsletter than I can. It's true, they don't reproduce too well but they do break up what is otherwise endless text. I feel particularly embarrassed this time because, after the AGM weekend, I had lots sent to me, mostly in electronic form so, thankfully, most people didn't go to the trouble and expense of having films processed. In the end I've only managed one. So I think I shall ask Richard Valentine to make some room for them on the website. (It was Richard who sent me some to begin with.) Please have a look at them.

Warlockiana

By AHS

Twenty-three years ago, RDH won the House Singing Competition with a rollicking, beerswilling account of 'Maltworms' by Peter Warlock OE. The genius behind that performance was Julian Nott, a B Blocker in the middle of a severe Warlock craze. By then, the Warlock Society had been established some fifteen years, and the suspicion was that it might attract to itself young men who admired that composer's dubious double approach to life, and, maybe, even sought to emulate it.

Julian's attempts to put on his own Warlock concert thus met with a flat refusal – even from Mr Smallbone, the Precentor. The desire to prevent boys becoming involved with 'people of that sort' was subtly expressed. The proposed concert would inevitably involve far too many of the more committed MSs and MEs who already had quite enough on their plates!

But Nott would not take 'no' for an answer! Enlisting the help of Desmond Bleately, the College Chapel Verger, he secured the use of Datchet Parish Church, where Desmond was two-timing us – though goodness knows how – as the organist! The boys, by now all in rebellious mood, practised assiduously. Authority caved in, and the Warlock Society turned up in large numbers, dressed mainly in leather, astride sinister



noisy motorbikes, causing a mild unease amongst the Eton community in the audience. The concert was a resounding success. But how times have changed!

On Friday 22 February, they were back again – now in the respectable dress of middle-aged guests at a reception hosted by the Provost, still listening to the music of their beloved hero, but in that most established of venues, Election Hall. And, once again, Eton's hard-pressed MSs and MEs, some eighteen singers and four pianists, made the music.

The occasion was to celebrate the recent acquisition of a valuable collection of

Warlockiana accumulated by that well-known music critic Felix Abrahamian during his long and distinguished career. He had decided that its final resting-place should be in the library of Warlock's old school. Times have indeed changed. Boys had clearly been encouraged to work hard with their singing teachers over many weeks to bring out all the subtleties of this unique composer, with his sensitive settings of his texts and colourful harmonic sense, owing not a little to Delius.

In Friday's programme, there was no 'The Curlew' to bring us to the edge of black despair. More was made of Peter Warlock's back-slapping good humour than of Philip Heseltine's sense of failure and shame, although we caught a glimpse of it in John Haworth's touching performance of Bruce Blunt's 'Ha'naker Mill'. A bit more fun from Blunt, 'The Fox' perhaps, would have helped present a more complete picture of this complex composer.

The performances from both the singers and their accompanists were as fine – and as well prepared – as I have ever heard at Eton.

But Warlockians have long memories, and their guest of honour was none other than Julian Nott himself with a fast receding head of hair, died bright yellow!

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An open letter from Malcolm Rudland to Alastair Sambson, Organist of Eton College dated 4 September 2002

Dear Alastair Sambson,

After much investigative research, I discover it is you who is the acronymically ubiquitous AHS, so I offer this as an open reply to your hilarious *Warlockiana* article in the current *Eton Chronicle*.

Although you mis-spelt Felix's surname with a "b" instead of a "p" (so I call you Mr Sambson), I have to admire your poetic licence in describing Julian Nott's 1978 Eton Warlock bash. However, I was there, and publicly declare that amongst our hierarchy present, there was, in common Warlockian practice, a variety of beards and exotic apparel but, despite Warlock's enthusiasm for motor bikes, there was not one single bit of leather on any Harley Davison!

I was there in my second Morris Traveller (I'm now on my sixth!), and I can even vouch that Mr and Mrs Smallbone played in the concert, so did he really feel Warlock disreputable?

Perhaps in some future edition of the *Eton Chronicle*, you may care to research and report on how many other Old Etonians have a nearly fifty-year-old Society in their honour?

Malcolm Rudland



LONDON NW8 7PA

*Adjacent to Lord's Cricket Ground at the north end of Park Road, and with access for the disabled
the nearest tube is St John's Wood, buses 13, 82, 113, 274 pass nearby, and parking is unrestricted on Saturdays*

———— SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER 2002 at 4PM ————

**English and Hungarian music
for violin and organ**

under the patronage of Lady Solti

to launch the Peter Warlock Society's appeal for Imre Varga's statue of Béla Bartók in South Kensington

György Pauk *violin* **Malcolm Rudland** *organ*

with Skaila Kanga harp János Keszei and friends timpani and percussion

Howard Williams *conductor*

William Mathias (1934-1992)

Andante flessibile from the Violin Concerto (11 mins)

dedicated to and first performed by György Pauk

Mathias's Series 3 Communion Service is sung at St John's every Sunday at the 9.30am service

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Sonata for organ Op. 28 (29 mins)

first performance with harp, timpani and percussion from the orchestration by Gordon Jacob

Peter Warlock (1894-1930)

Lullaby and Piggesnie from A Warlock Suite for violin and piano arranged by David Cox

Interval for "Elgar" Sherry (Pale Cream British Fortified Wine) kindly donated by Tesco

with Elgar Cheese kindly donated by Lightfoot Farm, Worcester, Tel 01905 333468

György Kurtág (b.1926)

Three pieces from Játékok VI (6 mins)

i. Versetto, Dixit Dominus ad Noe: finis universe carnis venit... Dobszay Lászlónak

ii. Sirens of the Deluge iii. Apocryphal Hymn

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

Andante tranquillo from the Second Violin Concerto (1937) (10 mins)

Miklós Rózsa (1907-1995)

Love Song and Organ Finale from El Cid arranged by James Pearson (4 mins)

Afterwards, Hungarian wine kindly donated by the Hungarian Embassy

with Hungarian Salami kindly donated by Terry's Delicatessen, Tel 020 8931 3884



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CITY OF
WESTMINSTER

A minimum donation of £8 is requested *Concessions/ResCard holders £5*

Donations over £10 to the Bartók appeal Gift Aid forms available

Further details: Malcolm Rudland 020 7589 9595, or mrudland@talk21.com

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Béla Bartók

A statue of Béla Bartók for London

Issued by The Peter Warlock Society

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Treasurer John Mitchell, Woodstock, Pett Bottom, Canterbury CT4 5PB, Tel 01227 832871, John.Mitchell12@btinternet.com

The Peter Warlock Society announce an appeal for £25,000

The internationally renowned Hungarian sculptor, Imre Varga, has completed a Bartók statue for London, and planning permission has been granted for his chosen site in South Kensington. Seven-foot statues of Bartók by Imre Varga are already in public places in Budapest and Paris.

As Peter Warlock was instrumental in bringing Bartók to London for the first time, our Society (Registered charity No. 257041) is honouring Bartók's memory and appealing for £25,000 to cover transport and erection of the statue. Cheques payable to the Society, marked Bartók, will be gratefully received and acknowledged. Gift Aid forms are available for those paying tax, so we can reclaim this, and all significant donors will receive a credit on the plinth of the statue.

Béla Bartók (1881-1945), the most significant Hungarian composer of the last century, was inspired principally by a love for his native folk music. Forced into American exile after the Nazis invaded Hungary, he died five years later. His music, melodic but characteristically dissonant, includes the opera *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, the *Concerto for Orchestra*, three piano concertos, six string quartets, and a remarkable set of graded piano pieces called *Mikrokosmos*.

Peter Warlock (1894-1930), the most significant English songwriter of the last century, was inspired by the music of Delius, Bartók, and Elizabethan & Celtic music and culture. His music includes a suite *Capriol*, 150 songs, several exquisite carols, and 600 Elizabethan transcriptions. In 1921, Warlock visited Bartók in Budapest and helped plan Bartók's London début in 1922.

In March 1997, it was therefore the Peter Warlock Society, in conjunction with English Heritage, who arranged for a blue plaque for Béla Bartók in London SW7, near South Kensington station, at 7 Sydney Place, the home of Sir Duncan and Lady Wilson, who hosted all Bartók's visits to Britain from 1922 to 1937. Accompanied by concerts, lectures and a 64-page souvenir brochure, it was unveiled by Felix Aprahamian, who had interviewed Bartók at 7 Sydney Place in 1938, and David Mellor, who in 1988, had accompanied Felix Aprahamian to Southampton for the arrival of the QE2, which then contained the remains of Bartók on their way back to Hungary from the USA. Bartók's two sons were also in attendance, and there was a concert at Southampton University with György Pauk, Peter Frankl and the Lindsay String Quartet.

In March 1998, the Royal Society of British Sculptors and the British Hungarian Fellowship invited the distinguished Hungarian sculptor, Imre Varga to talk about his own life and work, with a proposal for a Bartók statue in London. Varga visited several proposed sites and chose the southwest corner of the traffic island by South Kensington station, adjacent to Melton Court and 12 Old Brompton Road, London SW7. Without either contract or planning permission he returned to Budapest and completed a third statue of Bartók within months.

In December 2000, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Planning Department gave a five-year license for Varga's statue of Bartók to be erected on this site. Michael Portillo, the local MP has said "I do hope that funds can be found for Bartók's links with my constituency to be immortalised in this permanent reminder of such a great figure in international music."

For a photo of the statue, and/or further information on Bartók, Warlock or Varga please contact Malcolm Rudland Tel/Fax 020 7589 9595 e-mail: mrudland@talk21.com