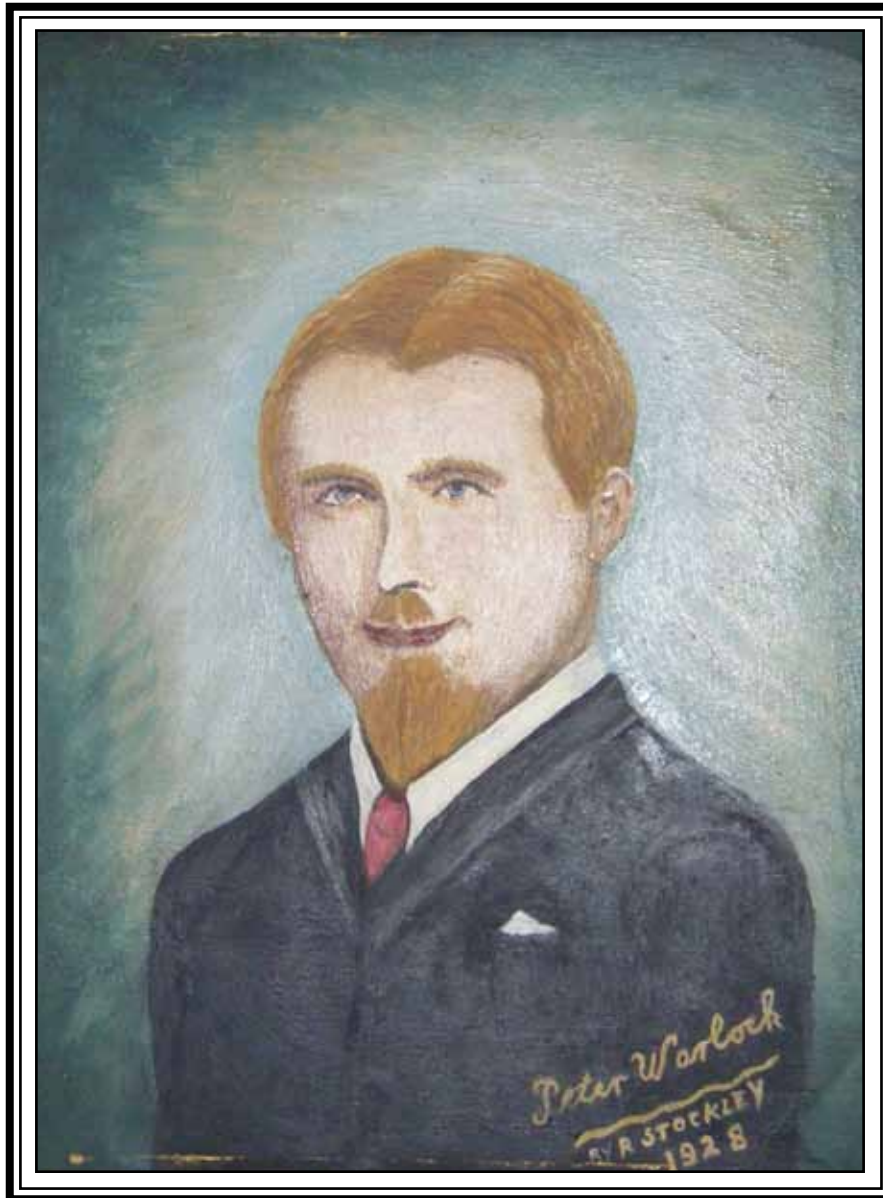


Peter Warlock Society

Newsletter 92

The Journal of the Peter Warlock Society – Spring 2013

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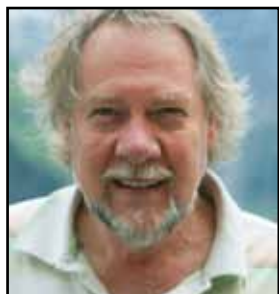
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Editorial



Welcome to Newsletter 92 and once again we thank Music Sales for their generous support in printing this Newsletter.

We have been saddened to learn that, over the last year or so, several of our members have passed away, including

our own late President, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, who died on Christmas Eve. Obituaries and personal memories are included for Sir Richard, Ian Parrott, Ernest Kaye, John Carol Case, James W Montgomery and Barbara Goss.

On a happier note, we are delighted to be holding our AGM this year in *Cefn Bryntalch*, the family home of Warlock, near Abermule, Montgomeryshire, on 25 May. This event offers a rare opportunity for Warlockians to meet in the house and surroundings that were so important to our composer. A complementary buffet lunch will follow the AGM. Full details on the back page.

As from the next AGM, the founder of the PWS, Patrick Mills, has decided to step down from the role of Chairman. His successor will be elected at the AGM.

The lead article in this edition is John Mitchell's significant and perceptive look at *Peter Warlock and Kaikhosru Sorabji*. Barry Smith then provides an introduction to the Bruce Blunt BBC Radio broadcasts of the 1940s, which were made about Warlock. A complete transcript of the 1943 broadcast follows.

The fox's head from *The Fox Inn*, which inspired Blunt and PW to write the song *The Fox*, came into the possession of the PWS in 2003. The previously unpublished story of how this came about is now told.

John Mitchell has organised another auction of *Warlockiana and otherwise* and we also have the usual excellent cluster of concert reviews.

Remember, I am happy to receive material for the Newsletter at any time, but to guarantee inclusion in the Autumn edition, **17 August 2013** is the deadline.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Newsletter and I look forward to meeting many of you at the AGM.

Michael Graves

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Articles

Peter Warlock and Kaikhosru Sorabji

John Mitchell



Kaikhosru Sorabji

(Alvin Langdon Coburn's studio portrait from 1918)

Not an enormous amount has been written about the composer Kaikhosru Sorabji (1892-1988) in relationship to Peter Warlock. What is probably the first article¹ about the two composers was penned by Fred Tomlinson soon after Sorabji's death, and this is a short, but informative and engaging commentary outlining, from a Warlockian angle, some of the key aspects about this enigmatic and eccentric figure from the English Music scene. A further brief summary appears in Barry Smith's Warlock biography² and there is a long chapter, authored by Kenneth Derus, on Sorabji's letters to Warlock in the first full-length book³ about Sorabji (this, naturally in the context, largely focuses on the latter's development as a composer as evidenced in his letters to Warlock).

Mention the name of Sorabji to the average music lover, and the response, if indeed there is any recognition of it at all, will often be along the lines of: "Yes – wasn't he the UK-born composer of Parsi/Spanish/Sicilian origin

who wrote inordinately long works for piano, which were so fiendishly difficult that he banned everyone from performing them?" Like so many popular myths, there is a strong undercurrent of truth here mingled with some inaccuracies. Sorabji was born in Chingford, Essex, and his father was a Zoroastrian Parsi from Bombay; his mother was, until recently, believed to be of Spanish/Sicilian ethnicity. Research conducted since Sorabji's death, however, has shown her to have been English. It is true that Sorabji did compose largely for the piano, either as works for the solo instrument, or larger scale works in which the piano played a prominent part. Some of his compositions are astonishingly long in duration, perhaps the most famed example being *Opus clavicebasticum* (for piano) that clocks in at a modest 4¾ hours(!), but there are also shorter pieces and songs that are more accessible. Many of his works are, in fact, of a degree of difficulty that almost places them in a league of their own. However, Sorabji did not, strictly speaking, actually ban his music from being played; he merely vetoed (sometime after 1936⁴) public performances without his express consent, feeling strongly that performers at the time were not up to doing his works justice. The situation changed in the mid-1970s when Alistair Hinton managed to persuade the composer that there had since come onto the scene pianists (Yonty Solomon being one of the first) who were capable of giving a good account of his music; this resulted in a steadily increasing number of performances and recordings that have occurred in the ensuing decades.

A potted biographical sketch of Sorabji is relatively easy to summarise, for, considering his ninety-six years, he had a fairly uneventful life. He spent the greater part of it (about two-thirds) in the Central London area, migrating to Corfe Castle in Dorset in the early 1950s, where he spent the remainder of his long life. His musical gifts may have been inherited from his mother, who is said to have been an opera singer in her younger days. A man of modest private means, and tending towards a reclusive existence, he was able to concentrate on music almost exclusively. This took a tripartite form: composing; occasionally, as a pianist, performing his own compositions in concerts (up until the mid-1930s); and writing about music.

I don't propose to say too much about the first of these three as Sorabji's compositions are largely beyond the scope of this article. For those who are unfamiliar with his work, there are suggestions for further reading and listening at the end. One of the extraordinary aspects of Sorabji's composing process, considering how complex his scores are, is that he did not compose at the piano, nor did he generally revise what he had written. This is what Warlock⁵ had to say on the subject:

'It is of interest to note that [Sorabji's compositions] are written straight down in fair copy – in the case of orchestral works, in full score. No sketches are made, nor is even the figuration of the piano music determined at the keyboard. One is reminded of Blake's method of composing in the *Prophetic Books*; but these, we are told, were dictated by angels. If we are to say the same of Sorabji's music we must use the word in its literal meaning of "messenger" without its usual connotation of celestial origin and moral intent.'

The result is a very individual sound-world that is a feature of his works. Warlock was clearly impressed both by Sorabji's music, and by the way he was able to conceive and put down on paper his compositions, a process which was so very different from his own, of course. I can do no better here than quote part of a letter⁶ Warlock wrote to Delius, where he is attempting to enthuse the latter about one of Sorabji's Piano Sonatas:

'I have heard him [ie, the composer] play it again several times during the last few days and I become more and more impressed by his quite extraordinary talent. I am sure you would be interested. It is the bigness of his conceptions and the sheer, overwhelming emotional *power* of his music that seems to me so wonderful and so welcome during these attenuated days when composers set out to "purge themselves of the domestic emotions" and other such miserable things!!....

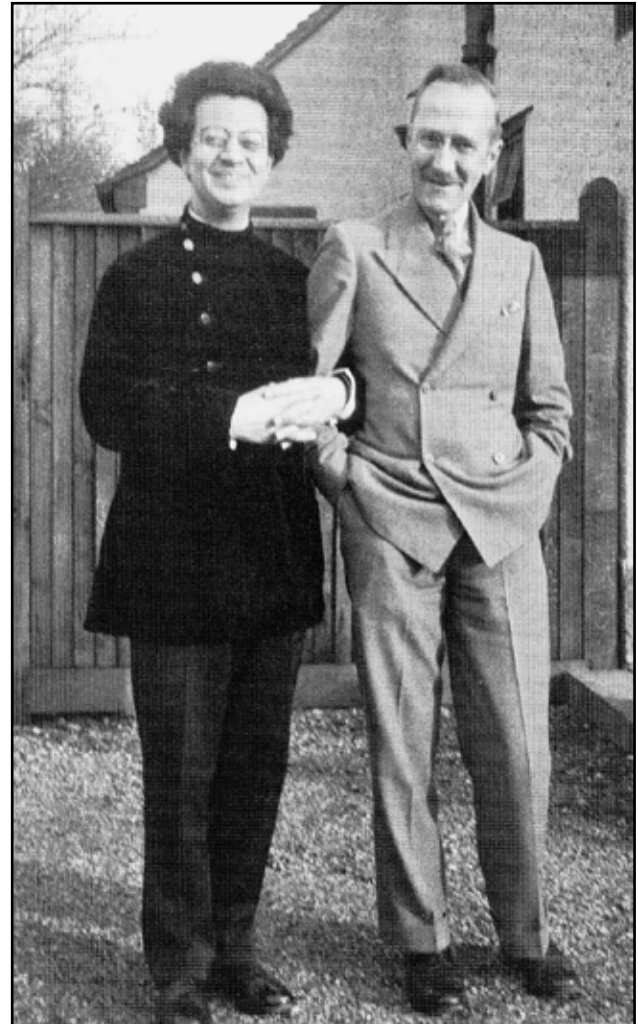
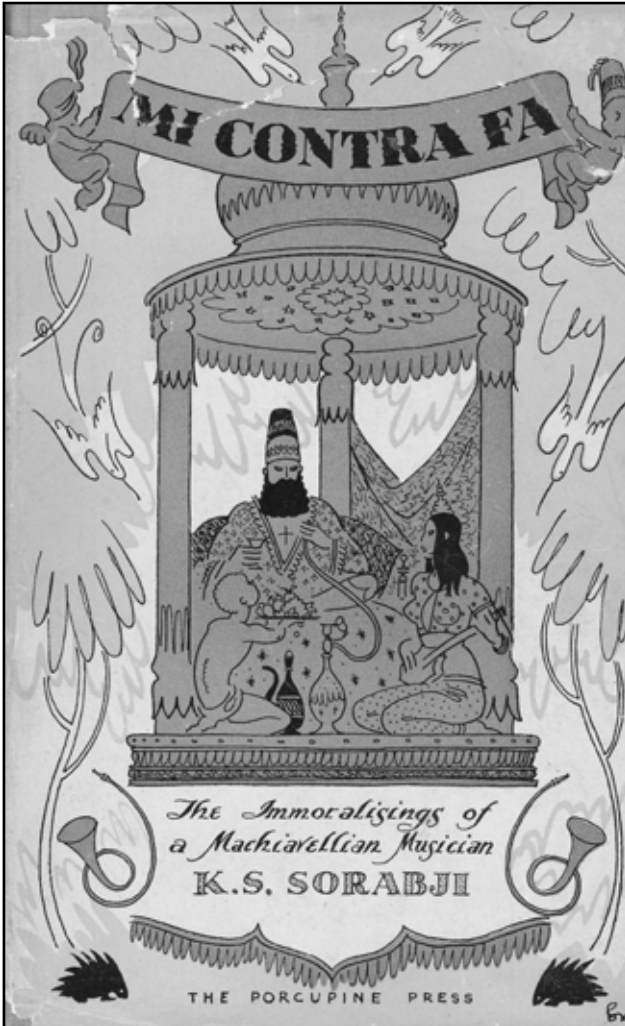
When one hears Sorabji, one cannot stop to marvel over his technical mastery of means, nor over his novel and peculiar chord-combinations – though to the analytical mind these things alone would be interesting enough – one is simply swept along by a whirlwind of amazingly significant, evocative sound.'

On the second point, Sorabji never had even, what might be termed, a part-time career as a concert-giving

pianist. He played his own compositions exclusively, and shunning public appearances by inclination, was only really comfortable about the process when he felt the venue and audience were likely to be sympathetic to his music. The pinnacles of his achievements here were probably the recital he gave in Vienna in 1922, and performing in Erik Chisholm's series of Glasgow contemporary music concerts during the early 1930s. Opinions are varied as to the merits, or otherwise, of Sorabji's pianism. Many were impressed by his abilities (Warlock included, or so it would seem); unfortunately, there are no recordings of Sorabji from the time Warlock knew him, when he was probably at his peak as a performer. The private recordings he made later in life (from his mid-sixties onwards), with the onset of arthritis, probably do not show him in top form, and he seemed then to adopt a somewhat liberal approach to realising exactly what was on the printed page. Others were less convinced, and I would quote here a comment⁷ from C.W. Orr who heard Sorabji play at a party somewhere in London during the 1920s. He was clearly bemused by the performance, and likened Sorabji's playing to '... a little mouse scurrying over the keys'.

The third aspect of Sorabji's musical life was that of critic and writer on music. Again this is an area which is quite vast, and cannot be dealt with in much detail here. Dealing with the quantitative aspect first, Sorabji contributed over 650 music reviews which appeared mainly in either *The New Age* or *The New English Weekly*, with more than 200 letters to the editors of various publications. The other principal sources of his writings are the two books of essays, *Around Music*⁸ and *Mi Contra Fa: The Immoralisings of a Machiavellian Musician*⁹ in which a great diversity of musical subject matter is covered. A sprinkling of the chapter titles will give an idea of the range here: 'Beer and British Music'; 'Piano Design'; 'Against Women Instrumentalists'; 'Rachmaninoff and Rabies'; 'The Contralto and the Gallon-jug'.

As to Sorabji's writing style, one is immediately struck by his command of the English language, his wide vocabulary, and his ability to create quite long sentences that are grammatically correct. A good snapshot of the tenor of his critical voice is given by Nazlin Bhimani¹⁰:



Left: The illustrated dust jacket of Sorabji's *Mi Contra Fa: The Immoralisings of a Machiavellian Musician* (1947).

Right: Sorabji with Norman Peterkin at the Peterkin's Surrey home in the mid-1930s. Peterkin was a mutual friend of Sorabji and Warlock (whose *Robin Goodfellow* was dedicated to him).

(Photo: Marie Peterkin)

'Sorabji praised highly the musical styles that appealed to him, and wrote in a harsh and negative manner about music he found distasteful. While this emotionalism tainted many of his reviews, it also encouraged the support of those who shared his opinions. Nonetheless, Sorabji's use of harsh and blunt language often turned the tide of public opinion against him. Yet, it is this particular style, which can sometimes be humorous and racy and other times harsh to the point of cruelty, that distinguishes Sorabji's writings from the mainstream of music criticism.'

Like Warlock in his music reviews, Sorabji was never afraid to pull his punches and, in the words of his friend and fellow composer, Norman Peterkin¹¹, he was '... a critic with the ability to cut down the pretentious nobody to size'. Part of this stance may have resulted from never having to rely on his critical work for a salary cheque, and also, being something of an outsider from the musical establishment, he had no qualms about saying exactly what he thought. A good, and amusing, example of his way with words is the dedication¹² of his first book, *Around Music*:

‘As both you and I, in our different ways, are out against the flaccid, mealy-mouthed, gentlemanly eunuchism that is the bane of musical criticism, you with your vehement and stentorian public protests against the propagation of the gospel of musical drivel, protests delivered with that magnificent and Nordic truculence you manipulate so well – I with the feline clawishness of a Southerner, the nastiness of scratching pen on paper (and I trust *at least* as ungentlemanly!), I cannot do better than dedicate the result of the scratchings to you, praying you to accept it as a tribute of admiration, friendship and respect from

KAIKHOSRU SORABJI

Warlock’s friendship with Sorabji began completely out of the blue when he (PW) was still only 18. He had recently commenced what turned out to be his single year at Oxford’s Christ Church College, and had just written an article, *Some Reflections on Modern Musical Criticism*, which appeared in the *Musical Times* on 1 October 1913. When Sorabji read it, something in this piece really struck a chord with him, and this may well have been the bit about ‘... It would be absurd to call anyone unmusical because the music of Schönberg or Scriabine meant more to him than that of Haydn or Beethoven...’ At the time Scriabin was the composer Sorabji most admired, and he also had little enthusiasm for Beethoven and the like. Sensing he had alighted upon someone likeminded, the result was a letter to Warlock (forwarded via the *Musical Times*) that Sorabji¹³ penned on 3 October 1913 from 25a High Street, St. John’s Wood, London NW. Running to 6½ pages, Warlock may well have been somewhat surprised to have received such a long, unsolicited letter from someone he had no prior knowledge of. It begins:

‘Dear Sir,

As an ultra-modernist musician will you allow me to thank you for and heartily congratulate you on your splendid courageous article in this month’s “Musical Times”?’

Apart from the mentions of Scriabin (‘a colossal genius’) and Beethoven (‘much of [whose] music is absolutely repellent to me’), the main themes of the letter are Sorabji’s love of the ultra-modern in music and his deprecation of some of the academics of the time who were attempting to halt musical progress. Frederick

Corder’s efforts in this connection are wittily singled out: ‘... and the spectacle of Corder trying to stem the Ocean with a mop is not a little ridiculous!’

And so began a correspondence between two composers¹⁴ who, despite their musical compositions being alike as chalk and cheese, had many similarities. Only two years or so separated their births, and both were brought up by dominant mothers, with the lack of a proper father figure. Warlock’s father, of course, had died when the composer was 2½, whereas Sorabji’s family situation was one where the father (who turned out to be a bigamist) was largely living and working overseas. It is hard to escape an impression that Sorabji was something of a ‘Mummy’s Boy’ (indeed, in a letter¹⁵ to Delius, Warlock remarks on Sorabji ‘appearing to be tied to his mother’s apron-strings!’), and perhaps, unsurprisingly, that he was of ‘gay’ sexual orientation. Both men were at least partly self-taught in music, neither having attended one of the colleges or academies of music, and both were ahead of their time (in the UK) in recognising some of the key musical developments and composers that were emanating from the Continent in the opening decade or two of the 20th century. They were well read, with a broad knowledge base and, as we have noted, became significant music critics who were not afraid to say exactly what they thought. Neither managed to integrate themselves to any extent into the musical establishment of the time – Warlock not doing himself any favours by his bouts of vendetta-ish behaviour, and Sorabji’s reclusive tendencies (partly engendered by his being of mixed race) being contributory factors here.

What ought to have been to Warlockians an interesting and maybe even revelatory correspondence between the two men (and one thinks here of the contemporaneous Delius/Warlock letters [to and from] as to what might have been) has unfortunately been scuppered by the fact that only one side of the correspondence now exists: the letters from Sorabji to Warlock. Warlock’s letters to Sorabji have not survived, which is quite surprising and unusual in that, judging simply by the fact that nearly a thousand items of Warlock’s other correspondence have survived, it would seem that most people carefully held on to his letters. In a letter to Arnold Dowbiggin (dated 28 February 1933) Sorabji explained:

‘... I have an inveterate habit of destroying all letters as soon as they are answered (...) I need hardly say how much I regret my habit in the case of Philip. He actually wrote me a great number (...) we were in the habit of corresponding at enormous length...’

There are 38 items of correspondence (now in the British Library) that Sorabji wrote to Warlock, and before examining some of the content of them, it is worth considering some other aspects relating to them, ie, purely as a series of letters. The first question is whether those 38 items of correspondence represent the total number of letters, etc., that Sorabji actually penned to Warlock. The chronology is intriguing here, as the correspondence can be divided into two chunks: 27 items date from between October 1913 and June 1917, and then after a gap of 2½ years, there is a further batch of 11 items which run from January 1920 up to July 1922. It strikes me there are two unanswered questions here: (a) is there an explanation for the 2½ year gap?, and (b) what caused the correspondence to finish somewhat abruptly, or so it would seem, in the summer of 1922? One is also inclined to wonder whether Warlock may have lost or mislaid any of the letters he had received from Sorabji, but Warlock’s track record was generally pretty good when it came to retaining correspondence he had received. What might account for nearly a half of the 1917-1919 gap could be the year that Warlock spent in Ireland, and I am inclined to think the two men may simply have lost touch with each other. The course of events seems to have been that within weeks of receiving the Sorabji letter of June 1917, Warlock, without much warning (probably with no notice given to Sorabji), moved out of his base at Anhalt Studios, Battersea, and disappeared down to Cornwall. He was not there very long, and by August 1917 he was living in Dublin. I rather suspect Sorabji did not know where he was at the time.

When Warlock returned to England a year later in August 1918 one can only surmise that making contact again with Sorabji was not one of his priorities, as there is no evidence that the two men were in touch with each for the greater part of the year 1919. However, it would seem from the content of Sorabji’s next letter to him in January 1920 that Warlock was the one who restarted the correspondence. Sorabji appeared to be very pleased

to hear from his old friend, and with Warlock apparently writing from *Cefn Bryntalch* [his family home in mid-Wales], Sorabji entreated him as follows:

‘How long will you be away? Will you swear to let me know at once when you come to London again, and to write to me apprising me of your movements from time to time¹⁶?’

There is a strong implication here that Warlock not keeping Sorabji posted of his whereabouts could be the reason why the correspondence suddenly dried up in the summer of 1917.

More problematic to account for is the circumstances of the correspondence, having started up again in 1920, then petering out completely two years later. An explanation which accounts at least partially for the apparent ‘drifting apart’ was given by Sorabji quite late in life:

‘In his latter years I saw little of Philip Heseltine. I found myself growing more and more out of sympathy with the Peter Warlock side of him with all that beer and boozing...¹⁷

It is very easy to go along with the element of truth in this statement, and I am reminded here of a like situation which existed with C.W. Orr, another friend of Warlock’s, where the friendship slackened off for not dissimilar reasons¹⁸.

However, that at best can only represent 50% of the story, as we have no direct evidence from Warlock himself as to why the letters suddenly stopped – but there are one or two intriguing clues. After Sorabji’s last letter to him in July 1922, there are no further mentions of Sorabji in letters to Warlock’s other friends (there had been up till then), apart from one rather cryptic one in a letter that he wrote to Cecil Gray on 16 July 1924, when he was on holiday at Poole in Dorset:

‘Not another word will I write for anybody about Sorabji¹⁹ – there really are limits – one must draw a line somewhere!’

Is there not just a hint of exasperation here, and that somehow he had “done” with Sorabji? There is another curious moment in Sorabji’s penultimate letter²⁰ to PW. It begins:

‘Belovedest Prosdoscimus -

By all means choose my paper if you like it. You don’t say what you think of the songs you Sod! And I wrote a swete (sic) dedication on them for you – Blast you!’

These songs have not been identified by Sorabji experts, but a possible inference here is that Warlock, being less impressed by them than with some of Sorabji's earlier work, sidestepped the issue of making what might have been a negative comment about them by remarking on the quality of the paper on which they were written.

Was he reaching a point when he felt less engaged with Sorabji's music than he had been formerly? Another aspect which may have a bearing here is the increasing familiarity of the endearments with which Sorabji would 'top and tail' his letters to Warlock. Could it be that Warlock felt that this sort of thing was getting just a bit too much in July 1922 when, in his last letter Sorabji, having opened with 'Belovedest', signed off with 'You're a dear sweet creature and I love you immeasurably, & sempiternally your Gote'²¹?

My best guess is that if there were a decline in the level of friendship between the two men, it was a case of 'six of one, and half a dozen of the other': Sorabji being less empathetic to Warlock's increasing indulgencies on the Beer Front, and with Warlock experiencing a tailing off of his enthusiasm for Sorabji and his work, feeling that he had done as much as he could for his friend. Whether there was a clear-cut rupture around this time between them will probably remain a moot point, but what is certain is that Warlock had not lost his regard for his friend completely as there exist two Christmas greetings he sent to him in 1927 and 1929 which have touches of affectionate good humour about them.

As indicated earlier, and as one might expect, much of what is in Sorabji's letters to Warlock is of more importance²² and interest to Sorabji aficionados than to Warlockians. Judging by Sorabji's half of the

correspondence, much of the to-ing and fro-ing of the letters would have comprised a typical exchanging of ideas/opinions that might be expected from two young men who were passionately interested in music. Apart from the latter, some of the other topics that Sorabji expounded upon included eastern religions, the First

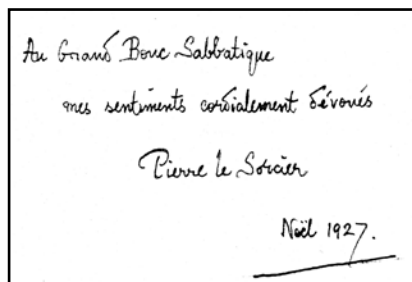
World War, the Church of England and graphic art, and interesting as they are in themselves, they are of less relevance here as they do not really add to our knowledge of Warlock in any important way.

What Warlock's reaction was to Sorabji's letters is best judged by the several mentions that he makes of Sorabji in letters to his other friends. When these are considered chronologically a telling picture emerges. During the period of the earliest letters, Warlock appears to be fascinated by his new friend, and having received the third letter from Sorabji, he writes to Delius²³:

'My article in the Musical Times brought me a long and enthusiastic letter from an interesting person of the name of Dudley Sorabji-Shapurgi, who lives at St John's Wood. He seems to be a very keen musician, with a hatred of the classics which exceeds even mine. He is very interesting, since he tells me all about composers of whom I know nothing. His last letter ran to more than twenty pages!'

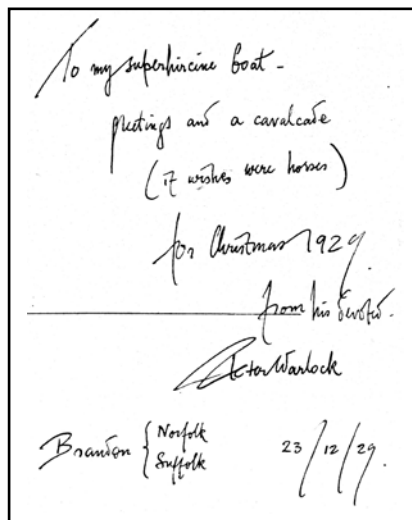
A few weeks later Warlock and Sorabji were, unknowingly to each other, at the same concert, and writing about it afterwards to Colin Taylor²⁴, Warlock is by now feeling less comfortable, and more equivocal about the correspondence with Sorabji:

'The blackamore whom you spotted at Ravel's concert was the very man! I asked him in a letter where he sat, and he has replied that he was immediately in front of the critics. Isn't it appalling?! I shall never dare to visit



Above: Warlock's 1927 Christmas Greeting to Sorabji ['Bouc' is French for 'goat'] and below: Warlock's 1929 Christmas Greeting to Sorabji.

[Hircine = goat-like, so presumably 'Superhircine Goat' approximates to 'Goatiest of Goats!']



him now, and I am beginning to fear that, amusing as his correspondence is, I shall soon repent having encouraged it, since I am sure I shall never get rid of him again! He becomes more and more queer, every letter he writes, but it is getting much too personal: I am “the most sympathetic person he has ever met”, etc, etc (although he has never *met* me – for that at least I am thankful!). Moreover he is convinced that in a former incarnation, I must have been closely related to him!! What funnys these Parsees are!

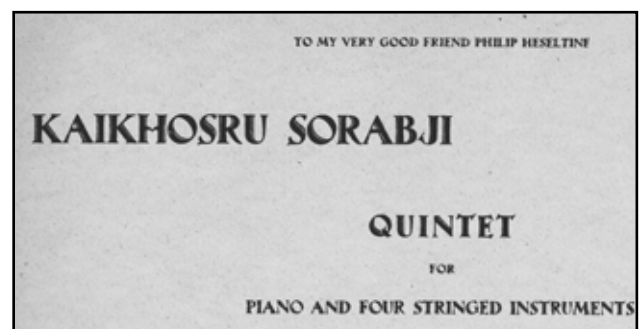
A week later, writing to Delius from Oxford, he echoes these sentiments:

‘The Parsee I told you about continues to write to me most gushing and enthusiastic letters! In the fourth letter, I was already “the most sympathetic person he had ever come across”, save his mother ... and by the time the fifth was reached, he was convinced that in a *former incarnation* (!) I must have been closely related to him: “the law of Karma has ordained us to meet in this life. What sort will it be in the higher stages of the Marwantara? Can you imagine?” ... etc, etc!! He concludes with the wonderful phrase, “Yours quite as much as his own”!!! This is to a person he has never seen! It is really great fun, and I encourage him to write more and more, since I find his letters most entertaining, and sometimes really interesting, when he talks about music. ...’

And then a remarkable change occurred: during the course of the next two years Sorabji began to compose his first music, and by 1916 Warlock’s attitude to his friend had shifted from benign interest and amusement to one of admiration and respect, taking Sorabji’s musical abilities much more seriously. Starting inauspiciously in 1915 with a few songs, within a year Sorabji had written a 177 page Piano Concerto, which he dedicated to Warlock. This is how the latter describes it to Colin Taylor²⁵:

‘Sorabji, the Parsee born of an Anglo-Spaniard, has written a soul-searching Piano Concerto, in a style *evolved* from late Scriabin + Ravel with a dash of Stravinsky [post-Petrouchkan (sic) period], but not ape-ishly imitative of any of them. He claims perfect mental auditory powers, for all the complexities of his harmonic scheme. If it’s true, he is a psychological phenomenon of the most astounding order – for a year ago he had no thought or even desire of composing anything at all. Even the piano passages were evolved without any reference to an instrument!!’

Four years later Warlock’s enthusiasm for Sorabji was unabated (as has been noted in his praise of a Sorabji Piano Sonata to Delius in March 1920), and it was around this time that his wrangle with Ernest Newman over Sorabji and van Dieren began (Warlock had sent copies of their music to Newman who seemed to ignore them)²⁶. Clearly Warlock’s esteem of Sorabji lasted well into the 1920s, but whether this esteem continued unreservedly is, as we have seen, debatable. Another thing I find intriguing, and possibly of some relevance here, is that Warlock never dedicated any of his works to Sorabji, which is quite surprising considering that for several years the two men had a significant friendship. Maybe Warlock did not deem Sorabji as being quite within his ‘inner circle’ of friends? Sorabji, on the other hand, dedicated two of his compositions to Philip Heseltine: the afore-mentioned Piano Concerto and his first Piano Quintet (1919-1920), and it is slightly odd that Warlock, for whatever reason, never reciprocated in kind.



Above: Part of the cover of Sorabji’s First Piano Quintet, with its dedication to Philip Heseltine and below: an extract from the score



Up until the time Sorabji and Warlock became friends, Sorabji had been quite isolated in his situation, living alone with his mother, and the advent of Warlock coming into his life was a great boon to him. Before they met, there is a revealing, rather sad reference to this in his fifth letter²⁷ to Warlock:

‘I am so pleased you are coming to London, and am dying to meet you and hope you will come and see me. I am very lonely; I have no friends at all, except my mother’s, and it will be indeed a joy to find such a keenly sympathetic soul.’

When the two men did eventually meet at a concert on (possibly²⁸) Friday, 20 March 1914, this is how Sorabji describes the occasion²⁹:

‘I was so delighted to meet you that Friday. I will be honest with you. I was a little bit afraid. But there was I could see no need for that. I was afraid lest you were a rather formidable person!’

The following Friday Warlock attended Leo Ornstein’s³⁰ much anticipated London debut at the Steinway Hall, and Sorabji spotted him there by chance:

‘I was not at Ornstein’s recital but I went with my professor³¹ to see if there were any free seats going. But as there were none or were said to be none I came away. I saw you come in. You passed within 2 feet of me but did not see me. I would have accosted you but you were with a lady, so refrained³².’

The fascinating thing here is the identity of the lady who accompanied Warlock to the recital, as there is an implication from Sorabji’s wording that Warlock may have been ‘on a date’, and would not have welcomed an intrusion. Viva Smith may seem the obvious candidate here, but judging from Warlock’s letters at the time the evidence is not totally convincing that it was her. Could it be that Warlock had a London girlfriend then which we do not as yet know about?!

Having met each other at last, one wonders how the friendship between Warlock and Sorabji went on to develop. Did they see quite a bit of each other (particularly after Warlock’s ‘Oxford Year’ had ended), or was it more a case that they kept in touch mainly through correspondence? There are scant clues in Sorabji’s letters to Warlock, and the mentions of the two men meeting each other are often mainly negative ones: in a couple

of Sorabji’s letters he declines invitations to stay with Warlock (in April and June 1914), and in December his attempt to call on Warlock at Maida Vale was abortive:

‘With infinite difficulty and after promenading Maida Vale from end to end, asking 4 policemen and 6 postmen I discovered Southwold Mansions, which – wretch! – you carefully omitted to tell me were half a mile from Maida Vale and left with the porter at 32³³ a parcel for you containing “Blast”³⁴.’

Later in the same letter Sorabji remarked ‘I was not surprised to find you out so don’t apologise as I shouldn’t have been able to stop had you even been in.’ There is the notion here of the two of them being mutually elusive! A different impression is given in the letter Sorabji wrote to Dowbiggin³⁵ after Warlock’s death:

‘It is a source of no small pleasure and pride to me that during a long period when he shut himself up and saw practically no one, I regularly visited him on a Sunday morning for many months on end.’

Sorabji’s next letter (dated 24th January 1915) is interesting in that it ties in with the tentative new arts magazine, *The New Hat*, that Warlock was to be involved with as Music Editor. Although it never got off the ground, Warlock had earlier been inviting contributions for it. This is how Sorabji responded: ‘Herewith enclosed an attempt – to be greeted by your fellow conspirators with howls of derision – a bit of scribble about Louis Aubert³⁶.’ It would seem Warlock never made use of it, for in a later letter (2 March 1915) Sorabji makes a request in a postscript for the return (amongst other things, including three books on Buddhism) of ‘...the pamphlet on Louis Aubert if it is not in the waste paper basket.’

Shortly after (in February 1915) Warlock became a music critic for *The Daily Mail*, a position he soon became disillusioned with, largely because of the restrictive nature of what he was allowed to write. He had recorded nearly a year earlier in a letter to his mother³⁷ that Sorabji appeared to be gaining musical background with a view to becoming a critic, and accordingly he later went on to ask Sorabji if he might be interested in taking over his job at *The Daily Mail*. This is Sorabji’s account:

‘You will doubtless in your own forceful and vigorous parlance think me a “bloody fool”, but do you remember

what you said to me the other day about chucking the “Daily Mail” at some future time? You asked me if I would care to take it on. I refused at the time, but have pondered since that at any rate it would be something as a start. So if you really do chuck it, think of me (...)

But seriously, if I were you, I don't think I should “chuck it”. At any rate it is safe and secure. It enables you to go to a quantity of concerts and hear heaps of music gratis, and you need have no feelings of shame or pricks of conscience in writing your notices for it. Few people would ever think of glancing at what the “Daily Mail” says in matters of Art. This may perhaps seem mercenary. But really there is not the slightest harm in doing so in order to make money out of the most thoroughly sordid mercenary rag that ever issued from a printing press³⁸.

Sorabji's advice to Warlock to ‘stick it out’ went unheeded, and Warlock resigned from his job shortly afterwards. Whether he (PW) ever put in a good word for his friend is a matter for surmise, but as far as is known Sorabji never wrote any reviews for *The Daily Mail* around this time.

Later that year, and now out of work, Warlock began his researches into, and editing of, Early Music at the British Museum, and, perhaps connected with this, he had written to Sorabji enquiring as to where he might be able to purchase a spinet or virginals. Sorabji's reply (written on 24 August 1915) gave his friend a number of suggestions of manufacturers and dealers where such an instrument might be obtained, but recommended Warlock should consider getting a Dulcitone³⁹ instead, where prices started as low as £12. Whether Warlock went on to acquire one I am not certain, but his enquiry was more than a passing whim, as another letter from him prompted Sorabji to send a postcard (dated 17 March 1916, and written in French) where he reiterates the previous information about the Dulcitone.

By this time in 1916 Warlock was involved with Puma who was several months pregnant: their son, Nigel, was born in July and the couple got married on 22 December. The present writer for one had always viewed their marriage as an afterthought, with maybe Warlock dragging his heels over the matter, but there is an arresting sentence in Sorabji's letter (of 21 April 1916) to Warlock which sheds another light on it: ‘As soon as I heard you were engaged, I fled as though 10,000 devils

were at my heels till I landed panting and on the verge of collapse in Kings Road!!!’. It is not clear from the context in the letter whether Warlock had told Sorabji the news himself, or whether it had been relayed by a friend, but if exactly as recorded by Sorabji, it does suggest that Warlock and Puma had planned to marry quite a while (8 months) before they actually did.

Sorabji's shocked reaction to the news of Warlock's engagement (even taking account of it possibly having been set down in rather exaggerated terms) does pose the question as to why he should have been taken aback quite so much as he was. One factor could be that he was totally unaware of Warlock being in a relationship with Puma, but could another explanation be that, being homosexual himself, and whilst accepting Warlock may have had some female friends, the finality of marriage – perhaps in Sorabji's mind associated with, and confirming, complete heterosexuality – came as a bit of a blow, especially if he had any personal feelings for Warlock in that direction. This last aspect is a very difficult one to judge and the already mentioned effusiveness of the endearments in Sorabji's letters could be spurious, even if Warlock may have found them slightly unsettling. To give an idea of what is being referred to here, from August 1915 onwards Sorabji's letters to Warlock are often addressed with such phrases as ‘Sweetest and Best!’, ‘Mon très aimable et très-cher!’ and signed off with ‘Toujours à toi’ and ‘Your loving Gote’. (‘Gote’ was a nickname given to Sorabji by another friend, and Sorabji encouraged Warlock to use it, so hence the ‘goat’ references in Warlock's Christmas greetings to him). Perhaps it is best to view these as overstatements of genuine affection, but, having said that, the question of whether Sorabji was physically attracted to the handsome young Warlock cannot be ignored completely. However, it is probably best left unanswered.

The only other time when the content of Sorabji's letters touches on Warlock's love life occurred in January 1920: having met up again with Warlock recently, Sorabji went round to visit him at 35 Warrington Crescent, Maida Vale, only to be informed “He does not live here now.” What Sorabji goes on to relate most likely alludes to the discovery, by Warlock, that his friend Boris de Chroustchoff (with whom Warlock was sharing 35

Warrington Crescent) was having an affair behind his back with Phyl Crocker (with his marriage heading for the rocks, Warlock had fallen in love with this young lady when he met her during his first sojourn in Cornwall):

‘You poor soul! Ten thousand sympathies is all I can offer you, but take them with all my heart! (...)

I can’t pretend I was astonished at what I heard because I knew it was coming. Latterly when I saw you, the atmosphere was loaded with electricity: but I was staggered at the sudden – or what to me seemed sudden – consummation of matters. I saw Boris in the Reading Room⁴⁰ about a week or ten days ago, or it might not have been so long, but he gave no hint of anything untoward happening⁴¹.’

Warlock had departed five days earlier, obviously in a bit of a hurry, and in a letter (dated 24 January 1920) to Cecil Gray from Cefn Bryntalch, to where he had retreated, he makes light of the upheaval by stating the reason for his leaving Warrington Crescent: ‘WHY I LEFT THE AIR WAS SO STRONG’ (quoting the words of an ex-housemaid that were in popular parlance at the time).

It was not many months later (May 1920) that the first issue of *The Sackbut* appeared under Warlock’s editorship, and it would be appropriate here to record Sorabji’s main contributions to the earlier numbers. These were two articles, one being entitled *On Singers*, included in the first issue, and the other, *Modern Piano Technique*, appearing in the third (July 1920). It is unclear whether Warlock had badgered Sorabji to produce the articles, or whether Sorabji, wishing to be supportive of his friend’s exciting new venture, wrote and submitted them on his own volition without any prompting from Warlock. There are no direct clues in Sorabji’s letters to PW, but there is a postscript in his letter (dated 21 August 1920) indicating that he was at least remunerated for his efforts:

‘N.B. I received this morning a cheque for £3.3.0. from Winthrop for the “Modern Piano Technique” article: why less than the first which was shorter by half a page, and for which he gave me £3.15.0?? Dost thou know[?]’

Warlock had seemingly made some sort of pledge to Sorabji quite a while back that he (PW) would write something on him (KS) – presumably in *The Sackbut* when it was launched – because in his 26 January 1920

letter to Warlock we see him penning a reminder: ‘And dare I hope for the long promised article on my own unworthy self in the not too distant future?’ Although, as we have noted earlier, Warlock did write twice about Sorabji three years later, it was not via an article in *The Sackbut*. However, an article on Sorabji did eventually appear in *The Sackbut*, but when it did, in June 1924, it was not written by Warlock. Entitled *The music of Kaikhosru Sorabji*, it was contributed by Becket Williams, another friend of the composer. By that time, of course, Warlock had been ousted from *The Sackbut*, and although he may have seemed the obvious choice for a piece on Sorabji, with the ‘political fallout’ Warlock had generated with the new editor, Ursula Greville, it is easy to imagine why he may not have been asked!

On a different tack entirely, there has been some recent speculation in the Newsletter as to whether Warlock ever met Aleister Crowley, and although Sorabji does not answer that question, what is not in doubt is that Warlock encouraged⁴² him to go and visit Crowley in Sicily. Sorabji’s attempt was in vain:

‘Crowley I missed in Cefalu [Sicily] and in Paris but one of the priestesses said he was coming to London so I have written to him expressing my desire and yours to meet him when he does come⁴³.’

When Sorabji did meet Crowley shortly afterwards, his description of him is quite amusing:

‘The Beast Salvarsan⁴⁴ is the dullest of dull dogs. He talked like Ralph Waldo Trine⁴⁵ + the Theosophical Society. It was most depressing. He wants however to hear me play and when I’m finished with my Solstitial Fast (...) he is coming to hear some of my demons.

He had on a red poplin silk waistcoat with gold buttons and his face is sunburnt up to the hat-line; above it’s lighter, making him look like the mask in a Chinese play. His face is that of a prosperous overfed fox-hunting tory squire – the unteachable in full pursuit of the unwearable⁴⁶.’

Writing back to Sorabji, Warlock must have commented on the Salvarsan epithet, as a few days later Sorabji continues: ‘Yes. Salvarsan is a good name for him: he’s as much a fraud as that much boomed “remedy”⁴⁷.’

Another topic that has also been in the Newsletter⁴⁸ recently is Warlock’s contretemps with Dr. Arthur Eaglefield

Hull in 1928 (which featured as part of Bryn Philpott's excellent article on Warlock's Purcell transcriptions). However this was not the first time Eaglefield Hull had incensed Warlock, for it would seem thirteen years earlier the latter took great exception to the former's book on modern harmony⁴⁹ soon after it was published in 1915. Sorabji thought Warlock had been too hard on him (Dr. A.E.H.) when he replied to him on 11 January 1915:

'I differ from you absolutely in your wholesale condemnation of Dr Hull's "Modern Harmony" and I think your criticism not by any means a fair one. You isolate certain musical examples of an unsatisfactory nature and present them as a portrait of the book as a whole. That the examples as a whole are not nearly so interesting (with the exception of Scriabin) as in M. Lenormand's book⁵⁰ there is no doubt whatever. But the work shows forth a keenly sensitive and responsive appreciator of music.'

In the postscript of the same letter Sorabji wryly adds: 'As you slate the unfortunate Dr Hull so unmercifully I wonder what you say about me behind my back. – "Tongue nor heart cannot conceive nor name" it!!' Earlier in the letter he concedes the subject of modern harmony is not an easy one to write about: 'I do not know of anyone ideally fitted to write a book on "Modern Harmony" (...) Calvocoressi⁵¹ perhaps if I might be allowed to write the Chapter on Scriabin and you the Delius chapter.'

The subject in Sorabji's letters to Warlock I have found most intriguing and puzzling relates to two references he made to a composer called Whitaker. Sorabji first mentions him in a letter dated 23 February 1916:

'The Whitaker songs are most beautiful and interesting. (...) They are saturated with Delius influence in a very subtle way.'

Luckily there is a tiny bit more information about the composer in Barry Smith's book on the Delius/Warlock letters⁵² where on page 189 he is named fully by Warlock, in a letter to Delius dated 15 December 1915, as George Whitaker. With that letter Warlock had sent Delius '... a song by an entirely unknown man, George Whitaker'. Further on in the letter Warlock continues: '...As for George Whitaker, I know very little of him, but I suspect him of being a poor, half-starved north country teacher of music.' The second Whitaker mention by Sorabji occurs in the letter to Warlock of 21 April 1916:

'The opening bars of that Yeats song of yours haunts me continually. I think it an extremely beautiful thing. Out of the whole lot I have from the very beginning singled that one out as the gem of what I supposed to be all Whitaker's work – you cheat! – what else have you done? I demand to know at once!!!'

There is something quite extraordinary here: it strikes me the obvious inference is that Warlock, having copied out some of Whitaker's songs for Sorabji, also copied a Yeats setting of his own which he included with them, intending that Sorabji would believe they were all composed by Whitaker. Whether Warlock actually inscribed Whitaker's name on his own song, or instead simply left out the composer's name is open to conjecture. Perhaps Sorabji's 'you cheat!' does suggest the act was deliberate on Warlock's part, rather than a misleading accident. The song in question may very well have been *He Reproves the Curlew*⁵³ that he had sent a copy of to Delius around the same time (but, interestingly, Warlock did not try to mislead Delius over its authorship!).

What is very significant is that we see Warlock in 1916 trying to conceal his identity in a song he had written. Although clearly intended to deceive Sorabji, I don't believe there was any malicious intent on Warlock's part. I think he recognised that if, with the high esteem in which Sorabji held him, he had sent the song under his own name he may have received more in the way of 'what he wanted to hear', rather than an honest opinion from Sorabji. The ruse was clearly a good one, and Warlock had at least the integrity to 'own up' in his next letter to Sorabji. This all becomes very relevant when, three years later, Warlock played a similar trick on the publisher Winthrop Rogers when he sent (and got accepted) seven songs under the 'Peter Warlock' name, because 'Philip Heseltine' was *persona non grata* in that quarter following a wrangle with Rogers he had had over Bernard van Dieren. In this case the intention was less benign, Warlock at the time confessing to Colin Taylor there was an element of revenge involved. Also in this case Warlock did not 'own up' – Winthrop Rogers only discovered the deception a year or so later. This has, of course, all become part of the Warlock Legend/Story, but it is interesting to reflect that Warlock may have remembered the successful outcome of the Sorabji/

Whitaker incident and how a similar tactic might be used again in different circumstances.

Having looked at some aspects of the Warlock/Sorabji friendship, it is appropriate finally to assess how much impact they had on each other's composing careers, and to what extent each promoted the other's music. In their developments as composers, in one respect Sorabji and Warlock had little influence on each other:— because their styles of composition and ways of working were so radically different, there was accordingly very little common ground that would have allowed much mutual interaction to occur. However, it is very likely that Warlock was a major source of inspiration and encouragement in getting Sorabji started on his composing path, and in fact Sorabji acknowledged this in his obituary for Warlock in *The New Age*. As we have seen, when the two men met in March 1914 Sorabji seems not yet to have written a note, but six months later (in a letter to Warlock dated 8 September 1914) we find him describing what is now believed to be his very first attempt to pen something creative in music:

I am attempting – how you will jeer!! – a piano arrangement of “In a Summer Garden”. Have got as far as [figure] 16 where it gets so big that one pair of hands cannot cope satisfactorily with it, though I am trying to manoeuvre it so that they can.’

Unfortunately the whereabouts of Sorabji's arrangement are unknown, so we will never know whether he successfully negotiated the ‘difficult bit’ or not, but interesting here is what might have prompted him to tackle this particular Delius work in the first place. True, Sorabji much admired this orchestral tone poem, but is it purely coincidence that in the previous couple of years Warlock had already made two arrangements of *In a Summer Garden*: one for two pianos (1912-13) and one for piano duet (1913-14)? As both young men greatly admired Delius, it is easy to envisage how Warlock would have told Sorabji of these, maybe hinting that all that was needed then was an arrangement of the work for solo piano. It is therefore very tempting here to assume Sorabji took his cue from Warlock, but there is no proof he did, of course. Warlock later (in 1921) made his own magnificent solo piano arrangement of *In a Summer Garden*, which might possibly imply the Sorabji one

was never completed (or, if it were, that Warlock felt it could be improved upon⁵⁴). It is not unreasonable to believe that Sorabji, in that first year or so of their friendship, saw Warlock as something of a role model. By March 1914 Warlock had already written several songs (although only three of them are extant now), and arranged a number of Delius works for piano; with his own fairly sheltered life, Sorabji must have been quite impressed by the achievements of the two-years-younger Warlock, with ‘the cherry on the cake’ being that Delius was a personal friend of his as well!

If Sorabji had any impact on Warlock's development as a composer it may have taken the form of something quite oblique and indirect, but also quite seminal, that he recommended to Warlock in one of his letters. Barry Smith⁵⁵ has drawn attention to how Warlock's year in Ireland was largely the making of him as a composer (whether it resulted from the occult experiences he had there, or simply just the ‘vibes’ of the place): the early crop of songs (such as *The bayley berith the bell away*; *As ever I saw* and *My gostly fader*) that were written during his final weeks there heralded something quite new: Peter Warlock, the composer with a distinctive individual voice, had arrived!

It is well known that the main reason why Warlock made what was in effect an escape to Ireland in August 1917 was to avoid the possibility of imminent conscription, but could it be that he also had in mind the idea of going there anyway? It comes as a surprise to read the opening of a letter Sorabji wrote to Warlock on 11 February 1916:

‘Mon très-cher ami – do not let yourself get into such a state of mental tension. I can see quite enough that it is well nigh unbearable for you, but you will only do yourself harm. Relax! Why has it not occurred to you to go to Ireland? There is no reason why you should not, and the change of surroundings and race would do you incalculable good.’

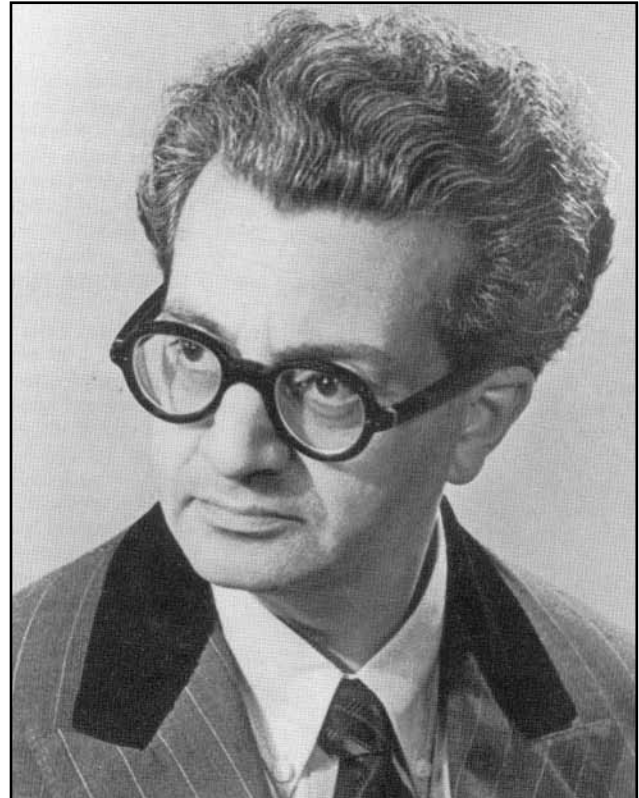
The ‘mental tension’ is also alluded to in a letter Warlock wrote to Delius on the same day, where he complains his ‘nerves are getting worse and worse’. At the time Warlock was residing with DH Lawrence in Cornwall, and whether this, with all it entailed, was the cause of it, or whether the prospect of going up to London a couple of weeks later to seek exemption from military service

was worrying him⁵⁶, is unclear – perhaps a bit of both? Although Sorabji's suggestion of going to Ireland was not taken up at the time, maybe the seed of possibility was planted in Warlock's mind, that eventually bore fruit a year and a half later?

When it came to promoting each other's musical careers, Warlock could be reasonably pleased with what he had achieved for his friend. His writings on Sorabji have already been recorded (see Notes 5 and 19): an article in the *Westminster Weekly Gazette* and an entry in *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*⁵⁷. It was Warlock's organising of the second Sackbut Concert in November 1920 that facilitated Sorabji's debut as a performer of his own compositions with his *Piano Sonata* [No.1]. Warlock also encouraged others (eg, Delius, as we have already seen) to become acquainted with Sorabji's music, even though the attempt to do so with Ernest Newman misfired. Sorabji thus had some reason to be grateful to Warlock. By contrast it would seem Sorabji made few, if any, clearly directed efforts to promote his friend's music, and there was little from him that did much to further Warlock's career during his lifetime⁵⁸. Even in his two books, either of which would have given Sorabji an ideal opportunity to pen a retrospective and reflective article on his late friend, there are just three references, with two of these being merely passing ones. The third is a little more than that, being almost a very brief tribute: in his essay *The Voice* Sorabji, noting a return of a more natural treatment of the human voice by some contemporary composers, continues:

'Among the Englishmen, Peter Warlock, as one would expect from a musician of the late Philip Heseltine's fine sensibility and aesthetic perception, is remarkable for the beauty of the line of his voice parts – particularly noticeable in the lovely 'Saudades' songs⁵⁹.'

An explanation of his having done 'not much' could be that Sorabji felt that, unlike his own peripheral place amongst UK composers, Warlock's profile was relatively prominent by comparison, and accordingly needed no extra help from him (indeed, in his obituary Sorabji refers to '...his name was a household word with a familiar public'). Moreover, he had already acknowledged his debt to Warlock by dedicating two of his more substantial works to him.



Kaikhosru Sorabji in the mid-1940s
(Photo: Joan Muspratt)

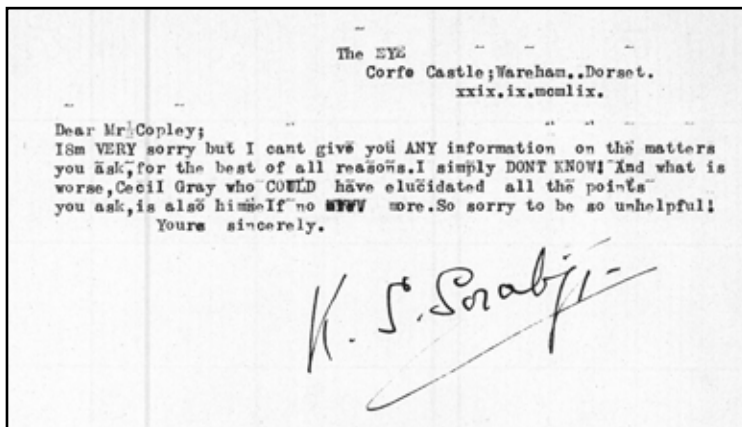
When Warlock died, it is pleasing to note Sorabji recorded his warm gratitude to him, and I can do no better than end with another part of Sorabji's obituary notice that appeared in *The New Age* on 15 January 1931:

'...gone from us [is] one of the finest musical minds of our time, a critic and a writer further of unparalleled brilliance, insight and subtlety. What I owe personally to his early encouragement, sympathy and championship I can never adequately express, except to say here and now is my bounden moral duty to express that obligation as best I can.'

A song writer of exquisite delicacy, jewel-like craftsmanship, and flawless rightness of instinct, he has been equalled by few and surpassed by far fewer, and those happy recipients of quaint postcards inscribed in a freakish manner so typical of him in a microscopic, dainty, and delicate handwriting, typical of the perfect orderliness and complete lack of loose ends about any part of his personality, have a poignant reason for cherishing these memorials of him now.'

Postscript:

As an afterthought, it might well be asked why the Peter Warlock Society seemingly made little effort to sound out Sorabji about his friendship with Warlock in the former's later years – Sorabji did, after all, live on into the period of the Society's first twenty five years (from 1963 to 1988). I can only assume any reluctance on our part may have stemmed from a not very promising reply that Ian Copley received from Sorabji following an enquiry he made in 1959 when researching Warlock for his book-to-be on the composer. Sorabji was an intensely private person, and one senses from the tone of his somewhat terse response that he may have viewed Copley's letter as a not particularly welcome intrusion into that privacy. Unfortunately, Copley's letter has not survived, so we can only guess at what he may have asked Sorabji, but it is difficult to readily accept that the latter's "I know nothing" type of answer would have reflected the sum total of his knowledge of Warlock at the time. With such an unforthcoming response it is thus not too surprising that (as far as I am aware) no one from the Society felt encouraged to enquire further. Sorabji's letter



to Copley is illustrated here, but as Sorabji confessed elsewhere, typing was not exactly his strong suit, and so accordingly the text is reproduced as follows:

Dear Mr Copley,

I am VERY sorry but I can't give you ANY information on the matters you ask, for the best of reasons. I simply DONT KNOW! And what is worse, Cecil Gray who COULD have elucidated all the points you ask, is also himself no more. So sorry to be so unhelpful!

Yours sincerely,

K.S. Sorabji ■

Acknowledgments:

I am especially grateful to Alistair Hinton of the Sorabji Archive for supplying me with much information and advice during the writing of this article. The Sorabji Archive is acknowledged for permission granted to quote from Sorabji's writings (mainly the unpublished letters he wrote to Warlock) and to reproduce the music example.

Further reading and listening:

The first port of call is a visit to the website of the Sorabji Archive at www.sorabji-archive.co.uk [for those readers without internet access the Archive can be contacted at: Warlow Farm House, Eaton Bishop, Hereford HR2 9QF]. This is an excellent resource, and includes a list of Sorabji's compositions, a list of recordings, and a fine, short introductory article *And who exactly is Sorabji?* by Alistair Hinton. The Archive is able to provide copies

of Sorabji's scores and writings at a reasonable cost.

There are quite a few recordings of Sorabji's music available now, and a good selection can be browsed at www.amazon.co.uk.

The book *Sorabji – A Critical Celebration* [edited by Paul Rapoport] is still available, and although first rate in its depth of content, at £75 it is a bit of a pricey option.

For those with internet access, it is worth checking out Sorabji on Youtube where it is possible to get a quick and easy flavour of the composer and his work. Included here (and recommended by the present writer) are *Pastiche No.2* on the 'Habanera' from Bizet's *Carmen* played by Sandro Russo; the interview with Sorabji; and Marc-André Hamelin playing part of the *Piano Sonata* No.1 [the work that so impressed Warlock].

Notes

- 1 which appeared in the Society's Newsletter No.42 [March 1989], page 10.
- 2 *Peter Warlock – The Life of Philip Heseltine*, OUP 1994, pages 47-48.
- 3 *Sorabji – A Critical Celebration* (Edited by Paul Rapoport), Scolar Press (now Ashgate Publishing), Aldershot, UK, 1992, repr. 1994, pages 195-255.
- 4 following a recital in which a pianistic travesty of part of *Opus clavicembalisticum* occurred.
- 5 In *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, edited by A. Eaglefield-Hull [J.M. Dent, London, 1924, page 469].
- 6 dated 15 March 1920, from Kilburn, North London.
- 7 relayed verbally to the present writer.
- 8 Unicorn Press, London, 1932.
- 9 The Porcupine Press, London, 1947.
- 10 In the Introduction to her 1985 thesis on Sorabji's writings about British Music in *The New Age*.
- 11 In *A Note on Kaikhosru Sorabji* in a programme note for a recital given by Yonty Solomon at the Wigmore Hall in 1976.
- 12 to Sorabji's and Warlock's mutual friend Robert Lorenz (dedicatee of PW's *Captain Stratton's Fancy*).
- 13 signing his name Dudley Sorabji-Shapurji at the time.
- 14 although, to be strictly accurate here, Sorabji at this point (in 1913) had not actually composed any music by then, as far as is known.
- 15 11 February 1914, from Christ Church College, Oxford.
- 16 Letter dated 26 January 1920 from Sorabji (writing from Clarence Gate Gardens, NW1) to Warlock.
- 17 Letter dated 5 September 1983 from Sorabji to Kenneth Derus.
- 18 An impression of Orr's disenchantment with the changing Warlock lifestyle is sensed in the letter he wrote to Ian Copley in 1963 (reproduced in part on pages 6 and 7 of Newsletter No. 85, Autumn 2009).
- 19 Warlock had written an article on Sorabji for the 18 August 1923 issue of *The Weekly Westminster Gazette*, and also an entry on Sorabji for *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.
- 20 which has been reliably dated as 24 June 1922.
- 21 Sorabji writing to Warlock from the Boscombe Pier Hotel, Bournemouth, on 28 July 1922.
- 22 indeed, these letters have greatly assisted Sorabji researchers in clarifying the chronology of the composer's earlier piano concertos.
- 23 on 28 December 1913 from Cefn Bryntalch.
- 24 on 4 February 1914 from Christ Church College, Oxford.
- 25 writing from Chelsea on 13 March 1916
- 26 See pages 160-161 in Barry Smith's biography for more details of the Newman Feud.
- 27 letter dated 3 February 1914
- 28 Warlock, in a letter to his mother on 25 March, stated that he met Sorabji at a concert on Monday 23 March, but whether the two men had met prior to this is open to interpretation.
- 29 on page 20 (dated 28 March) of a long letter he wrote to Warlock.
- 30 The Russian ultra-modernist composer/pianist (born 1894?) - he was almost 108 when he died in 2002 at Wisconsin!
- 31 Sorabji was, at the time, studying music privately with a Charles A. Trew, so presumably he was being referred to here.
- 32 as per Note 29
- 33 Warlock at the time was living at No.34 Southwold Mansions.
- 34 Letter from Sorabji to Warlock, dated 27 December 1914. *Blast* was the short-lived magazine of Wyndham Lewis's Vorticist movement, and a seminal publication in pre-War UK modern art. This would have been the first number that was issued in July 1914.
- 35 Op. cit.
- 36 Louis Aubert (1877-1968): French composer and pianist, whose work Sorabji admired.
- 37 dated 25th March 1914 from Cranston's Ivanhoe Hotel, Bloomsbury Street, London WC
- 38 Letter from Sorabji to Warlock, dated 15th May 1915.
- 39 a lightweight and compact keyboard instrument, where the sound was produced by felt hammers striking tuning forks.
- 40 presumably of the British Museum.
- 41 letter from Sorabji dated 26 January 1920.
- 42 'I visited the creature at Heseltine's insistence...' [letter from Sorabji to Kenneth Derus, dated 23 January 1982].
- 43 letter to Warlock dated 12 April 1922.
- 44 Salvarsan was a well known drug [which, when discovered, was simply known as Compound 606] used at the time to treat syphilis, often with fatal side effects. With Crowley's preference to be called The Great Beast 666, it is easy to follow the logic of Sorabji's waggish re-naming, bearing in mind Crowley's sexual practises!
- 45 Ralph Waldo Trine (1866-1958), American philosopher and mystic.
- 46 letter to Warlock dated 19 June 1922.
- 47 letter to Warlock dated 24 June 1922.
- 48 Newsletter 89, Autumn 2011, pages 8-10.
- 49 A. Eaglefield Hull: *Modern Harmony, its explanation & application* [London, Augener Ltd., 1915].
- 50 *Étude sur l'harmonie moderne* [Boston Music Co, c.1915] by René Lenormand.
- 51 Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi (1877-1944), music critic and writer.
- 52 *Frederick Delius and Peter Warlock - A friendship revealed* [OUP, Oxford, 2000].
- 53 the Yeats setting that was later incorporated into *The Curlew*.
- 54 Perhaps Sorabji's 'How you will jeer!!' was an implicit acknowledgment that Warlock's superb arrangements of Delius were a tough act to follow?
- 55 Op. cit., page 154
- 56 Relevant here is a comment in a letter (dated 1st February 1916) from DH Lawrence to Lady Ottoline Morrell: '...Heseltine is gloomy about conscription...'
- 57 Both of these can be conveniently read in respectively Volume 3 (page 150) and Volume 4 (page 64) of *The Occasional Writings of Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock)*, Edited by Barry Smith [Thames, London, 1998 & 1999].
- 58 Although, as noted earlier, Sorabji was supportive during the early months of *The Sackbut*, but whether, or not, this resulted from cajoling by Warlock is a moot point.
- 59 *Around Music* [The Unicorn Press, London, 1932] page 97.

Articles (Continued)

The Last Songs of Peter Warlock: Transcript of the BBC Broadcast by Bruce Blunt

Introduction by **Barry Smith**

Bruce Blunt (1899-1957), bon viveur, poet, journalist, and writer on wine, gardening, and the turf, was one of Heseltine's closest friends during the last three years of his life and some of Heseltine's finest musical settings are of Blunt's poetry. The two men had struck up a friendship sometime early in 1927. Although there are no details as to how or where they met, there is a significant press cutting (from *The West London Press*) stuck in Philip's 1927 diary, which reported that the two of them had been arrested on 25 June 1930 for being drunk and disorderly in Cadogan Street.¹ Both pleaded guilty and were subsequently fined 10s. each for shouting and singing. Theirs was a close and fruitful friendship and over the years the unique combination of their literary and musical talents resulted in a number of masterpieces. There are two important surviving scripts of broadcast talks that Blunt gave about his friend. The brief portrait of Philip which Blunt gave in a BBC Home Service programme, *The World Goes By*, on 16 December 1944, is one of the most penetrating that we have:

Peter Warlock was only a pen-name at first, but latterly he used it for every purpose. This started the extraordinary legend that he was really two persons in one, and that the sinister Peter Warlock eventually destroyed the gentle Philip Heseltine. Every time that any reference is made to Peter Warlock or his work, this myth is trotted out. It's time that it was forgotten. At its very mention you instantly think of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, those figures of good and evil splitting a single man. This suggestion of the sinister gives an absolutely false impression of Philip Heseltine, who was fundamentally so simple and sincere. Anyone who has any character at all has many sides to that character, and so it was with Philip. That was all. Of the many times that I was with him, I was quite unaware that a dread figure was my companion. On the contrary.

On expeditions to the country he was the genius of wherever he might be. The country was in his blood. He seemed to be part of the English scene, a timeless being who had always stood and always would stand upon some Kentish hill-top or among the valleys of that land which he loved the best – the stretch of country which lies between Ross-on-Wye and the Black Mountains.

Did I say 'Stand'? As a matter of fact, he had a passion for speed, but speed never blurred his vision. He expected his driver

to take in all the details of the passing scene and keep his eyes on the road as well. A rather alarming passenger. Yet, somehow or other, we usually managed to get to the end of our journey, and this, more often than not, was an inn.

Philip's entry into a bar or taproom was apt to be dramatic. That vivid creature, with the handsome face, fair hair and pointed beard, was bound to attract attention. Eyes turned towards him, and talk ceased. But not for long. No-one was quicker at melting barriers than Philip. He was perfectly at ease with all kinds of people, and so were they with him. Many who had known him for only a few hours felt that they had known him all their lives . . . He had that rarest quality in human beings, that when you were with him you were never dull. But what was the secret of that affection which he inspired? He had great charm and a brilliant mind, but these are not enough. Like other people with the quality of true greatness, he was very modest. He never put on airs. And his was a most generous spirit.²

It was Blunt's avowed intention to clear away 'the unsavoury legend' which he felt had gathered around Philip. Although he was obviously guarded in his broadcast talks, Blunt was highly critical of Gray's part in building up the sinister Warlock-Heseltine fabrication in his biography. He had written to Arnold Dowbiggin³ saying:

I think that Cecil Gray has done Philip quite enough harm already with his deplorable book and the dual personality nonsense . . . After the recent fiasco, I think it will be as well if the whole thing is allowed to rest for a considerable time, in the hope that such vulgar trash will eventually fade from people's minds.

I hope to give a talk about Philip late in the year, but it will not be handled by the Music department, with whom I refuse to have any dealings.

In this I shall do my best to clear away the fog of unsavoury legend which has gathered about him. . . .

[Gray] built up this sinister Warlock-Heseltine fabrication because his knowledge of life was insufficient to enable him to see the simple truth.

Any man of character and versatility has a hundred facets to his nature . . . Gray was too ingenuous to realise that the difference in moods which caused him such tremendous bother was simply the difference between 'Philip drunk and Philip sober.'⁴

The following script is undated and is here transcribed from a photocopy of the original. Given Blunt's comments to Dowbiggin this is in all likelihood the talk prepared for the BBC sometime in 1943 though it has been impossible to discover the exact date of the broadcast.

The Last Songs of Peter Warlock

BBC Broadcast by Bruce Blunt

When one is asked of this or that person, 'What was he like?' it is usually a difficult question to answer offhand.

It is not so difficult with Peter Warlock, because, although he has been dead for twelve years, his image remains as vivid as though he had only just left the room.

It was this quality of vividness which made so many people who had met him only once or twice mourn him as though they had known him all their lives. At the news of his death chance acquaintances in remote villages and London by-streets felt a catch at the heart which is usually only felt at the loss of a friend.

As most people know, his name was Philip Heseltine. Peter Warlock was primarily a pen-name, but from his use of it has grown up a legend of dual personality.

The very mention of dual personality immediately calls up visions of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, the figures of good and evil splitting a single man.

This suggestion of the sinister gives a ludicrously false picture of Philip Heseltine, who was fundamentally so simple and so sincere.

Anyone who has any character at all has a hundred facets to that character, and a dozen personalities, but, except in that sense, Philip Heseltine, Peter Warlock, and the other pen-names which he used, were one, indivisible man, compounded of the same wayward elements as the rest of us.

Few of his friends ever called him 'Peter' or 'Warlock'. I never did so once, and am not going to start doing so now.

Of the dozen songs which Philip composed in the last three years of his life, four were settings of words which I had written. If I pay particular attention to these four, it is not through egotism, but partly because I naturally know more about them than about any others, and partly because three of them – *Bethlehem Down*, *The Frostbound Wood* and *The Fox* – are accounted, musically at any rate, as among the best of his songs.

Towards the Christmas of 1927 we conceived the idea of getting the words and music of a carol printed in a daily paper. Our motive, I confess, was largely to obtain financial support money to tide us over the season's festivities.

Before this, we had a carol published by a firm of music publishers, but we thought that a great daily paper would probably be a more remunerative medium for publication. And in this we were right.

Here I would like to mention that Philip always thought that the writer of the verses was entitled to as much reward as the composer of the music for a song. How many other musicians and critics would agree with him, I do not know. At any rate, he always insisted that we should go halves in the proceeds of our songs.

If, in this instance, Philip's generosity got the better of his judgment, it is at least typical of his over-generous self. However that may be, I wrote the words of *Bethlehem Down*, and sent them off to him. In a few days the carol was finished, and it was printed in the 'Daily Telegraph' on Christmas Eve.

The original composition was a four-part choral work, and the song which you are now going to hear sung by [blank space in Blunt's script] is a later version.

Bethlehem Down

When he is King we will give Him the King's gifts,
Myrrh for its sweetness and gold for a crown,
Beautiful robes' said the young girl to Joseph,
Fair with her first-born on Bethlehem Down.

Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight,
Winds for the spices and stars for the gold,
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

When He is King they will clothe Him in grave-sheets,
Myrrh for embalming and wood for a crown,
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary,
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.

Here He has peace and a short while for dreaming,
Close-huddled oxen to keep Him from cold,
Mary for love, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

We did no other song together for about a year, when a curious cricket match took place. It was played on New Year's Day, 1929, on Broadhalfpenny Down, Hambledon, the so-called Cradle of Cricket.

I was partly responsible for the organisation of this match, which took a considerable time, and Philip was staying with me in Hampshire whilst the arrangements were going on. These arrangements were very largely made in the *Vine Inn* and *The George* at Hambledon, and it was there that we met several members of the Hambledon Brass Band.

Philip composed two songs to celebrate the somewhat strange occasion, and they were specially written for the Hambledon Brass Band. I wrote the words for one of these songs, which was called *The Cricketers of Hambledon*. The words are deplorable doggerel, and the whole song was looked on more or less as a joke. As far as I know it never hurt anyone, except one or two earnest-minded critics who seemed to think that a composer should never joke.

The other one was a drinking song called *Fill the Cup, Philip*.⁵ The words were anonymous, of the time of Henry VIII.

I have the manuscript in front of me now, in Philip's beautiful handwriting.

He describes it as 'A song to be roared, over mugs of beer,' to the accompaniment of:

- 1 Cornet in Bb
- 2 Saxhorns in Eb
- 2 Baritones in Bb
- 1 Euphonium in Bb

It has never been published and it is now being sung for the first time.

This was the last of Philip's roystering songs, of which he had written a good number, including *Good Ale* and the well-known *Captain Stratton's Fancy*.

The rest of his work after this consisted mainly of settings of 16th and 17th century poems, with two lovely modern ones – Hilaire Belloc's *Carillon Carilla* and Richard Adlington's *After Two Years*.

Another Christmas came round, and the last carol which we did together was printed in the Christmas number of the *Radio Times*. This was *The Frostbound Wood*.

The Frostbound Wood

Mary that was the Child's mother
Met me in the frostbound wood:
Her face was lovely and care-laden
Under a white hood.

She who once was Heaven's chosen
Moved in loneliness to me,
With a slow grace and weary beauty
Pitiful to see.

Bethlehem could hear sweet singing,
'Peace on earth, a Saviour's come'.
Here the trees were dark, the Heavens
without stars, and dumb.

Past she went with no word spoken,
Past the grave of Him I slew,
Myself the sower of the woodland
And my heart the yew.

Mary that was the Child's mother
Met me in the frostbound wood:
Her face was lovely and care-laden
Under a white hood.

And so we pass on to the summer of 1930. Philip was then living in London, but the days of it which I like to remember the best are those which he spent in the country with me.

The country was in his blood. He seemed to be an integral part of the English scene, a timeless being who had always stood, and always would stand, with windblown hair upon the high downs, looking towards the sea.

He was always at perfect ease with country people. One would have thought that his entry into an inn, with his pointed beard and colourful appearance, would have caused that awkward silence which often falls upon such gatherings at any hint of the eccentric or unusual.

Nothing of the sort ever happened. The fineness of the man outshone the trappings, his natural good fellowship warmed the room, and the drinks and the talk were soon going round as though the whole company were old familiars. No one was swifter than Philip at melting the barriers which surround a stranger.

And, as I have hinted before, there are many inns which he only went to once or twice, where people who met him still remember him, and feel more than a vague sorrow that they will never see him there again.

One of the inns which we visited distinctly more than once or twice was *The Fox* at Bramdean. On the wall behind the bar hang's a fox's mask – it still hangs there, as a matter of fact⁶ – and one evening it gave me the idea for the words of *The Fox*.

When we got back home, Philip went to bed, and I sat up writing the verses. It was three o'clock in the morning before I finished them, so, as I knew that I should get up pretty late in consequence, I left the verses on the table so that Philip should find them when he came down in the morning. When I eventually came down myself, he was sitting with music manuscript paper in front of him writing out the first draft of the song.



Bruce Blunt at *The Fox Inn*, 1955

We were going into Salisbury that day and, when we got there, Philip hired a room with a piano at some music shop, and finished the song in the afternoon.

So the whole thing, words and music, was completed well within twenty-four hours, and we duly celebrated the feat at the *Haunch of Venison* in Salisbury in the evening.

After that there were a few more days of summer, and they had, like all other times spent with Philip, a quality and splendour of their own. To quote Mr. Jack Yeats⁷ on another matter, they seemed part of a lost age 'when three parts of the year were like one long, hot Irish May-day, and the dust was gold, and mushrooms crowded all the fields, and sleep was only for children'.

So the last song of Philip's was written, and after it has been sung, I shall say no more, because *The Fox* is, in itself, a song of farewell. ■

The Fox

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. At 'the Fox Inn'
The tatter'd ears,
The fox's grin
Mock the dead years. | 2. High on the wall
Above the cask
Laughs at you all
The fox's mask. |
| 3. The horn is still,
The huntsmen gone;
After the kill
The fox lives on. | 4. Death's date is there
In faded gold;
His eyes outstare
The dead of old. |
| 3. Beneath this roof
His eyes mistrust
The crumbled hoof
The hounds of dust. | 6. You will not call,
I shall not stir
When the fangs fall
From that brown fur. |

Notes

- 1 See PWS Newsletter 85, M. Rudland, *Peter Warlock's Diary for 1927*, 13-14).
- 2 Quoted in I.A. Copley, *The Music of Peter Warlock* (London, 1979), 25-26.
- 3 Arnold Dowbiggin (1898-1970), research chemist and amateur singer who came to know Heseltine through corresponding with him in the late 1920s
- 4 Blunt to Dowbiggin, 20 May, 1943, photocopy.
- 5 The music was found among Blunt's papers after his death in 1957 and was first published in 1972.
- 6 The fox's head remained on the wall of *The Fox Inn* until it was taken down in 2003. By chance, it then came into the possession of the PWS. See p.22 for the full story.
- 7 John 'Jack' Butler Yeats (1871-1957), Irish painter, author and Olympic medalist and brother of the poet, William Butler Yeats.

Articles (Continued)

From the Archives: *The Fox's mask at The Fox Inn*

Michael Graves relates the story of how the fox's head, which used to hang on the wall of *The Fox Inn* in Bramdean, came into the possession of the PWS in 2003.

Introduction

It is quite possible that some Warlockians are not aware that the fox's head, which once graced the walls of *The Fox Inn* in Bramdean, became the property of the PWS, in 2003. In many respects it is surprising that the original fox's head, which inspired Blunt and PW to create the song, remained on the wall of *The Fox Inn* for as long as it did, over 122 years. I even recall being surprised to see it there when I first visited the pub in 1975. Such was my delight, that I couldn't help acting in a rather eccentric manner for posterity (see photo below), much to the bemusement of my long suffering companions!



Michael Graves (left) and Garvin Crawford at *The Fox Inn* circa 1975 (Photo: Úna McDonald)

But I digress. By some strange quirk of fate the story of how ownership of the fox's head transferred from *The Fox Inn* to the PWS has never been included in any of the society's Newsletters. It is an important piece of Warlockiana and Barry Smith's introduction to, and the transcripts of, the Bruce Blunt BBC Broadcasts of 1943 and 1944 (p.18-21), present an appropriate opportunity for the tale to be told.

It was PWS member, and former Hon. Sec. of the Delius Society, Anthony Lindsey, who was mostly responsible for the PWS's acquisition of the fox's head. The saga began in 2002 when Anthony was returning to his home in Sussex after having been to the Three Choirs Festival. His route passed through Bramdean and, recalling the significance of *The Fox Inn* for Warlockians, decided to stop at the pub for some refreshment. Anthony was interested to see the fox's head displayed on the wall, together with the framed copy of *The Fox*, installed

by the PWS in the early 1970s. A similar journey and sojourn for refreshment took place after the Three Choirs Festival the following year. This time, however, Anthony discovered that the fox's head was no longer on display. He enquired at the bar as to the head's whereabouts and was told it had been removed from the wall and was kept in a box in a cupboard. The landlady (Mrs Jane Inder) was not available at the time, so any further conversation was not possible. Anthony left the pub and informed our Hon. Sec. Malcolm Rudland of his findings.

Predictably, Malcolm contacted the pub immediately to enquire about the fox's head. Mrs Inder told him she had removed it from the wall because it had become rather scruffy. Telephone negotiations then started in an attempt to secure the head for the PWS and eventually a deal was struck to buy it for £50. It was in 2003 that the fox hunting debate was at its height and Anthony recalls that, although the 'official' reason for the head's removal had been due to it being 'rather scruffy', the member of the duty staff he originally talked to intimated another reason. Apparently a customer (pro-ban) had felt 'it's presence might perhaps be inappropriate in view of current feeling on the subject.' It is more than likely that the landlady had become rather nervous, being concerned that if the fox's head remained in place her trade might be adversely affected.

Anthony was duly charged with the task of collecting the head from the pub on presentation of the agreed sum. On completion of the transaction, it became possible to attempt verification of whether the head was indeed the same head that had been 'high on the wall above the cask' when Blunt and Warlock had been drinking there in 1930. The legend on the plaque clearly states 'The Hambledon, October 15th 1880' and a label on the reverse provides the name of a local Winchester taxidermist. It was customary for 'The Master' to present the trophy to wherever the morning stirrup cup had been taken.

From the archives

Two documents follow, both slightly abridged to avoid repetition. First is the emailed letter of invitation the Hon. Sec Malcolm Rudland sent out to members on 7 October 2003 and secondly, a formerly unpublished, review written immediately after the event.



Above: Part of the first page of *The Fox* with amendments by Bernard van Dieren



Right: Anthony Lindsey, who rescued the fox's head from *The Fox Inn*.

Email from the Hon. Sec. Malcolm Rudland to those PWS Members having email addresses, 7 October 2003

Dear

Within the next week you will be receiving a copy of our latest Newsletter, No.73, in which pages 8 to 14 are devoted to our 40th anniversary celebrations in Hampstead last May.

However, the actual date of our 40th anniversary is Saturday 18 October, and we shall be marking the occasion with a social evening from 7.30 pm to 11 pm in the Upper Room of *The Antelope Tavern*, Eaton Terrace, London SW1 ... Melton Mowbray pork pies and Stilton cheese will be served upstairs.

My former counterpart in the Delius Society was Squadron Leader Anthony Lindsey ... who lives in Sussex and was travelling home through Bramdean. He remembered the story of Warlock's fox and dropped into *The Fox Inn* for a drink.

The reputation of the Warlock Society had permeated the hierarchy of his Society ... after inspired motivation from all parties, our Society has now acquired ... the original fox's mask that inspired Warlock's song.

At 8.30pm our founder Pat Mills will be appointed *The Keeper of Warlock's Fox's Mask* ... and the song itself will then be sung by a celebrity singer.

Please reply by Tuesday 14 October if you can come.

With my good wishes,

Malcolm Rudland

Hon. Secretary

The Fox at the Antelope (Unsubscribed review circa October 2003)

'At the committee meeting on 27 September, our Chairman (Dr Brian Collins) proposed an idea for an informal drink with a few like-minded people at *The Antelope* on our actual 40th anniversary, 18 October 2003. He said he didn't mind if he ended up on his own, but at least it would mean that one person would be celebrating somewhere appropriate.

To the wroth (*sic*) of some and the pleasure of others, Rudland Enterprises Unlimited hijacked this idea to create a fully choreographed extravaganza with a cast of thousands. It also celebrated some interesting cross-fertilisation between the Delius and Warlock Societies. (We are sorry if you didn't know of it. It happened too late for the Newsletter, and so we could only contact our e-mail list. Perhaps we need your e-mail address?)

The former Hon. Sec. of the Delius Society, Squadron Leader Anthony Lindsey, lives in Sussex and travelling home through Bramdean one night he remembered the story of Warlock's fox and dropped into *The Fox Inn* for a drink. Seeing our framed copy of the song on the wall, but not the fox's mask, he enquired of the landlady where it was, and was told it had got a bit scruffy to be on the wall anymore. Delicate negotiations between the landlady and the Warlock and Delius Societies resulted in the Warlock Society acquiring this fox's mask that inspired the song! The mask is engraved to 'The Hambleton' and dated 15 October 1880, almost 50 years to the date of Warlock's *The Fox*,



Left: Eamonn Dougan who sang *The Fox* 'with chilling conviction'.

Centre: The fox's head

Right: Patrick Mills *The Keeper of Warlock's Fox's Mask*

and the taxidermist's name being Henry Moreton. What a pity this contact with the Delius Society had not been made last year. Squadron Leader Lindsey had arranged the Delius Society celebrations for their 40th anniversary last year to be at the RAF Club, 128 Piccadilly, whereas this year our 'umble society only 'oled up in an 'olly bush in 'ampstead.

The drama started to unfold at 8.30pm

Apologies came from:-

- Dame Felicity Lott: 'Many thanks for the Newsletter and for the invitation for Saturday 18th. Unfortunately Tom Allen and I are singing a duet programme in Devon on 18th and tonight in Edinburgh. He's singing *The Fox* and *Yarmouth Fair* and I'm doing *My own country* and *Sleep* so Warlock is represented. Best wishes, Felicity Lott.'
- Sir Thomas Allen: 'Have a wonderful evening at the Antelope on Saturday and enjoy looking at those 'tattered ears' and 'faded gold' of the original mask. I shall try to explain this stint in Glorious Devon (He did!). My best wishes to my stand-in, Eamonn Dougan – I'm sure he'll do great justice to the song. (He did!) Best wishes, Thomas Allen.'
- Our Vice-President, Ben Luxon rang from Massachusetts to say he is now a US citizen, but won't be able to come on the 18th because he will be in Newcastle (Northumberland not Massachusetts!)
- Ian Partridge, Mark Wildman, Stephen Varcoe

Thanks to the Caterers:-

- Lawrence Rice, Eddie Morgan

Notable members present:-

- Gordon Honey, Tony Britten, Julian Baker, Malcolm Smith
Civilians Present:-

- David le Lay, our Pied Piper of Chelsea in 1994, who led our Centenary ChronotopogaPHical Crawl.

Squadron Leader Anthony Lindsey then related why he was there, and introduced Dan Gillingwater who, recoiling from his foetal position, did another of his dramatic presentations, this time based on his conception of what actually happened the night *The Fox* was composed. He then played with our Hon. Sec in a two-organ arrangement of Betty Roe's *Leave me at the Fox Inn*, which created an ecclesiastical atmosphere so intense that in the ensuing silence, Malcolm Smith was moved to intone 'Let us pray'. Warlock's *The Fox* was then given its first performance in the presence of the original mask. Our Hon. Sec converted one of his organs into a grand piano and accompanied Eamonn Dougan, who sang from memory and with chilling and total conviction. After this our Hon. Sec had a quiet word with him, which resulted in us being shown a copy of the Warlock song which Eamonn had agreed to sing for the next presentation that Squadron Leader Lindsey might bring us from 'Warlock in Sussex'. It was a copy of *Ha'nacker Mill!* The mask was then taken off the wall and presented to our founder Pat Mills, who was regally appointed *The Keeper of Warlock's Fox's Mask*.

The debate surrounding fox-hunting eventually resulted in the Hunting Act of 2004, which banned the hunting of wild mammals with dogs in England and Wales. It came into force in February 2005. ■

Articles (Continued)

The Goss Archives

Giles Davies investigates the personal manuscripts and HMV recordings of John Goss

The Manuscripts

John Goss's own leather bound dossier of manuscripts, contains almost seventy pages of songs written out in his own hand. Many of these were obvious favourites, and some found their way into the *Anthology of Song* published in 1927. Of German Lieder composers, the songs of Schubert, Schumann and Brahms feature, alongside lesser known pieces by Cornelius and Rubenstein. The English songs within the manuscripts folder, include earlier 17th century composers such as Lawes, and other anonymous works from the Elizabethan period and earlier. Various Folksongs appear, with arrangements by Moeran, Hughes and Vaughan Williams. Goss was also fond of earlier French songs, and it appears that the haunting Mediaeval song *L'amour de moi*, was a particular favourite. This also appears in the *Anthology of Song*, in an arrangement by Foss, though here the key is lower and the arrangement considerably different. A few pages can be seen here as examples of Goss's copperplate handwriting. Amongst the original English songs, we find Quilter, Moeran, Orr and van Dieren. One loose page has a written out upper line for the arrangement by Moeran of the atmospheric *Sheep Shearing Song*.

The Goss Shellacs

Dating from the 1920's, this collection of HMV recordings of Goss's Cathedral Male Quartet and solo songs, features popular discs of ballads and drinking songs, in various arrangements. Of the few art song discs, we hear John Goss on fine form in the best of Purcell, Blow and Schubert. The range of Ballads is impressive, from heartfelt pieces such as *Shenandoah* and *Lowlands*, to the rounds and catches such as *Gentle Robin* and *Fie, nay Prithee John*. Today, many verses of these ballads would be considered too 'politically incorrect'. In this version of *Haul away Joe*, for example, the opening line is 'Once I had a nigger girl, but she was fat and lazy'. This was later changed to 'coloured' in one edition, which is hardly less problematic. The song then moves on to a catalogue of the man's female conquests from various countries. *Hanging Johnny* is a memorable performance in particular from Goss and his Quartet, again on a rather strange theme of a character who one by one murders each member of his family, the refrain being 'Hang boys, hang'. (This seems closer to the world of Sweeney Todd, or a Hitchcockian



thriller, alongside other sociable drinking songs). As usual the HMV shellacs have very noisy surfaces on the whole, compared to versions on Columbia or Victor labels. It is a miracle, however, that any collection of Shellacs survived two world wars! The only other Goss record copies I know of, are the ones residing in the British Library sound archives at St Pancras. Finally, I must thank again Andy Low for his very kind permission to transfer the recordings, along with access to rare manuscripts and photos.

Recording and Mastering

For digitally remastering the Goss Shellacs, I've been using my box cabinet HMV 511 Gramophone. This was a 'rolls royce' of players back in the 1920's, with the horn inside the cabinet, and a lid which can be closed to reduce surface noise considerably.

This model was purchased in London in 1928, for the high price of fifty pounds. Using a stereo pair of Rode NT5 microphones, with a Rode NT2A studio vocal microphone placed closer to the speaker, the full frequency range of the discs can be clearly heard, a warmer, and far more dynamic aural quality than with a modern turntable. Two



Left: The HMV box cabinet 511 Gramophone
Above: Original Songster needles ensure authenticity

eight track mixing desks are used with a small amount of acoustic reverb in the stereo pair, which soaks up some of the harder edged frequencies. The recording is 24bit/96khz WAV mastered directly to a card writer. Tracks are then uploaded to Logic on a Mac for further processing. As the Gramophone lid shuts off much of the surface rumble of the discs, there is less need for digital 'de-hissing'. Voices in particular, have tremendous focus and strength with this box cabinet machine. Using 'Songster' needles from

the period, this brings us as close as possible to how these recordings would have sounded in the inter-war era. ■

Giles Davies would like to hear from any PWS members who would be interested in a print run of these recordings, digitally remastered in stereo with notes, annotations, rare photos and matrix numbers. Email: davies.giles825@gmail.com. Samson Studios Tel: 0208-766-0065 or Email: samsonstudiosuk@gmail.com.

Reviews

118th Birthday Concert: David Josefowitz Recital Hall, RAM. Tuesday 30 October 2012

Dr Brian Collins

Sara Lian Owen (soprano); Sarah Shorter (mezzo-soprano); Richard Dowling & Thomas Elwin (tenors); Ed Ballard (baritone); David Shipley (bass); Suling King & Rebecca Taylor (piano)

Rosemary Hinton, Katherine Walker (violins); Anna Lusty (viola); Cecilia Bignall (cello); Lucas Jordan (flute); Nicola Hands (oboe/cor anglais); Andre Gocan (conductor)

This excellent concert, part of the Academy Song Circle series, was an all-Warlock event although, in part, aided and abetted by Fred Tomlinson. This reviewer was also responsible for some of the programme notes so it's best to make that confession at the outset. He was, however, not responsible for the typesetting of the song-texts so 'The bayly berrith (*sic*) is NOT HIS FAULT!

The two halves of the programme were to demonstrate respectively Warlock's more serious and lighter sides. To this end *The curlew* was put with its sister-cycle *Lillygay* and there were two more arbitrary groups of two songs each. We began at the beginning with a pair of early offerings: *The wind from the west* and *A lake and a fairy boat* were given sensitive, measured performances, perhaps more so than they deserve. Thereafter I awaited *Lillygay* with bated breath. Although the piano could have been more assertive I wasn't disappointed. Sara Lian Owen, her Welsh origins notwithstanding, gave us some convincingly Scots vocal characterisation that I wish more established singers would attempt. She missed the G natural that colours 'wond'rous' (in *The distracted maid*) but so many people do, I'm afraid. *The*

shoemaker in particular was absolutely right, energetic yet sympathetic to texts musical and verbal. To contrast these songs, David Shipley's rich bass coped well with *The bayly berith the bell away* and invested it with a dimension I'd not considered before, his upper register being particularly impressive.

Several folk that I chatted to afterwards spoke warmly of *The curlew*. It had some fine moments and I was particularly impressed by Thomas Elwin's treatment of 'I know of the sleepy country'. I'm full of praise for any singer and ensemble that can deal with this piece, still something of a minefield 90 years after its composition. Part of the difficulty arises from its stylistic disparity: it's not just four songs, each with its own agenda (or agendas in the case of *The withering of the boughs*) – you'd expect that from a song-cycle – but Warlock makes the executants stagger from Delian desolation to Schoenbergian freneticism while having to negotiate a multitude of van Dierenesque obstacles *en route*. As if this wasn't enough he sets everything out metrically and the trick, for both singer and instrumentalists, is to make it sound as though he didn't! This applies especially to the instrumental fantasias. Don't get me wrong; any criticisms I suggest are intended as constructive and the standards were consistently high throughout the whole evening. This particular rendition had much to commend it too but the work has a sub-text that is far from readily assimilable and, should any of the participants give it again (and I hope they will) there are these issues to address.

It was good to see Fred Tomlinson (and Pam) in attendance for his *Curlew companion*, an elaborate ploy to keep the performers of the other work feeling needed. The instrumental ensemble remained the same but the tenor had been substituted at half-time. It is an esoteric contrivance, beset as it is with fragments – some fleeting and fugitive – that keep both performers and informed listeners on their toes. If *The curlew* itself is stylistically challenging this is more so and, while the songs themselves are plain enough, the linking material might perplex or mislead a non-specialist gathering. I can imagine Eric Morecambe's performance of this piece: 'I'm singing all the right songs but not necessarily with the right introductions.' However it did give the opportunity

to experience works not included elsewhere, especially outstanding pieces like *Robin Goodfellow* (although it needed more pace), *The cloths of Heaven* and *The fox* (but this most sinister of Warlock's solo songs in the 'lighter' half?).

Candlelight is another treat and one too rarely heard. These microcosmic pieces, unnecessarily ignored for their individual brevity and verbal inconsequence, are tiny gems brimming with ironic wit, elements that did not evade Sarah Shorter who gave each item its own identity. I would question the need for a starting note in *O my kitten*, however, and the over-the-top piano-writing in *Arthur O'Bower* needed to be played more... well, over-the-top.

Despite their own inherent inconsequence the *Little Peterisms* present their own problems of interpretation. The impatient demand that concludes *Good ale* was convincing but *Hey trolly loly lo* is always difficult to bring off because of the rhymes. If the singer sticks with modern pronunciation they don't work; if they are to sound right some attempt at an antique format is necessary and that means changing the whole song. The fault is Warlock's rather than the performer's and it is a real challenge that makes this member of the audience uncomfortable. Does one sing 'coo' (cow) to rhyme with 'you' or sing 'yow' (à la West Midlands) to rhyme with 'cow'? (I'd go for the former even if the whole thing degenerates into Mummerset; the words are daft anyway.)

David Shipley reappeared to bring the formal part of the event to a conclusion; the two *Fancies* pertaining to Captain Stratton and Mr Belloc were given with gusto and elicited cries of acclaim from the assembly. Then, as has become customary on these occasions, the proceedings concluded with an attempt at community singing. As has also become customary on these occasions the chosen item was *Fill the cup Philip*. And, as has become even more customary on these occasions, the response was mixed: the person next to me remained mute and in a sitting position but it was of no matter. In the previous hour-and-a-half Philip's cup had been amply filled to the point of running over and inspired a few of us to repair to a nearby alehouse to further celebrate the anniversary in an appropriate manner. ■

Reviews (Continued)

A Short While Dreaming: the Blossom Street Singers. 15 November 2012

St Sepulchre-without-Newgate, Holborn Viaduct. EC1A 9DE

Malcolm Rudland



The Blossom Street Singers

On 15 November 2012, the warm and generous acoustics of the Musician's Church, St Sepulchre-without-Newgate resonated to the warm and generous harmonies of Peter Warlock, thanks to the generous support of the Peter Warlock Society. It was in this Chapel that young Henry Wood learnt to play the organ and when he died in 1944 his ashes were laid beneath the *St. Cecilia* window, where he is shown as a young boy at the organ and as the mature Sir Henry conducting a Promenade Concert. Others depicted in Brian Thomas's fine Chapel windows are Dame Nellie Melba and the composer John Ireland. On the south wall of the chapel is a case containing the Musicians' Book of Remembrance.

I was last in this church for an organ recital by Francis Jackson, organist emeritus of York Minster, but the console now displays a notice appealing for funds to restore the organ, and an adjacent electronic organ suggests the pipe organ is unplayable.

The concert programme contained eight Warlock carols, with eight items of other English music. The concert's title comes from the first line of Bruce Blunt's fourth verse of *Bethlehem Down*, of which Warlock's setting is still the only known musical one. [Ed. *This may no longer be the case. Please see Newsbrief on p.46.*] The Blossom Street Singers, named after the street in York where Hilary Campbell formed the choir in 2003, was re-located to London in 2007, since when it has flourished with a QEH debut, and many broadcasts and TV appearances.

The concert opened with a rich and vibrant torrent of G major in Warlock's *As dew in Aprylle*, in which the acoustics blurred some of the subtle harmonic changes in the opening phrase, but with the climaxes at 'kyng of allé kynges', and the subsequent quieter sections, all could be forgiven, for all the naughty Warlockian chords were well understood and realised to their full.

More successful was *Bethlehem Down*, for here the harmonies move at a slower and quieter pace, and the conductor well-used the church's echo as a built-in diminuendo, to enhance her well-shaped phrases. In the first bar of verse two, I am still waiting for some choir to risk suspending the alto third beat an extra minim, to resolve the B onto an A on the fifth beat. I once met a friend of Elizabeth Poston who had told him that Warlock had sanctioned that idea!

The other English composers represented in the first half were Rathbone, Campkin, Bairstow, MacMillan, in which Warlock's *Cornish Carol* and *The Rich Cavalcade* were interspersed. In the second half the other composers were Finzi, Campbell, Grainger and Moeran, coupled with Armstrong Gibbs's joyful adaptation of Warlock's *Yarmouth Fair* and Fred Tomlinson's wistful arrangement of the Warlock's solo song *My own country* in which all the juicy chords from the piano accompaniment are successfully transcribed into the vocal parts. The concert finished with a delicate and sensitive *I saw a fair maiden* and a rousing performance of *Benedicamus Domino*.

In conclusion, this was a fine and enjoyable concert. My only criticism would be that the repertoire was all a bit unvaried harmonically. But the choir produced a very classy vocal sound and I would love to hear more of them – perhaps some Italianate repertoire from the 15th-17th Centuries? ■

Reviews (Continued)

Dreamers of Dreams: British Music from the first half of the 20th Century. 12 January 2013

Nash Ensemble series at the Wigmore Hall with John Mark Ainsley and Mark Padmore

Bryn Philpott



Left: John Mark Ainsley

Above: Nash Ensemble

(Photo: © Hanya Chlala/ArenaPAL)

Right: Mark Padmore (Photo: © Marco Borgrevve)

'We are all the Music Maker's, and we are the Dreamers of Dreams'. The words of Arthur O'Shaughnessy, set by Elgar in *The Music Makers*, form the inspiration for the title of the latest chamber music series by the Nash Ensemble at Wigmore Hall. This ongoing series commenced last September and continues into March this year and presents British music during the first half of the 20th Century.

The Nash Ensemble alongside a superb list of singers perform music from sixteen British composers of the period. Nine concerts include a fascinating selection of chamber music and songs from that most remarkable period of British music. Rarely performed pieces, such as Alwyn's *Pastoral Fantasia* and Quilter's *Pastoral Songs* with piano trio accompaniment stand alongside more familiar works such as Elgar's *Piano Quintet* and his ever popular *Chanson de Nuit* for violin and piano to name but a few. Britten receives his fair share of the programme reflecting the celebration of the centenary of his birth, including an evening of film and radio music such as *Night Mail* from 1936 and *The Sword in the Stone: Concert suite* from 1939. The inclusion of the Dvorak *Piano Quintet* and Mendelssohn's *Octet*, however, in the Sunday morning concerts may seem at odds with the series aims, but they gave a thrilling performance of that astonishingly mature work by the 16 year old Mendelssohn.

To complement the series, contemporary British music is also represented by a supplementary tenth concert, in celebration of the 70th birthday of David Matthews

where, in addition to his own, there are works by four other contemporary British composers.

Two of the concerts (No 2 and 6 in this series) included works by Peter Warlock (or 'Warock' as he was listed in the series brochure), and each was preceded by a personal dedication by Amelia Freedman of these concerts to Composers, Hans Werner Henze and Sir Richard Rodney Bennett respectively: both had a close association with the Nash and had very recently passed away.

The first of these concerts (27th October) started with Britten's *Three Divertimenti for string quartet*, an early work with its relentless Burlesque finale clearly demonstrating Britten's precocious talent. After Marianne Thorsen's sensitive performance of the *Romanze*, *Cradle Song* and *Serenade for violin and piano* by Britten's teacher, Frank Bridge, the Nash were joined by the tenor, John Mark Ainsley for works by Peter Warlock.

The Fox, the only solo song on the programme, was accompanied by pianist Ian Brown and provided a stark contrast to the preceding works. Warlock's last original solo song marked a new departure in his writing and John Mark Ainsley's eerily intense performance really brought out the meaning of this grim little song that seems to say so much with very minimal forces. Ainsley's use of facial expressions echoed the mocking laughter of the fox hung high on the wall above the cask.

With the memory of the final notes falling away, the piano was moved back and we were given a selection

of the rarely performed songs for tenor with string quartet. The five songs chosen provided a contrast in style and character: they commenced with the delightful *Chopcherry* which provided welcome thoughts of summer for a winter's evening, Ainsley's knowing looks, as he sung 'till that time comes again she should not live a maid', captured the implied meaning of the words. *My Lady is a Pretty One* was next but here the tenor seemed to struggle to be heard over the quartet accompaniment. After *My Little sweet Darling* and *Take, O take those lips away* they gave a measured performance of *Sleep* with a real sense of longing in the final bars that brought the set to a fitting conclusion. The Nash string players are comparable to the finest full time string quartet, and on the whole provided a sensitive accompaniment to John Mark Ainsley's singing, who I felt may have been suffering a little from the effects of a cold, but did his very best to overcome these apparent difficulties in this performance. Incidentally Ainsley recorded these works on two superb CDs (one with the Nash) for Hyperion back in the 1990s (*Songs with piano* – CDA66736 and *Songs with String Quartet* included in CDA66398). After several works by Elgar for violin and piano, the concert concluded with a telling performance of Vaughan Williams' great early chamber work *On Wenlock Edge*, in which Ainsley came into his own.

For the second concert (12 January) the Nash Ensemble were joined by the tenor Mark Padmore for, among other works, Warlock's *The Curlew*. It would seem that this bird is becoming a little less rare at the Wigmore Hall with four outings in as many years, this being Mark Padmore's third. Having attended all three it seemed to me that each performance offered a slightly different perspective on the work as Padmore continues to explore and probe the depths of emotion in the work.

Padmore has described the Curlew 'as one of the most miserable pieces of music ever written ... mining every ounce of melancholy and desolation in the poetry' and his appreciation of this certainly brought out more than simple despair in this performance. It's clear that he is a great admirer of this piece and states that 'It really is a masterwork, there's nothing quite like it'. I have to confess to great admiration for Padmore as a singer, he manages to bring out the meaning of the text subtly and without ever needing to be too forceful or overbearing – in my opinion this was the best of his three performances

at the Wigmore Hall. The members of the Nash were masterful: the total sense of concentration from each player was palpable and every note was made to count. My only regret was that the work did not end the concert, though it did conclude the first half, leaving just twenty minutes to recover ones thoughts.

Other works on the programme included the *Oboe Quintet* by Arnold Bax, a work with a strong Irish atmosphere, the melancholic opening oboe bearing some resemblance with the *cor anglais* solo of *The Curlew*. This is a work that deserves to be heard more often and according to the programme notes was somewhat pioneering in its day.

Padmore was also accompanied by the Guitarist Craig Ogden in Britten's *Songs from the Chinese* Op58 and earlier in the evening a selection of *Folksong Arrangements* for tenor and guitar. One particular song from this set was 'The shooting of his dear', a work also arranged by E.J. Moeran in his *Six Norfolk Folksongs*. Warlock was known to admire this folksong and although the vocal line remains faithful to the original, it was interesting to compare differences between Britten's Guitar and Moeran's Piano accompaniment particularly the ethereal ending where Polly appears in ghostly apparition to defend Jimmy at his trial.

The concert concluded with the rarely performed early *String Quartet in C minor*, by Vaughan Williams. After its first performance in 1904 the work was not heard again in concert until it was resurrected nearly 100 years later and performed by the Nash Ensemble at the Wigmore in November 2003. This provided an interesting if less demanding conclusion to a wonderful evening of music.

It inspires an almost reverential sense of history to reflect that a large number of the pieces performed in this series were first heard in the Wigmore Hall and is therefore undoubtedly the perfect venue for the series. Whilst the Nash Ensemble is very much at home in this repertoire, their performances at the concerts I was able to attend could hardly be bettered. Lewis Foreman's programme notes were both authoritative and informative and this added to the sense that this was a very special and memorable series indeed. The dedication of a concert that included such a fine performance of *The Curlew* to the memory of Peter Warlock Society President, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, following his recent passing seemed on reflection rather poignant. ■

Reviews (Continued)

Impressionistic Saturday Classics on BBC Radio 3 introduced by Jan Ravens

12 January 2013

Bryn Philpott was pleased to discover that PW's *Cod-pieces* 'framed' this interesting and fun programme.

Impressions are most often used in comedy to caricature well known figures with humorous intent. In art, however, and particularly in music, impressions can have a much wider meaning. This was the subject of Radio 3's *Saturday Classics* on 12 January and who better to introduce this than Jan Ravens: best known for her comedy impersonations of politicians and celebrities on shows such as *Spitting Image* and *Dead Ringers*. For two hours Jan introduced numerous examples of musical impressions ranging from Victor Hely-Hutchinson's *Old Mother Hubbard* [in the manner of Handel] for voices and piano, to the atmospheric and impressionistic *La Cathédrale engloutie* from Debussy's preludes book 1. The submerged Cathedral rises out of the sea using the piano tones to create images of priests chanting, bells chiming and an organ playing from across the sea.

The programme started off in humorous vein with Warlock's *Beethoven's Binge* (*Der Beethoven-Bummel*) (or *The bard unbuttoned* – vide *Sir George Grove passim*) to quote Warlock's title in full. This is one of his *Cod-pieces* written under the pseudonym 'Prosdocimus de Beldamandis Junior' (hinting at another dimension of the theme). This hilarious pastiche on the opening of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in a sort of ragtime style set the tone of the programme. A recent recording for the BBC of Fred Tomlinson's arrangement of the work for piano duet was performed by pianists David Quigley and Jeremy Young. They launched into the opening bars following Warlock's instructions to play 'as fast as you can' and really captured the sense of fun of the piece.

This theme continued with Dudley Moore's pastiche of *And the same to you* for piano in the style of Beethoven along with his unashamed performance of *Little Miss Britten* for voice and piano where he sings and plays in the style of Pears and Britten. These works seemed to confirm Dudley Moore's fine talent for music as well as comedy, apparently his dying words were 'I can hear the music all around me'. Some of the musical examples broadcast were fairly obvious, such as a selection from Saint-Saëns *Carnival of the Animals* or that perennial steam train enthusiasts' favourite *Pacific 231*, where Honegger creates the impression of increasing momentum whilst actually decreasing the tempo. Others such as the aria where Leonora disguises herself as a prison guard in Beethoven's only Opera, *Fidelio*, gives yet

another definition of impressionism that is more visual than musical. Hindemith's *The Overture of The Flying Dutchman as sight-read by a bad spa band at 7am at the spring for string quartet* seems to show that the title of a piece can create an equally amusing impression as the work itself.

The programme concluded with the other arrangement, by Fred Tomlinson, of Warlock's *The Old Codger*, a parody on a theme from César Frank's Symphony in D minor. Cecil Gray called this 'a perfect little masterpiece in a genre too seldom practiced' and Warlock was said to have a great affection for the piece. This has a more relaxed tempo 'Rather slow but very sure. Like a barn dance, or perhaps a cab horse' with the following amusing indication *Elephantasticamente (ma non troppo)* and a metronome mark that I recall (without affection!) from my engineering studies as the formula for solving quadratic equations. Quigley and Young caught the tongue in cheek character of the work.

Warlock composed the *Cod-pieces* around 1916-17 and they are unique in his output. They survive as a set of four pieces in piano score with a cover inscription 'Here beginneth the first book of Cod-pieces' implying more were planned. Warlock later arranged *The Old Codger* for the Savoy Orpheans. The arrangements performed here were originally recorded by Fred Tomlinson and Jennifer Partridge in the 1970s but these have long been out of the catalogue. There is however a recording, played by pianists Stephen Ralls and Bruce Ubukata, currently available on a Canadian website (<http://aldeburchconnection.org/a-quatre-mains/>). Other arrangements are also included in the CD *The return of Bulgy-Gogo: Carey Blyton Miniatures* (URCD 106) by the Phoenix Saxophone Quartet and is also still available. John Mitchell's arrangement of *The Old Codger* provides an interesting insight into how it 'might' have been heard at the Savoy.

The scope of this radio programme was wide ranging and could perhaps be loosely described as variations on the theme of 'impressions'. Jan Ravens used her own well known impersonations, such as of Thora Hird, to illustrate her points with humour. It was particularly good to see Warlock's rarely performed *Cod-pieces* used as fitting examples of parody and pastiche in music to provide solid bookends for the broadcast. ■

Auction

Warlockiana and otherwise

John Mitchell

The present selection of items on offer in the main originate from Fred Tomlinson and Brian Collins. We are very grateful to them for donating these materials for auctioning, and all proceeds from the sale will go to the Society's funds.

Unlike previous auctions that we have held, on this occasion I am facilitating an opportunity for bidders to increase their bids. In a situation where you have been subsequently outbid, you will be informed accordingly and given an opportunity to increase your bid should that be your wish. Each Lot has a reserve price specified as a guide.

Ideally I would prefer bids to be made by e-mail, but for those without this facility, I will accept a bid by 'phone or letter: mmitchelljohn@aol.com

Tel: 01227 832871

Woodstock, Pett Bottom, Canterbury,
CT4 5PB United Kingdom

The closing date is 30th June 2013, and successful bidders will be informed in the following month. Postage costs will be added on to the sale price of the item(s). The auction is only open to paid up and honorary members of the Society, and Vice Presidents.

The Lots

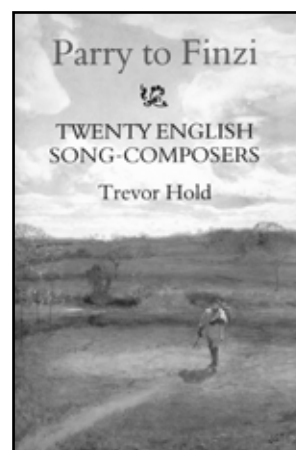
Lot 1

Parry to Finzi: Twenty English Song-Composers

Trevor Hold (Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2002).

This substantial book (463 pages) is a major contribution to the English Song literature, and includes a 42 page chapter devoted to Warlock. It is currently only available new as a paperback, and we have here the original hardback book in mint condition.

Reserve price £13.



Lot 2

Roger Quilter: His Life and Music by Valerie Langfield

(Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2002).

Another substantial book (375 pages), a good read, and with comprehensive coverage of the subject matter. There are several references to Warlock in the text, and a special feature of the book is a complementary CD containing historic performances of Quilter's songs, with the composer either accompanying or directing. Again, the book on offer here is in mint condition.

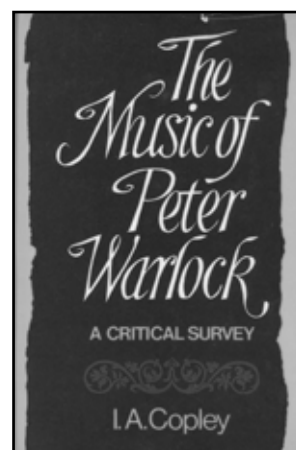
Reserve price £15.

Lot 3

The Music of Peter Warlock: A Critical Survey by Ian Copley (Dennis Dobson, London, 1979).

The first full length book (334 pages) on Warlock's music. Condition is fair to good (some minor chipping of the dust jacket).

Reserve price £7.





Lot 4

Peter Warlock The Composer

Brian Collins (Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1996). A more in depth and analytical study (compared with Lot 3) of Warlock's music by our former Chairman and Newsletter Editor. Another substantial volume at 361 pages, with copious music examples, and an authoritative book on the subject matter. Mint condition hardback in dust jacket.

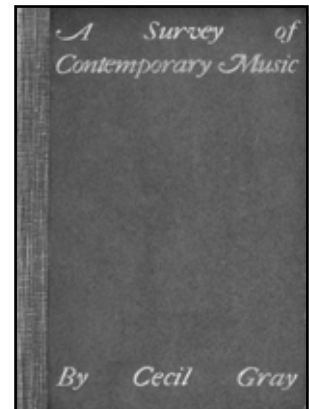
Reserve price £10.

Lot 5

A Survey of Contemporary Music

Cecil Gray (Oxford University Press, 1924). From the library of the late Carey Blyton (it bears his *Ex Libris* stamp), this is a first edition in nice condition of a book that went into several printings. It contains a 19 page chapter on Bernard van Dieren, but nothing on Warlock as far as I can remember (surprising really, as surely the then recent *The Curlew* would have been pretty fresh in mind for Gray in 1924!).

Reserve price £3.



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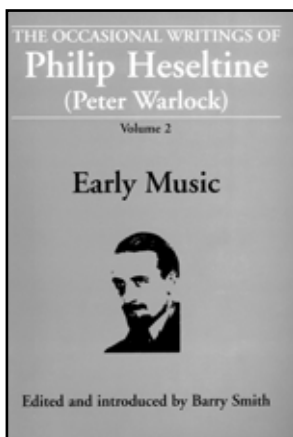
Lot 6

The Occasional Writings of Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock)

in four paperback volumes, edited and introduced by Barry Smith (Thames Publishing, London, between 1997 and 1999).

These are being auctioned as a single lot. In mint condition, there are two volumes of Musical Criticism, one on Early Music, and the fourth is of Miscellaneous Writings.

Reserve price £15.

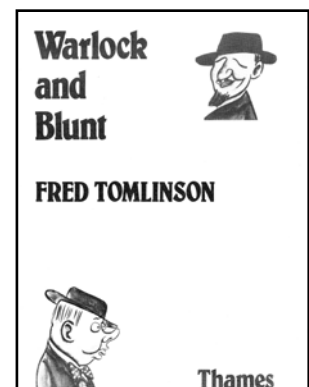


Lot 7

Warlock and Blunt

Fred Tomlinson (Thames Publishing, London, 1981). This A4 size paperback of 40 pages is well illustrated and gives a comprehensive account of Warlock's friendship with Bruce Blunt. In good condition.

Reserve price £5.



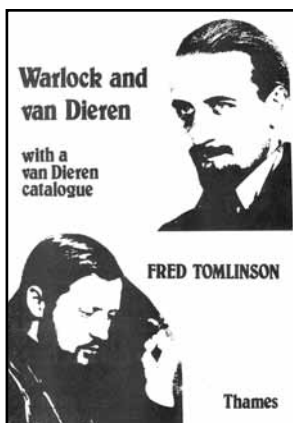
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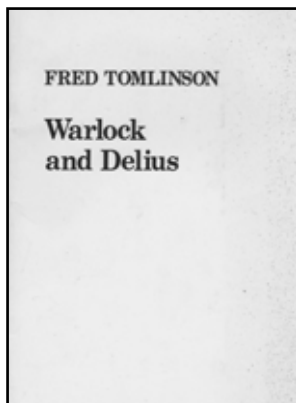
Warlock and van Dieren

Fred Tomlinson (Thames Publishing, London, 1978).

Another A4 size paperback; 64 pages with illustrations and music examples. It contains a catalogue of van Dieren's compositions. In good condition.

Reserve price £5.





Lot 9

Warlock and Delius

Fred Tomlinson (Thames Publishing, London, 1976). A smaller format paperback, this 31 page booklet is essentially the text of a lecture which Fred gave to the Delius Society in January 1976. Good condition.

Reserve price £3.

Lot 10

A Peter Warlock Handbook Volume 1

compiled by Fred Tomlinson (Triad Press, London, 1974).

This is copy number 184 of the original 300 that were printed (ie, not to be confused with the updated version that was issued 3 or 4 years ago). This volume focuses on Warlock's original compositions, and is an excellent reference source of factual information, dates, etc.. Good condition.

Reserve price £5.

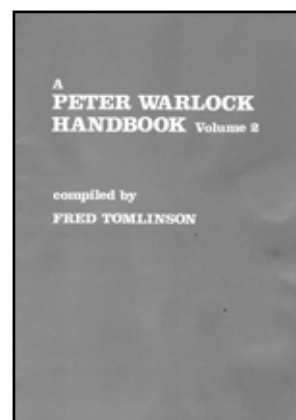
Lot 11

A Peter Warlock Handbook Volume 2

compiled by Fred Tomlinson (Triad Press, Rickmansworth, 1977).

Again, one of the original limited edition of 300. This volume deals with Warlock's transcriptions of early music, with some extra chapters, including one each on Delius and van Dieren. This copy is in fair condition, having suffered some spine damage.

Reserve price £3.



Lot 12

William Yeates Hurlstone – Musician and Man

H.G. Newell (J & W Chester Ltd., London, 1936).

As far as is known the composer Hurlstone (1876-1906) has no Warlockian connections, and the 32 page booklet (donated by Frank Bayford for auctioning) is a brief study of the composer's life and work. It was prepared at the behest of the composer's sister, Katharine Hurlstone, and the booklet is inscribed by her.

Reserve price £5.

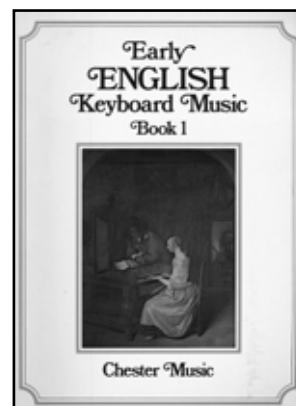
Lot 13

Early Keyboard Music

in eight volumes (Chester Music, London, 1980/81), edited by Eve Barsham.

Each volume contains around 30 pages, featuring the keyboard music of four countries: England; France; Germany; and Italy (two volumes from each country). Good condition.

Reserve price for the set £12.





Lot 14

Five Songs by William Boyce

for voice and piano, edited by Michael Mullinar (Augener, London, 1955). 12 pages. Fair condition, with some cover damage.

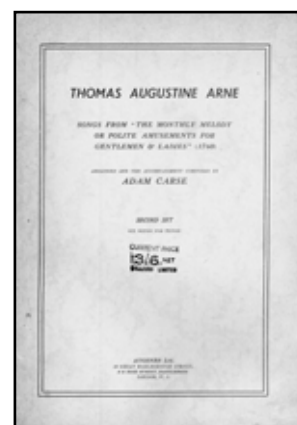
Reserve price £3.

Lot 15

Thomas Arne: Songs from "The Monthly Melody or Polite Amusements for Gentlemen & Ladies" (1760)

arranged by Adam Carse for voice and piano (Augener, London, 1939). 12 pages. Fair condition.

Reserve price £3



Lot 16

Thomas Arne: Six Songs

(Joseph Williams Ltd., London, undated – although the artwork suggests it might be of similar vintage to Lot 17). Edited by G.E.P. Arkwright,

‘...the six songs...are supplied with an accompaniment arranged for the pianoforte from the score. At the end of the volume will be found the score of each song, taken from the old editions.’. 50 pages. Fair condition.

Reserve price £6.

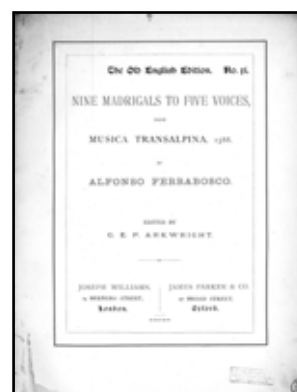
Lot 17

Alfonso Ferrabosco: Nine Madrigals to Five Voices from Musica Transalpina [1588] (Joseph Williams Ltd., London, 1894).

Edited by G.E.P. Arkwright and running to 96 pages.

Fair condition, considering it was printed in the year of Warlock’s birth!

Reserve price £8.



Lot 18

The Clarendon Songbooks, Volumes IV and VI (Oxford University Press, 1930).

These small format booklets (16/20 pages) are compilations of the ‘tune only’ sort, varying from traditional materials to songs by Delius and Frank Bridge. There is editorial input in three of the numbers by Warlock. The lot comprises three copies of Volume IV and four of Volume VI, with the condition ranging from adequate (no covers) to good.

Reserve price £4.

Obituaries

Sir Richard Rodney Bennett 1936 – 2012

Sir Richard Rodney Bennett became President of the PWS in 1986 and had been a Vice-President for at least ten years before that. **Michael Graves** provides a few words.

Several obituaries for Sir Richard Rodney Bennett appeared in the national press earlier this year, providing mostly similar accounts of Sir Richard's life. I will try to avoid any repetition of the general information contained in those obituaries and hope instead to provide some additional glimpses of other aspects of Sir Richard's rich and colourful life.

Sir Richard's father, Rodney Bennett, was a professional singer and later a writer of drawing room ballad lyrics. Richard's mother was very musical also and studied with Holst, who became a kind of grandfather figure to Richard as a child. She studied at the RCM along with Rubbra, Lambert and Howard Ferguson, who would later become one of Richard's teachers at the RAM. Both Richard's parents were great friends of Roger Quilter, however Richard declared that, although he was a lovely man, he was not so much interested in the music of Quilter, but in 'music that was rather more exotic.' His parents reviewed music for magazines and had a wooden chest full of scores by all manner of composers from the inter-war years. 'Composers, you'd never have heard of. I thought it was too exciting for any words'. But there were other names, now more familiar, like Walton, Bridge, van Dieren and Peter Warlock – 'I LOVE Warlock.'

As a boy, Richard one day found a small book on the shelves and was immediately fascinated by the *risqué* lyrics within. It was the work of Noel Coward and he asked his father if he had ever known him. There was an 'instant and freezing silence'. Later his mother said 'don't ask daddy about Noel Coward,' but this simply made him eager to find out more. Coward and Peter Warlock thus became significant influences. 'There was something rather wicked about Warlock,' he declared, but added that he loved the songs and particularly the harmonies.

Another early influence on Richard was French music. His mother played Debussy and Ravel and Richard attempted to play the pieces. He started writing music 'that could be played' when he was six. By the age of 19 he had written three string quartets and was working on the music for a documentary film. At the RAM he 'learnt precious little' but found a great deal of contemporary music, 'which was marvellous', including Bartók and Webern, at the Westminster Music Library on Buckingham Palace Road. 'That was where I really

got my education.' It was a very exciting time for him.

A significant development occurred one day when he bought a copy of *The Chesterian*, the in-house magazine of Chesters Music Publishing, at Victoria station on his way back to prep school. There he read for the first time the 'magic words – 12 tone technique' with regard to the music of Elisabeth Lutyens. Getting hold of a few pieces he found them to be 'totally mysterious'. He telephoned Lutyens, who thought he was a woman because his voice hadn't broken, to ask if he could show her his music. She invited him over. 'Elisabeth was a difficult woman in many ways, but she had a gift for encouraging talent in young people. She was writing atonal music, which was deeply unfashionable, and was doing movies to earn a living.' It was Elisabeth Lutyens who introduced him into the world of being a composer.

Fired up by Lutyens' atonal music Richard explored a great deal more modern music. Together with fellow student Cornelius Cardew, he ran a 'new music' club at the RAM, which gave no support for this initiative whatsoever. 'Cor was a very good pianist and we did a lot of things together – mad things with number series – it was a phase we had to go through, but it lasted three years.' They used to go to Darmstadt, which was, in the 1950s, an important centre for new music. Boulez, Stockhausen, Berio, Maderna et al were there, but it was John Cage who shook things up, he recalls. Richard and Cor performed the premiere of Boulez's *Structures* and Richard the *Sonata* for solo piano. Boulez heard about this and asked if he could hear it. He was impressed. Richard moved to Paris and studied with Boulez, who made 'ridiculous pronouncements about music he did not approve of ... was very intolerant, but was a great teacher.'

Whilst doing this, Richard was also writing music to make a living, particularly film music. This was something he enjoyed because he had the freedom to write for eccentric orchestration that would never be played in a concert hall. He is best known for the music he wrote for films such as *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral* and *Murder on the Orient Express*. Talking about the latter film, Richard described how he actually enjoyed working out arithmetically the gradual increase in tempo as the train pulled out of Istanbul. 'The sound team had spent weeks gathering all

the train noises, but when the director heard the music, he decided not to use any of the train noises at all.'

Sir Richard regarded his music as 'particularly useful' music. 'It was music that people wanted – and it was beautiful. I can't listen to that music we were all writing

in the 1950s. Even though I worshipped Boulez, I can't stand it.' He gave people something they enjoyed rather than 'what they needed, which sounds a little like cough mixture.' He supported himself completely as a composer from the age of 19, something he was very proud of. ■

John Carol Case 1923 – 2012

Garry Humphreys

Best known for his recordings of music by English composers and for his role as Christus for 21 years at the annual performances of the St Matthew Passion by the Bach Choir, the baritone John Carol Case died on 28 December 2012 at Malton, North Yorkshire, aged 89.

He was born at Salisbury in 1923 and won a choral scholarship to King's College Cambridge in 1941, where, unusually, he sang in the choir as both baritone and alto. [Ed. *At the same time our Chairman Emeritus, Fred Tomlinson was a chorister there.*] War service intervened and he (and others) returned in 1945 older, wiser and more musically mature, for what were regarded by director of music Boris Ord as 'the golden years of the choir'. The organ scholar at the time was David Willcocks, who was eventually to succeed Ord and with whom Case was often to be associated during his career.

After Cambridge he was director of music at King's School Wimbledon and music adviser to the National Union of Townswomens' Guilds, composing and conducting music for the Union's 25th anniversary celebrations at the Royal Festival Hall in 1954. From 1958, however, he devoted himself entirely to singing.

In 1951 during the Festival of Britain he had sung Finzi's *Let us Garlands Bring* at the Festival Hall and afterwards met the composer, with whom he was to work closely, culminating, after Finzi's death, in authoritative recordings of all the composer's baritone songs, with Finzi's friend, Howard Ferguson, at the piano. He was also 'baritone of choice' for Sir Adrian Boult, taking the part of Christ in Elgar's *The Apostles*, Evangelist in *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Vaughan Williams), *Dona Nobis Pacem* and *A Sea Symphony* (Best Classical Record UK 1968, USA 1969). With David Willcocks came Vaughan Williams's *Five Tudor Portraits* and Fauré's *Requiem* (also recorded live with Nadia Boulanger).

He recorded songs by Elgar, Robert Still, Butterworth, and a pioneering *Maud* by Arthur Somervell (1976) and earlier in his career (1961) was the baritone soloist in Schoenberg's *Serenade* conducted by Bruno Maderna. In recital he was a fine singer of French song and appeared at music clubs, festivals and with choirs throughout the country, including long years at the Three Choirs and Leith Hill Festivals. He sings the bass arias in Vaughan Williams's 1958 live recording of the *St Matthew Passion* and was Judas in Klemperer's studio recording 1960/1. At only a few hours' notice he took over the role of Second Yeoman in Sir Malcolm Sargent's recording of *The Yeoman of the Guard* (1958).

In 1976 he retired from singing to devote himself to teaching, privately and at the Royal Academy of Music, and was vocal coach to the King's College choral scholars including several of the original King's Singers. He was a member of the Peter Warlock Society, president of the English Song Award in the mid-1980s (at the 1988 Competition the Society gave a Warlock Prize, won by Suzanne Higgins), adjudicated at competitions at home and abroad, and was an inspiring conductor of masterclasses. He was appointed OBE in 1993. ■

[Ed. *In the 1988 English Song Award referred to above, out of the 76 candidates, 38 entered for the PW prize as opposed to 18 for Blake. Suzanne Higgins sang Heraclitus (the prize-winning song) and My Own Country (the complementary song). For the prize, Malcolm had persuaded OUP and Boosey & Hawkes to contribute £50 vouchers, Thames to provide the first 4 volumes of the Collected Edition and Ruddles to give £50 cash, an engraved beer-pump handle and a vast quantity of beer.*

John Carol Case was one of the adjudicators for the Preliminary Auditions. Fred Tomlinson adjudicated the PW prize.]

Obituaries (Continued)

Ernest Kaye 1922 – 2012

Michael Graves and Charles Kaye



Ernest Kaye had been a member of the Peter Warlock Society since 1974 and remained so right up till his death at the age of 89. He served on the Committee throughout the 1970s and when he decided to step down circa 1980, he gave the society a rubber stamp with 'Peter Warlock Society', in Warlock's own handwriting, for the hire library. Ernest contributed articles for the Newsletter and also wrote a chapter, *Witches and Warlock* for the book *Peter Warlock – A Centenary Celebration*.

Although music was his first love – invariably he won all the school music prizes – he pursued a career in electronic engineering. In 1949, aged 27, he applied for an anonymous advertisement for electronic engineers. This turned out to be with the Lyons tea shop company, which had 200 teashops and 10,000 staff. All daily stock orders and the payroll were done by pen and paper. Ernest's job was to design the world's first commercial computer (called LEO – the Lyons Electronic Office) that was to ultimately perform these tasks. LEO filled a room 5000 square feet with 9' high racks, printers, tape-readers and huge power supplies for the 6,000 valves. The LEO team applied to the government for a development grant, but the application was unsuccessful because the government of the day didn't think there was any future in computers! In 1970 he left the world of electronics to run the family props business supplying the film and TV industries with silver, glass, china and jewellery items.

Ernest studied piano with Harry Isaacs and achieved his performer's LRAM with honours. He also composed music. The OUP published his sets of piano pieces for children and later, much of his liturgical music written for the West London Synagogue.

He was full of energy right up to the last, writing music, playing the piano, walking and enjoying Shakespeare at Stratford.

Here is Charles Kaye's eulogy to his father.

Dearest Papa

Since you went to sleep on Saturday, I have been feeling that your soul has not yet gone forth to its final resting place – and that you are still nearby, watching over us and caring for your family as you did throughout our lives together. I hope this is so – and that my words, which come from my heart, will reach you.

I have so much to say 'thank you' for – and so many wonderful memories... For the gift and love of music which you passed on in our genes – and for the encouragement you gave me from my earliest days at both the piano and violin. How you taught me to listen to music – and the right way to be introduced to Gilbert and Sullivan – and later to Wagner – just small tunes at a time, such as Siegmund's love song. You were always ready to share your music and musician loves – and I still have so many of them – from Peter Warlock to Horowitz – or from Chopin to Rachmaninoff.

I remember your always clear and searching mind – and how when I was first awakened by a thunderstorm you took me to the window and took away my fear by explaining to me how we could know how far away the lightning was....

And your passion for science and mathematics – and how you were always ready to help with school homework – and actually make it fun with books like *Mathematics for the Millions*. You introduced me to the importance of preparing well – for whatever we do in life. From whole journeys before we travelled – down to preparing the next chord on the piano before actually playing it. If I became a good organiser, it is in no small way thanks to the principles which I learned from you throughout my formative years. You taught me to be visually aware – and again made it fun, when we went on early car journeys, with games like 'pub-legs'.

Above all, though, I remember the unconditional love – and that you were always there being supportive and encouraging, showing how proud you were of what all your children achieved – without ever being unfairly critical or judgemental.

I hope that you feel that love coming back to you in abundance from all those here to send you on your way. As Fritz Curzon wrote: Clifford has been waiting so long for his favourite page-turner – and for some four-handed fun with you on the celestial keyboard.

God speed, dear Papa – and thank you.... ■

Professor Ian Parrott – Some personal memories

John P Evans (assisted by Mrs Cecilia Evans)



John Evans (with pipe) and Professor Parrott (facing camera)
with Brian and Sheila Hammond near St Austell 2007

I first came to Aberystwyth in 1969 with a couple of suitcases and a new wife, fully intending to stay just for a couple of years. The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft a-gley! After eating the local lotus (*Nymphaea Aberystwythea*) and acquiring a mortgage and two children in that order, not less than 43 years have flown by and we have begun to feel and be treated as locals.

Shortly after arriving, I joined the college orchestra (Cond. I. Parrott), the silver band (Pres. I. Parrott) and started a brass group and a jazz band. The extra mural lectures by Prof Parrott and the regular concerts by the college quartet were a delight, especially as I already knew half of them from school and various orchestras. Bill James, 2nd fiddle asked me if I could deputise for the quartet at a rather unusual 'gig', the International Politics Department annual party, this one celebrating the Congress of Vienna. (He did not add that they would be expected to perform gratis while those who do not tread the groves of academe could ask a fee.) He said 'just a few German Marches and some Viennese Waltzes, they've especially asked for the Radetzky March – it would be more suitable for your brass group.' It was certainly some party, the ladies in their 'gownless evening straps' and most of the men in white tie and tails save for a few in splendid Austro-Hungarian army uniforms. I did not know Malcolm Rudland then, he could well have been there! Most of the dancers sported various coloured sashes and they whirled with a will. This was the first

outing of a group that would become locally quite popular.

Not long after, Prof Parrott asked if we could provide the musicians for a great day in the University calendar. They were hosting two Princes of the Blood viz. Phillip and Charles and a host of slightly lesser worthies at an Installation Ceremony for Prince Charles as the new Chancellor. Prof was providing the music and as well as some processional fanfares he had a specially written piece for brass quintet called *Fanfare and March*. The day all went well and it consolidated our friendship with 'Prof' as everyone called him.

We were delighted to meet his charming wife Elizabeth and intrigued to hear she had been born and spent her early years in Russia. My wife Celia and I were attending evening classes trying to learn the language and looked forward to some practise over dinner. However, apart from some marvellous tales of how she was sheltered from the Red Army in the Winter Palace, she could only remember some 'servant Russian': phrases such as 'put some more wood on the fire' or 'get the troika ready'.

She was however excellent in French and the silver band took advantage of this and their renowned hospitality to house the more monoglot members of L'Harmonie Municipale de St Brieuc on our annual town-twinning exchanges. Elizabeth was also a very talented painter and her lovely painting of Elgar's cottage was reproduced on an LP.

We were always welcome at their beautiful Georgian villa *Henblas* and Prof would invariably play me his latest composition. He was a very good pianist, a sympathetic accompanist and I believe was once an even more exceptional organist. It was on one of these visits he learnt that I had a trombone in the car and produced the music of his trombone concerto. After a run-through with Prof accompanying it was scheduled and performed at one of the college chamber concerts.

It is now, however, I must confess to PWS members that until the Centenary Weekend at Gregynog in 1994, I thought Peter Warlock was a 'one-hit wonder'. My thanks

are to Prof for the invitation which opened my eyes (and ears) to PW's special history and art. Due to attend this weekend was one of PW's sons, Nigel Heseltine, but he cancelled at the last minute. I hardly realised due to the excellence of the other speakers such as Rhian Davies and Barry Smith, but a few months later, Nigel Heseltine gave a talk at the Joseph Parry Hall, Aberystwyth at the behest of the Music Department, I believe. Prof, Celia and myself were in the audience and I persuaded her to take notes in shorthand. (On later perusal, the themes did not vary much from his book *Capriol for Mother*) but at the end the then Director of Music Dr David Russell Hulme asked if Prof and myself would like to join them (DRH & NH) for the usual post-lecture lunch at the Talbot. We were persuaded and agreed of course! I found Nigel a very impressive and sincere gentleman and when Prof gently enquired about his maternal ancestry he insisted it was the 'Swiss girl'. I certainly believed him at the time and do now, until such time as DNA evidence can, perhaps, prove otherwise.

The main reason for his visit to west Wales became clear the following morning when Prof, Celia and I were asked to the *Healing Sanctuary*, Pantglas, Trerddôl, home and clinic of the late George Chapman, one of our greatest spiritual healers. Prof knew him from their mutual friendship with Rosemary Brown and more mundanely, George and I were friends from Regimental associations. We did not realise at the time how seriously ill Nigel was, he showed no sign and was most charming, but had travelled far for a session with George. It was a lively party over drinks and he signed my *Capriol* to 'John Trombone'. An odd thing I remember he said was that one of the things he hoped to be remembered for was his engineering of a water pipeline over a mountain from the 'wet' end to the 'dry' side of Rodriguez Island near Mauritius.

Although Prof himself always seemed to be bounding with health and was always energetically full of plans, the same could not be said of Elizabeth who was becoming increasingly short of breath. He had plumbed *Henblas* with piped oxygen in every room where she 'plugged in' and was able to function normally. However, the last few years saw increasing spells at the hospital, where I was employed and handily lived next door. Prof was able to visit her and seemed to time his calls chez nous around

dinner, when thankfully we were able to repay some of his hospitality. Elizabeth sadly died in October 1994, four years after celebrating their golden wedding anniversary and we all wondered how Prof was going to cope. He was very well organised academically and 'sharp as a tack' but was no 'tiger' in the kitchen. Some ladies from the village all helped but his second marriage to the very capable Jeanne in June 1996 gave comfort to his friends and even more to Prof, no doubt.

Jeanne was a good friend of ours as a violinist in the local orchestras and always enjoyed a beer after rehearsals. She was also a capable driver, a talented painter (who held a retrospective in M.O.M.A. Machynlleth in 1999) and best of all perhaps, a very good cook. Prof always joked she'd won him in a raffle but the facts are these. The Philomusica held a 'promise auction' to raise funds for bursary awards to instrumentally gifted students. My wife, Celia, was sitting with Jeanne at the auction and when bids were invited for a short series of music appreciation lessons with Prof Parrott, Jeanne was successful. When she eventually arrived at *Henblas* for the first lesson, she was immediately pressed into service in the kitchen as some visitors had arrived unannounced! This task she accomplished with much aplomb and it was inevitable that her many talents proved to be indispensable to Prof. They married in June 1996 and until Jeanne died in 2010 it was a very productive period in Prof's life. She was able to drive him to his multifarious societies, concerts, churches and committees and they even went around the world examining for the Trinity College of Music. He also dedicated two interesting compositions to her for our string chamber orchestra. She was also a very keen gardener and they joined the National Gardens Scheme where their lovely garden at *Henblas* was shown to a much wider circle.

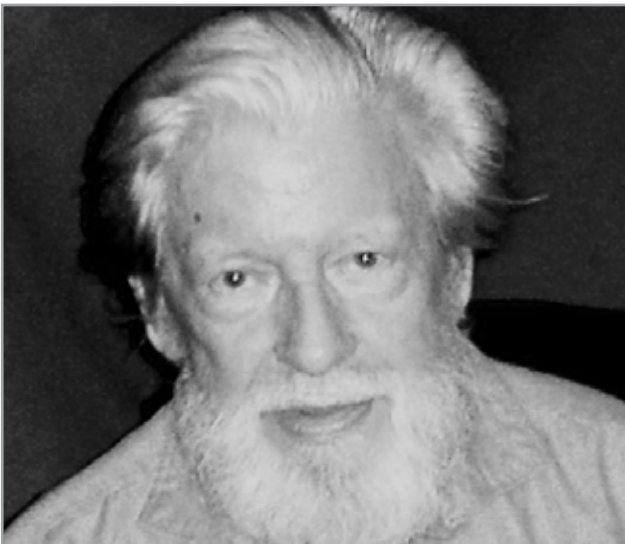
They were very keen to see the *Castle Gardens* on the Scilly Isles and we were asked if we'd like to share a holiday with them and assist in the driving. As none of us had been to the Scillies we were delighted to have an excuse. We stayed in the first class *Island Hotel* on Tresco and were suitably staggered by our visit to the *Castle Gardens*, and on our return visited the *Lost Gardens of Heligan*. We also got in touch with Mr and Mrs Brian Hammond of the PWS in Cornwall and he suggested a

suitable venue where we all enjoyed a bibulous supper, toasts all round to PW and the PWS. It was sad when Jeanne died in 2010 after fourteen years together and Prof was once more cared for by the 'village ladies'.

We visited as often as we could and he was always delighted to see us but had lost some of his phenomenal energy and communication was getting more difficult. Our last visit was, for me, especially poignant. He passed me a recent journal of the *British Music Society* with a picture of the great violist Raymond Jeremy on the front and a main article by Nigel Jarrett inside. He had spent his remaining playing career as a member of the Aberystwyth University quartet when 'increasing deafness had made him anxious about the rat-race in London orchestral concerns.' This disability of Jeremy's shared by Prof Parrott, myself (and of course Beethoven!) puts up barriers and causes communication problems. I noticed that Prof signed the booklet before handing it to me, an indication that he wanted it returned! I still have it, as he died before I could return it...

James W. Montgomery 1927-2012

Susan Hassel



James W. Montgomery, a member of the PWS since 1976, was born in Indiana and received both a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Music. Originally thought to be a baritone, once past his college years his voice shifted to that of dramatic tenor with an extraordinary top range. Initially James taught at the Shenandoah Conservatory

For some reason the announcement of the funeral was restricted to the 'Western Mail'. This meant not so many at the service and only a sprinkling of PWS members. The organist was Ian Rees (who was proud to have received his diploma from Prof in Birmingham). He suitably played some Elgar and Parrott before the service began. The hymn-singing as one would expect from a Welsh church was very good and Prof's old friend Archdeacon Hywel Jones gave the eulogy. I sat near the front behind a man in an overcoat who suddenly got up just before the end and surprised most of us by producing a descant recorder from his coat pocket. It was John Turner, the recorder virtuoso, who had been involved with Prof in many CDs and Machynlleth Music Festivals. He played on this difficult instrument Parrott's *Aweldyfi* (*Dovey Breezes*) quite beautifully.

The order of service handed out to all however, would have given Prof apoplexy had he been able to see it. His name was spelled large on the front with a single 'T'! ■

and then moved to Washington, D.C. where he freelanced as a soloist singing oratorio, and in the professional chorus at the Washington Cathedral as a male alto! He finally settled in New York City where, ever curious, he achieved a Masters Degree in Library Science and became Head Librarian of the New York Psychiatric Center. In New York City James performed the complete roles of Radames, Pollione, as well as excerpted sections of *Othello* and *Tristan* in concert.

In his later years James sang in concert extensively in duos, first with a mezzo and then a dramatic soprano. Once he discovered the songs of Peter Warlock, he devoted his complete attention to everything he could find composed by him. Peter Warlock was James' last big passion. James was also a fine pianist, harpist, and published composer of liturgical music. James will be sorely missed by his circle of friends and his musical friends who appreciated his wonderful voice, incredible ear and musically acute taste. His recorded legacy include the following CDs: *Muncie Songs*, *Wagner Duets*, and *The Songs of Peter Warlock*. (The latter CD will be reviewed in the next edition of the Newsletter.) ■

Obituaries (Continued)

Barbara Goss 1919 - 2010

Steve and Chris Maxwell pay tribute.

Giles Davies provides an introduction with grateful thanks to Andy Low.



Barbara Goss at home with her horse 'Nutty'
(Photo: © Birmingham Post)

Introduction:

Barbara Goss, (by marriage later Barbara Low) daughter of the singer John Goss, passed away in 2010. By the time I met her in 2008 she was rather frail in a Suffolk nursing home and was unable to remember much or speak fluently. This tribute would have been impossible without the help of Andy Low, Barbara's son, a restorer of old buildings and ruins based in rural France. I had the pleasure of meeting him this summer, and was delighted to discover that in keeping with the tastes of his famous grandfather, the Goss enthusiasm for good wine and beer is still alive in 2012! Indeed, Andy makes superb, highly alcoholic wines himself. He has been exceptionally kind in allowing me access to many family photos, manuscripts and recordings on 78rpm records.

Steve and Chrissy Maxwell were long time friends of Barbara, and I'm indebted to them also for permission of their eulogy to be printed here.

Barbara had written of her own life and times for a biography, but being the modest type, this remained in sketch form. Luckily, she penned her life 'in her own words', which still exists.

It seems that as a youngster, her parents left her very much to her own devices, even to the point of being left to travel back alone from Japan to England at a tender age. She remarked that John, her father, had not been a good parent, partly due to a busy performing career and travels. However, there seems to have been some reconciliation later in their lives. John came to adore Barbara, and they became closer as adults. One



Barbara Goss the archer
(Photo: Gerry Hayward)

interesting fact that has recently come to light, is that John Goss was offered a Knighthood as he was one of many to assist King George with his speech problems.

John declined the offer, however, being a staunch socialist. John Goss's wife, known to Andy as 'Granny Moo', lived to be 100 and received a Telegram from Queen Elizabeth 2nd.

Also known to the family as 'Peter', (though nobody has ever known quite why), Goss's 1927 *Anthology of Song* was dedicated to his wife, not to Peter Warlock as previously thought. *The book of Peter* is a historic family treasure, with jottings, poems, and wartime remembrances.

Barbara's character emerges clearly from the photographs seen here. Those at home with her horse 'Nutty' made the newspapers both in the UK, and overseas. With the Circus troupe (p. 32), and as Archer, we are reminded of a distinctively adventurous lady. She seems to have excelled at everything she touched, and was highly successful as a horsewoman, including dressage in Vienna, and as a prizewinning Archer. Her passion for horses continued throughout her life, alongside a notable ability with cryptic crosswords. Her earlier years were spent in London, then the Midlands, and her later life in Suffolk.

She married but later separated from Alan Low, and is survived by their son Andy. John Goss's 1937 publication *Ballads of Britain*, a collection of folk melodies in various versions from around the British Isles, was dedicated 'For my daughter Barbara'.

Barbara Low (Bar) – A Tribute:

Bar's amazing life began as the daughter of a well-connected stage family. It would seem that it was difficult for her parents to make provision for a baby in their lives, as they travelled around following the stage bookings of her father, John Goss – a very well-known singer of the time. Bar was often left in the care of others and there is a sense of tragedy in her mother's obvious distress at this arrangement. However, it began to create in Bar the strong, independent persona which became so evident in later life.

When Bar was 15, her parents moved to America and Bar was left to make her own future. She decided to go to a riding school, where she could indulge her passion for horses. This seemed to be going well, but obviously her parents' situation had changed again and Bar joined her mother, who by then was working at the British Embassy in Japan. It would seem that this was intended as a long-term arrangement, but things, for some reason, didn't work out, and Bar had to travel back to England alone – a huge feat for a young teenager. She had joined the school as a fee paying pupil, but had to return on the basis that she earned her keep, and the strain of combined work and study eventually proved too much. She became very ill, and her life was saved by parents of a school-friend who took her home for the holidays and effectively adopted her. These wonderful people were to eventually leave Bar a house in Dunwich, so they obviously loved her very much. There is a scrap of a letter amongst her paperwork, which must be assumed to be from the lady of this family, apparently writing to Bar's mother:

'You have sometimes expressed gratitude to me for taking Bar into my home; believe me it is I who should be grateful to whatever power ordained that step, and to you for letting me have her. You have every reason to be proud of her.'

Bar emerged from the school a supremely talented horsewoman, who pursued a distinguished career in dressage and other riding disciplines – even working in a circus, which was an experience she treasured. During this time, she married and had a son, Andrew, and continued to live her unique life with modesty and grace.

As an older lady, she took up archery and, being Bar, became Ladies' European champion! In fact she seems to



Barbara Goss (far right) worked in the circus, an experience she treasured.

have become a star at everything she attempted – there is even a knitting award amongst her papers! Looking through the photos and correspondence which she left, it is overwhelming in this immodest age to have known a lady of such huge abilities and depth, who thought so little of herself and tried to live life 'below the radar' so as not to be a problem to anybody. Amongst her papers is a poem written for Bar by her aunt – herself an actress of note – which paints a wonderful picture of the lady that we knew, and shows how much she was actually treasured.

Barbara

How shall I call her, fair?
Aye very fair
And yet not proud
Most lovely when her head is bowed.

How shall I call her, wise?
Aye very wise,
Yet not unkind,
Most gentle in her secret mind.

How shall I call her, calm?
Aye very calm,
And yet not cold,
Most comforting to tease and scold.

We were honoured to know her and she enriched our lives. We loved her and we miss her 'bowed head, her secret mind and her calm'. ■

Forthcoming Events

Concerts

Saturday 11 May 2013

Bromsgrove Festival: Pre-concert talk

6.30pm. There will be a pre-concert talk on Peter Warlock by Dr Barry Smith, author of *Peter Warlock – the life of Philip Hesletine*.

Free entry

Bromsgrove Festival: Orchestral Concert

8.00 pm in the Artrix.

English Symphony Orchestra

Leader and Soloist Michael Bochmann

Conductors – Donald Hunt and Barry Smith

<i>Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra</i>	Britten
<i>Serenade for Strings</i>	Warlock
<i>Capriol</i> (full orchestral version)	Warlock
<i>Bredon Hill</i>	Harrison
<i>Enigma Variations</i>	Elgar

Tickets: £18 (FT Students: £15.50)

The Artrix is Bromsgrove's arts centre. It has generous car parking and comfortable seats. All seats are reserved, and can be booked on-line at www.artrix.co.uk or by telephone on 01527 577330.

Tuesday 14 May 2013

Organ recital by Barry Smith

1.10pm Worcester Cathedral

Peter Warlock and Elgar: A talk by Dr Barry Smith

2.30pm Elgar Birthplace Museum

Barry Smith takes a look at the characters and links common to both composers. An intriguing subject!

Tickets £6.00

NB Barry will be very pleased to sign any books of his that members bring along to these events, or to the AGM at *Cefn Bryntalch*.

Saturday 18 May 2013

Ian Parrott – A Celebration

7.30pm Y Tabernacl, Machynlleth

Lesley-Jane Rogers (soprano); John Turner (recorder); Harvey Davies (piano); Catrin Finch (harp).

The programme:

Soprano, recorder and piano

Songs of Renewal Ian Parrott
Three Kipling Songs Mervyn Burtch

Piano

In Smyrna Edward Elgar
Folksong Preludes Peter Warlock
Westerham Ian Parrott

Soprano and piano

In Phaeacia Ian Parrott
Songs Edward Elgar
Songs Peter Warlock

Harp

Improvisations William Mathias
Ceredigion Ian Parrott

Recorder and piano

Dedication: Farewell to Aberystwyth
(Premiere performance) Ian Parrott
Three Playford Dances David Cox

Plus short pieces written in memory of Ian by Geraint Lewis and Andrew Cusworth.

Friday 24 May to Monday 27 May 2013

English Music Festival

Dorchester on Thames once again sees a vast selection of English music on offer. No Warlock, but lots of familiar names and some not so familiar.

For more information visit:

www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk or Tel 07808 473 889

Thursday 25 June to Sunday 30 June 2013

Gregynog Festival: Great Britten

No Warlock on offer, but several concerts include composers much admired by both PW and Britten, particularly Purcell.

For more information visit: www.gregynogfestival.org or telephone 01686 207100

Wednesday 6 November 2013

Peter Warlock's 119th Birthday Concert

1.15pm Dora Stoutzker Hall at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff CF10 3ER

Full details at www.rwcmd.ac.uk after 1 September.

Forthcoming Events (Continued) and Letters to the Editor

Other Events

Saturday 25 May 2013

Annual General Meeting 2013

11am, at PW's family home *Cefn Bryntalch*, nr. Abermule, Montgomery, Powys SY15 6LA

Full details on the Back Page

Saturday 22 June 2013

Social Lunch

12.30pm. Upper room of *The Antelope*, Eaton Terrace following the Committee meeting.

Saturday 14 September 2013

Cornish Chapter Social Lunch

Note the date now. Full details will be emailed in due course, or telephone Michael Graves on 01666 837334.

Thursday 3 October

Memorial Service for Sir Richard Rodney Bennett

2pm *The Actors Church*, St Paul's Covent Garden

Saturday 12 October 2013

Gloucester Chapter Social Lunch and visit to Didbrook

12:00. Meet at Winchcombe station (steam railway).

We will first partake of lunch at a nearby hostelry and then visit Didbrook, where Warlock studied Latin with the Rev Hubert Allen. We will ride the steam train from Winchcombe to Toddington and then walk to Didbrook (car available if required). Details will be emailed in due course, or telephone Michael Graves on 01666 837334.

Letters to the Editor

Could Norman Gilbert have known Warlock?

I was intrigued by the reference, in Malcolm's obituary of Ian Parrott (Newsletter 91) to one of Ian's fellow members of the Advisory Committee which established the Society, Norman Gilbert. He was head of music at my grammar school in Swindon and successfully taught me to "O" level – indeed, I would have been studying with him at the time the Committee was formed. I never discussed Peter Warlock with him, since I knew the composer only by name and had not then developed such a passionate interest in his music. It would have been a couple of years later that I first came across *Capriol* which was used as incidental music for various theatrical performances I saw and took part in while still at school. But I do recall visiting him later on, when in the sixth form, and proudly announcing my 'discovery' of Delius, his reaction to which was distinctly lukewarm – despite the fact that he was also from the West Riding!

Norman contributed massively to the cultural life of the school. As well as conducting the school choir and orchestra, he was instrumental (no pun intended) in a fundraising effort, which resulted in the building of a school organ (he was an FRCO, and I believe at one time had been shortlisted for the post of cathedral organist at Durham). He was also responsible for an annual music and speech festival which was properly run, with professional, or at least authoritative external

adjudicators, and it was at one of these I first encountered another of my artistic heroes, Edward Thomas, whose famous poem *Adlestrop* was the subject of a recitation class. The music we performed at concerts reflected Norman's own eclectic tastes – J S Bach featuring prominently – and was often quite adventurous. I recall taking part in Herbert Chappell's *The Daniel Jazz* and George Dyson's *Reveille*. Among his own compositions was the music of the school song, which always seemed to sit rather uncomfortably with the words, written by an Old Harrovian colleague and complete with the Newboltian refrain 'Floreat semper schola!', its harmonies placing it well into the twentieth century and containing some very Warlockian sevenths. It was on an outing he organised to Bath Abbey that I first heard a performance of the Bach B Minor Mass, and I remember fondly the annual trips to a Promenade Concert at the Royal Albert Hall.

I should be very interested to know whether he became a paid-up member of the Society, and if so what part he played in its activities. He died fairly shortly following retirement, I think, a year or two after I left school in the mid-1960's, which would put his date of birth somewhere around the turn of the century, and although I have no idea what his own association with Peter Warlock may have been, it's not inconceivable that he may even have known, or at least met our composer. I wish I'd asked him!

Richard Packer

Winner of the *Can you name Warlock's fictional friend?* competition.

Congratulations go to Keith Glennie-Smith, the winner of the competition. The announcement was made in January. The judges commented that Keith's entry was well considered and appropriate.

The idea for the competition started when John Mitchell recently read Kingsley Amis's classic humorous novel *Lucky Jim*. His attention was caught immediately by the mention of Dowland in the second sentence. By association (ie, from the large number of Dowland transcriptions he had made), he found himself wondering whether, by some slim chance, Warlock might just be named too. My astonishment can be well imagined when, a couple of pages further into Chapter One, the following appeared:

'Yes, I think there must be something about the atmosphere of the place, you know, that has some sort of healing effect. We had a friend of Peter Warlock's down once, one Christmas it was, years ago it must be now. He said very much the same thing.'

The objective of the competition was to put a name to Warlock's fictional friend. For the purposes of the competition an assumption was made that the author had no one specifically in mind. The conceit was that had the Professor Welch character existed in real life, which of Warlock's many friends would have been the one that had most likely stayed with him and his wife?

Here is Keith's competition submission:

'John Mitchell has already done considerable research himself and provided valuable clues to the man's identity – "He said very much the same thing", eliminates all female suspects.

I have also re-read 'Lucky Jim' to gain a few more clues. First I wanted to establish the location of the non-Oxbridge University, and secondly the era in which the novel is set, before trying to identify the possible 'friend'.

Location

Amis himself taught in University College, Swansea 1949-51, but earlier in 1948 he visited Philip Larkin (the dedicatee of the novel) who was the Librarian at University College, Leicester: Amis had once said that the relationships and the whole atmosphere he 'witnessed' in the Senior Common Room there may have been the inspiration for 'Lucky Jim'. Jim Dixon misses a train to London towards the end of the

novel. One gains the impression that the rail journey would have taken 2-3 hours: there were also 2 railway stations in the town. Leicester seems a more likely location than Swansea.

The Era

Ration Books are mentioned, it was still a time of post-war austerity, and a Socialist Government was, or had been recently, in power. These clues, plus the possible age of Professor Welch, would put the late '40s as the most likely setting of the novel.

The friend of PW

In November 1930 Warlock had toured Wales by car with Basil Trier, who felt that PW was making a 'final' visit to his home country, and particularly to Cefn Bryntalch. It was Trier who identified PW's body in the mortuary. He lived in Dulwich. But I could find very few other references to Basil Trier in the several books on Warlock.

Soon after his return from Wales, PW wrote to Jack Moeran, a letter typical of the correspondence that continued after their Eynsford experience. Moeran's reply was in the same vein, and, at the time, he was either in hospital or laid up at home with Tb of the knee joint. He was in Ipswich. Significantly, he was absent from the circle of friends round the graveside at the burial in Godalming.

Moeran was one of PW's closest friends and was deeply affected by his death, possibly leading to the alcoholism that clouded the rest of his life.

Ipswich is within reach of Leicester and Jack Moeran may have known Professor Welch and been invited to a musical week-end roundabout Christmas-time the following year, 1931 – and found the solace that he had been desperately needing in the months following the untimely death of his friend.'

Whilst there can be no right or wrong answer, in the view of the judges, Moeran was very high on the list of contenders as 'the friend', but if pressed for a personal opinion, John Mitchell may well have gone for John Goss – the reason being here (noting his recording of Elizabethan music with lute on the *Historic Warlock* CD set) that Goss shared Prof. Welch's interest in Early Music, which as the novel suggests was very much the Professor's 'thing' in the realm of music. ■

[Ed. See also the letter *Mainstream or Madrigals?* from John Evans on the next page.]

News (Continued)

Mainstream or Madrigals?

I wish I was clever enough to win a John Mitchell competition, the wine rack could use some top-up money at this time.

Is it possible, however, that he could be wrong about Amis's 'passion' based on one line in an essay and a few mentions of Dowland and Warlock in *Lucky Jim*?

I was living in Swansea and playing each week at the Swansea Jazz Club when Amis was a lecturer at the University. I can never remember a session when he was not present and would guess his particular passion was 'mainstream jazz' as was played there. He had a special fondness for the trombone judging by his body language. When the club closed he and his friends took off to the local Chinese restaurant where they invariably ate with a large bottle of scotch on the table. This was always drained before the end of the meal, much to the amazement of my fellow (albeit younger) diners (who become less abstemious as they got older). Swansea at this time enjoyed a plethora of music of all sorts but I never saw him at a concert or any other musical function.

His love of the devil's music is well recorded in his many years of correspondence with his fellow aficionado, Philip Larkin.

John P Evans

Bethlehem Down – a new setting?

Two days after writing his review (p.28) of the Blossom Street Singers concert, Malcolm Rudland received an email from a Josh Bauder asking the PWS for information regarding the copyright owner of Bruce Blunt's words for *Bethlehem Down*. Josh is a 25-year-old composer from Minneapolis, currently a master's student at the University of Minnesota. Josh has composed his own setting of *Bethlehem Down* (actually on Christmas Day 2010), and would like to publish the work. It will be performed at the 2013 Christmas concert of the University of St. Thomas, which will also be televised in the US. If you would like to hear it, a medium-grade recording is available on YouTube recorded in Aquinas Chapel, St Paul's, Minnesota:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBq9u6PXzSU>

With Blunt having no immediate family the PWS is not clear as to who inherited Blunt's copyrights and this information has been conveyed to Josh Bauder.

The Editor's dedication to duty



Newsletter editor Michael Graves keeps calm and carries on.

Following surgery to repair a failed tibialis posterior tendon, and also to reset the heel bone, our Newsletter editor, Michael Graves, valiantly forsook his own vehicular mode of transport in order to secure a new LPG cylinder for the heater in his studio (there is no mains gas supply in the village). This ensured that satisfactory progress on the Newsletter was maintained, leading to this edition being published on time. Are there no limits to the lengths he will go in order to ensure production of this erudite publication?

And finally ...

The Peter Warlock Society once again wishes to express its gratitude to Music Sales (www.musicroom.com) for the printing of this Newsletter free of charge to us.

As Warlock's main publisher, we appreciate the generous support they have given to the Society. Their music and also those of other publishers can easily be bought on-line at www.musicroom.com.



Peter Warlock Society

Notice of the 2013 Annual General Meeting

12:00 on Saturday 25 May at PW's family home *Cefn Bryntalch*,
nr. Abermule, Montgomery, Powys. SY15 6LA



The meeting will be followed by a **Complimentary Buffet Lunch** at *Cefn Bryntalch* and an informal *Sing-a-long-a-Warlock*, at which all are welcome to perform.

Cefn Bryntalch has recently been converted into self-catering holiday accommodation and the PWS has booked the whole house for one week – Thursday 23 May to Thursday 30 May.

If anybody would like to stay in the house and make a mini-break of it, then please contact the Hon. Sec. Malcolm Rudland as soon as possible. Rooms will be booked on a first come first served basis and must be paid for in advance (by 30 April latest). There are six first floor rooms with three shared bathrooms and five *en-suite* rooms on the second floor, accessible by a spiral staircase. Room costs vary, but all rooms will be less than **£200 per room** for the week.



During the week, there will be various attractions and events for members, including a talk on Warlock by his chief biographer, Dr Barry Smith, the inevitable annual Danny Gillingwater Sketch, this time delivered by our Chairman, Pat Mills, the showing of various TV and film shows of relevance to Warlock, some walks we know Warlock made in the area, including to Dylife falls, and an event with the Guilsfield Singers.

Further details from and RSVP to:

The Hon. Secretary Malcolm Rudland on 020 7589 9595 or mrudland2@gmail.com