

*Peter Warlock Society*

# **Newsletter 106**

## **Lockdown Edition**

**Spring 2020**



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# Peter Warlock Society

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## Editorial

Welcome to the Lockdown edition of the Newsletter!



Here I am in my garden studio, where I edit and design the Society's Newsletters

(Photo: Úna McDonald)

First, may I say that I sincerely hope you are all keeping well, and coping with the situation we find ourselves in. It looks as if it will be a long haul, but we are fortunate to have a passion for music.

As we all spend so much more time in our gardens, if we are fortunate to have one, I should like to welcome you to mine by including a few photographs on the back cover. The photo above is of the 'media centre', in my studio, which is situated in the back garden. This is where I hide myself away to play music and to indulge in music technology, film editing, and, of course, designing the Newsletter. The eagle eyed among you will notice that in the photograph I am working on pages 28 and 29 of this edition.

I am delighted to pass on the news that I have discovered a printing firm that not only offers a more favourable rate than previously, but the company also offers a packaging and mailing service. Recalling the photograph of the wheelbarrow full of Newsletters in my editorial in PWSN 105, I am sure you will empathise with my delight. This edition is in full colour, a special treat to add a bit of colour to life in Lockdown.

In this edition, Bryn Philpott has contributed a fine article on Hugh Sidgwick, the man who was the inspiration for Warlock's *Heracleitus* and Brian Alderson follows with a fascinating article on Warlock's *Candlelight*.

Reviews cover two Warlock 125th anniversary concerts and also the concert given at the launch of the book *Kaikhosru Sorabji's Letters to Philip Heseltine*. John Mitchell then reviews the book itself and also the recently published *Music in Their Time, The Memoirs and Letters of Dora and Hubert Foss*. John Mitchell's two volumes of *Peter Warlock: Songs Without the Words*, arranged for piano, are reviewed by Jonathan Carne.

My sincere thanks go, as always, to those who have contributed to this and past editions of the *Newsletter*. Remember, I am happy to receive material for the *Newsletter* at any time, but to guarantee consideration for inclusion in the Autumn edition, **31 July** is the deadline. My full contact details are on the page opposite. I hope you enjoy reading this edition.

Keep well, stay safe!

Michael

## Articles

### *Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus*

Bryn Philpott

ΕΙΠΕ ΤΙΣ ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΤΕ ΤΕΟΝ ΜΟΡΟΝ

## [Heracleitus]

(Manuscript Version)

Translated from the Greek of  
Callimachus by William Cory

Peter Warlock

Slow - tempo very free - the voice murmuring softly to itself

They told me, Her - a - clei - tus, they told me you were dead, They brought me bit - ter  
Her - a - cli - tus

## Introduction

In 1923 Peter Warlock published a set of three songs under the collective title *Saudades*, a Portuguese word which has no equivalent in the English language. This name was taken from an essay on poetry by Launcelot Cranmer-Byng (1872-1945) that explained the meaning as '...that haunting sense of sadness for days gone by...' and provides a good clue as to the emotional character of these songs that were written between 1916 and 1917. This article will concentrate on the man that might reasonably be described as providing the inspiration for the dedication of the third and best of these songs: *Heracleitus* 'To C.T. in memory of A.H.S.'

It is worthwhile here repeating briefly the circumstances that led Warlock to dedicate this song to his music teacher from his days at Eton College, Colin Taylor, following the tragic death of Arthur Hugh Sidgwick in the Great War. Sidgwick was Colin's closest friend from his early school days and his death must have hit him hard. On 1 October 1917 Warlock, now in Dublin, wrote to Colin expressing his deepest sympathy.

My dear Colin,

I am dreadfully grieved to hear of Hugh Sidgwick's death: it is terrible – and I know how deeply you must feel it. There are so very few friends who can stand the test of even a few years, but each one of those few is like a part of oneself. I remember well two delightful evenings spent with you and Sidgwick – one at his club<sup>1</sup>, and the other at *The Ship* in Whitehall.

That you found a little sympathy in my tunes pleases me more than anything that could be said about them. Yesterday brought back to my mind the lovely little Greek poem on the death of a friend, which if I remember rightly Sidgwick quoted in the dedication of his 'Walking Essays' to you – and immediately it seemed to fit itself to music, so I am sending you the outcome which I hope you may like.

Do'nt [sic] be despondent –

Always yours, with Love

Φ



## Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus (continued)



Hugh Sidgwick – 1910 (Photo: G. C. Beresford)



Hugh Sidgwick's elder brother Frank – 1910

As we shall see later, Sidgwick had dedicated his book *The Promenade Ticket* (and not his 'Walking Essays' as Warlock incorrectly recalled) to Colin Taylor, with a quotation in Greek from the Callimachus epigram *Heracleitus* 'I remember'd how often you and I had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky'. This it seems prompted Warlock to compose the song using the English translation by William Johnson Cory (1823-1893) from his *Ionica* (1858). Cory's translation has, in its own right, achieved a classic status and is an elegy on the death of Heracleitus, a fellow-poet and friend of Callimachus, from Halicarnassus (not to be confused with the famous philosopher from Ephesus).

Modern transliteration appears to favour the spelling Heracleitus, from the original Greek. Cory, however uses the spelling Heraclitus, possibly removing the 'e' to ensure the correct pronunciation in English. Warlock was familiar with both, but seems to have used the former in both the text and title of the song as well as in his subsequent correspondence with Colin Taylor<sup>2</sup>. The poem at once combines both a sad reassurance to the dead with comfort for the living. This in the circumstances seems highly

appropriate and must surely have given solace to Colin, coming from his former pupil.

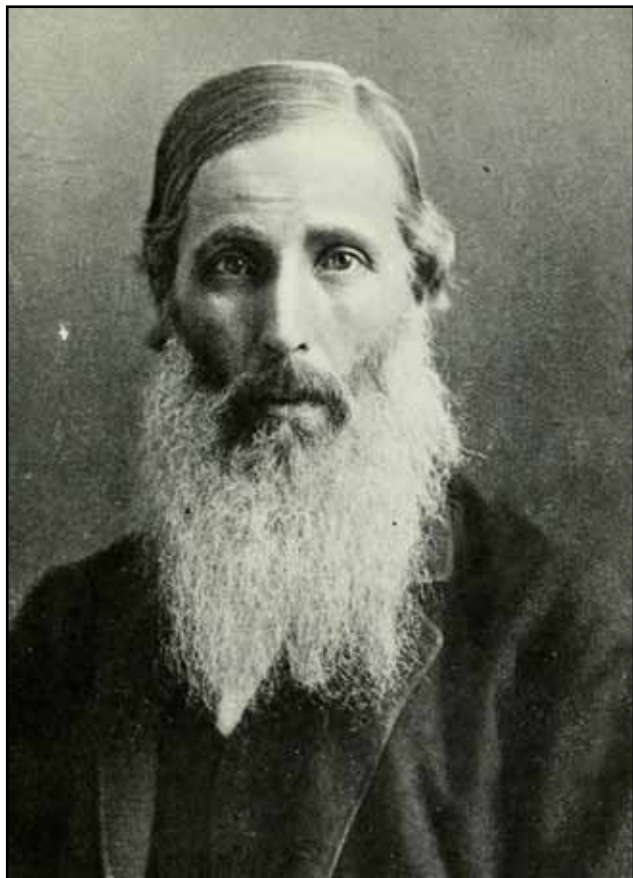
We shall now explore Hugh Sidgwick's all too brief life along with his achievements.

### The Sidgwick Family

Arthur Hugh Sidgwick was born on 2 October 1882 in Oxford, and was always known as Hugh to family and friends. He was the youngest of five children born to Arthur Sidgwick (1840-1920) and Charlotte Wilson (1853-1924). His father Arthur taught classics and mathematics at Rugby School and when they moved to Oxford in 1882 he became a fellow of Corpus Christi College and reader in Greek where he was well known for his witty conversation.

A number of their children followed literary and academic careers. Hugh's eldest sister Rose<sup>3</sup> became a lecturer in ancient history at Birmingham University. She contracted pneumonia and died whilst with a delegation in New York in 1918 during the influenza pandemic. His second sister, Ethel, was a novelist who also wrote plays for children; she lived until 1970. His elder brother Frank studied at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge, where

## Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus (continued)



Hugh Sidgwick's uncle, Henry Sidgwick  
(Photo: Elliot & Fry)

he won the Chancellor's medal for English Verse and later became an authority on the subject. After an 'apprenticeship' with A.H. Bullen, at the Shakespeare Head Press, Frank co-founded the publishing firm 'Sidgwick and Jackson' in 1908. He also wrote two novels, several volumes of verse and a 'Gilbertian' libretto; he died suddenly in 1939, aged 60. His third sister Margie was the only one that did not pursue a career but stayed in Oxford helping with the household and undertook voluntary work; dying in 1948.

Hugh's Aunt Mary married her cousin Edward Benson (later to become Archbishop of Canterbury) and of their six children – Hugh's cousins – were E.F. Benson, best known for his *Map and Lucia* novels and A.C. Benson, who wrote the words of the song *Land of Hope and Glory*.

His uncle, Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900) was a lecturer in Moral Philosophy at Trinity College, Cambridge. He became one of the most influential Utilitarian (i.e. ethical)

philosophers of the Victorian era and was probably best known for his book *The Methods of Ethics* (1874). Among his many interests were poetry, sociology, psychology and walking and he was a founding member and first President of the Society for Psychical Research as well as a member of the Metaphysical Society. He also promoted the higher education of women, co-founding Newnham College, a women only college at Cambridge; his wife<sup>4</sup> later became its principal.

Hugh was said to share some of the characteristics that marked his uncle; who was always cool, critical, slightly detached and sceptical with an absolutely candid attitude – but always a realist.

### Educational achievements

Given the family background it is perhaps unsurprising that Hugh was also academically gifted. In 1891 he attended The Dragon School<sup>5</sup>, as a day boy. The Headmaster C.C. Lynham, or 'Skipper' as he was affectionately known, described him as 'a small and dark and rather impish looking boy.....very keen about a variety of things'. He did not take to sciences nor was he skilled with his hands but he was an enthusiastic footballer and cricketer. He also had an exceptional knowledge of *Bradshaw's* and could from memory tell the quickest train route between stations, including any necessary changes.

It was however in classics and mathematics that he was to excel and gained several prizes. He became head of school, with the Headmasters Gold Medal, and was, according to Lynham, 'the ablest boy that ever came to Dragon School and withal one of the most lovable'. He was taught Divinity by Cosmo Lang, who was to become Archbishop of Canterbury. Lang later remembered Hugh as being 'so full of promise, with the fun and eagerness of life shining out of his bright eyes'.<sup>6</sup>

It was at the Dragon School that his literary career began where he became a regular contributor to the school magazine *The Draconian*. His first piece, at age 11, was a poem entitled 'My Rabbit', a parody of a famous poem 'My Mother' by Anne Taylor (1782-1866).

Among his contemporaries at the school it was Colin Taylor who became, and was to remain, his closest friend. Colin Campbell Taylor (1881-1973) was born in Oxford, the son of James Taylor (1833-1900), a former Organist at

## Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus (continued)

New College, Oxford. Colin and his three brothers attended Dragon School, his elder brother Leonard became an artist, who in 1928 painted a portrait of Queen Mary, and was elected a member of the Royal Academy in 1931. Colin was to train in music at London and Leipzig and between 1904 and 1914 taught at Eton, where both Philip Heseltine and Aldous Huxley were among his pupils. Colin set to music the school song – *Carmen Draconiense* – to words by Hugh's brother Frank who also attended the school.

Clearly, Hugh enjoyed his time at Dragon School and would come back for 'Old Boys' dinners and other occasions on a regular basis. At a speech at one such event, he praised the school's refusal to force the boys into one or two conventional moulds, by giving positive encouragement to originality and allowing the boys the opportunity to discover their own peculiar interests and gifts.

From 1895 he attended Winchester College, where a contemporary described him as '... young and unassuming in appearance and small in stature – the majesty of his intellect is only equalled by the multitude of his virtues...' His academic achievements here led him to win the Gold Medal for English verse in 1899 for his poem *Sicily*, the Duncan Mathematical Prize (1900), The Warden and Fellows Prizes for Greek Prose, Greek Iambics and Latin Verse, and the Hawkins English Literature Prize. He was also the Richardson Mathematical Prizeman in 1900 and Goddard Scholar in 1901. In addition he managed to find time to edit the school magazine *The Wykehamist* (between 1899 and 1900) and was the Secretary of the school debating society.

In 1901 he went up to Balliol College, Oxford with a Second classical scholarship in 1901, and won a distinction in the examination for the Irish Scholarship. He gained a double first in Mathematical and Classical Moderations. As if that were not enough was also a member of the Hockey team and rowed for the Balliol VIII.

In 1905 he won a Fellowship at University College, Oxford, which he held as a non-resident Fellow until 1912. In 1906 his major achievement was to win the Chancellors Prize for an English Essay *The influence of Greek Philosophy on English Poetry* in which he covered the period between Chaucer and Browning.

Clearly his academic record was quite exceptional and his list of achievements surprised even those who knew



*The Draconian School Magazine*  
November 1914

him best. He didn't come across as the stereotypical scholar locked away in his room poring over obscure texts, but was a well-rounded and popular character.

### Employment at the Board of Education

Despite these achievements, Hugh did not pursue an academic career. His general interest in the advancement of learning led him to obtain employment at the Board of Education, in Whitehall. He started work as a junior examiner in 1906, and the first three years served in the branch that dealt with the training of teachers and then spent a further two and a half years in the Technological Branch.

During this time he shared a flat, in 5 Verulam Buildings, in Grays Inn, with Augustus Uthwatt, an Australian born lawyer from Ballarat, who was later to become a High Court Judge and Life Peer. On 1 January 1910, Hugh wrote to Colin Taylor inviting him to stay with him in the flat.



## **Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus** (continued)

I am here from now until I die of overwork next May or so. So come while I am yet alive. You know what to expect – hard fare, a beastly room, no company from 10 – 7, & pretty poor company before & after that. But you'll be welcome as the flowers of spring.

We can see in his correspondence that characteristic Edwardian sense of comic irony developing. On the occasion of the death of King Edward VII, he again writes to Colin in a letter dated 17 May 1910 that combines the mood in the office with a touch of the musical criticism that he was later to develop in his writing.

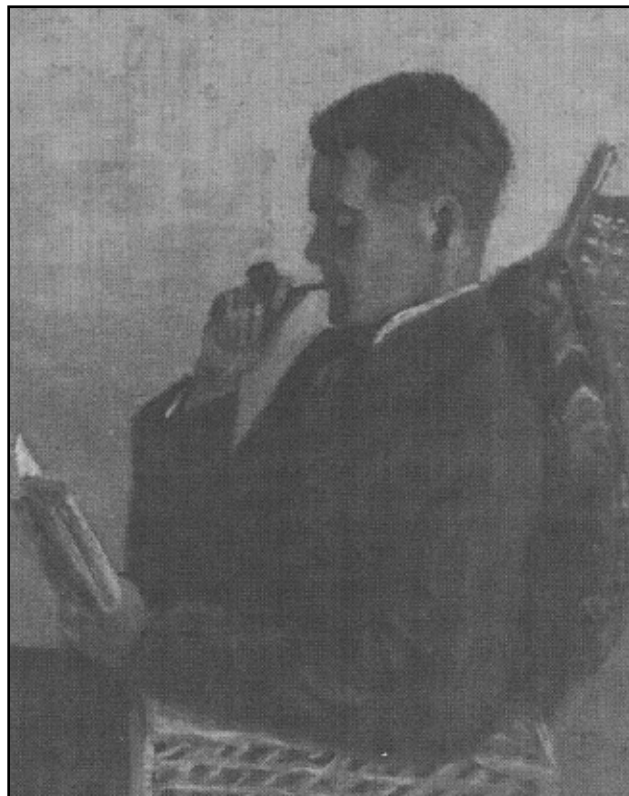
We are in a damnable state here over the King's death – black ties, and blinds down at the office, & black edged paper. I conform in the matter of costume, but there are times, especially after reading the papers, when I long to put on a red tie & sing the *Marseillaise*. I have not been to any functions yet: the Chopin funeral march has turned my stomach ever since Victoria's death. The *Dead March* in *Saul* is much more suitable, being written by an anglicized German. I saw the procession from my window today – really a very fine sight & the *Dead March* in *Saul* is worth ten of Chopin.

Though he occasionally grumbled about the volume of work in letters to his friends, he always felt that education was the right field for him; he enjoyed the work and intended to continue working for the Board. By all accounts he was a diligent worker and occasionally translated papers he was working on into Greek to test the coherence and lucidity of his argument.

### **Holiday to Germany**

During September 1911, Hugh was able to take a three week holiday from work with his sister Ethel and Colin to Germany, where the weather was perfect. Their visit was centred in Munich and he kept a detailed diary of the trip. They visited museums and art galleries and particularly enjoyed the Hofgarten, where they spent both their mornings and afternoons relaxing in the sun, smoking cigars and observing life. Hugh and Colin swam regularly in the city swimming baths and being initially unaware of the cleanliness rules, were hauled out for not first showering for five minutes prior to the swim.

His first experience of German beer was at the Pschorrbräu Bierhall which he describes with almost



Portrait of Hugh Sidgwick by Colin Taylor – 1911

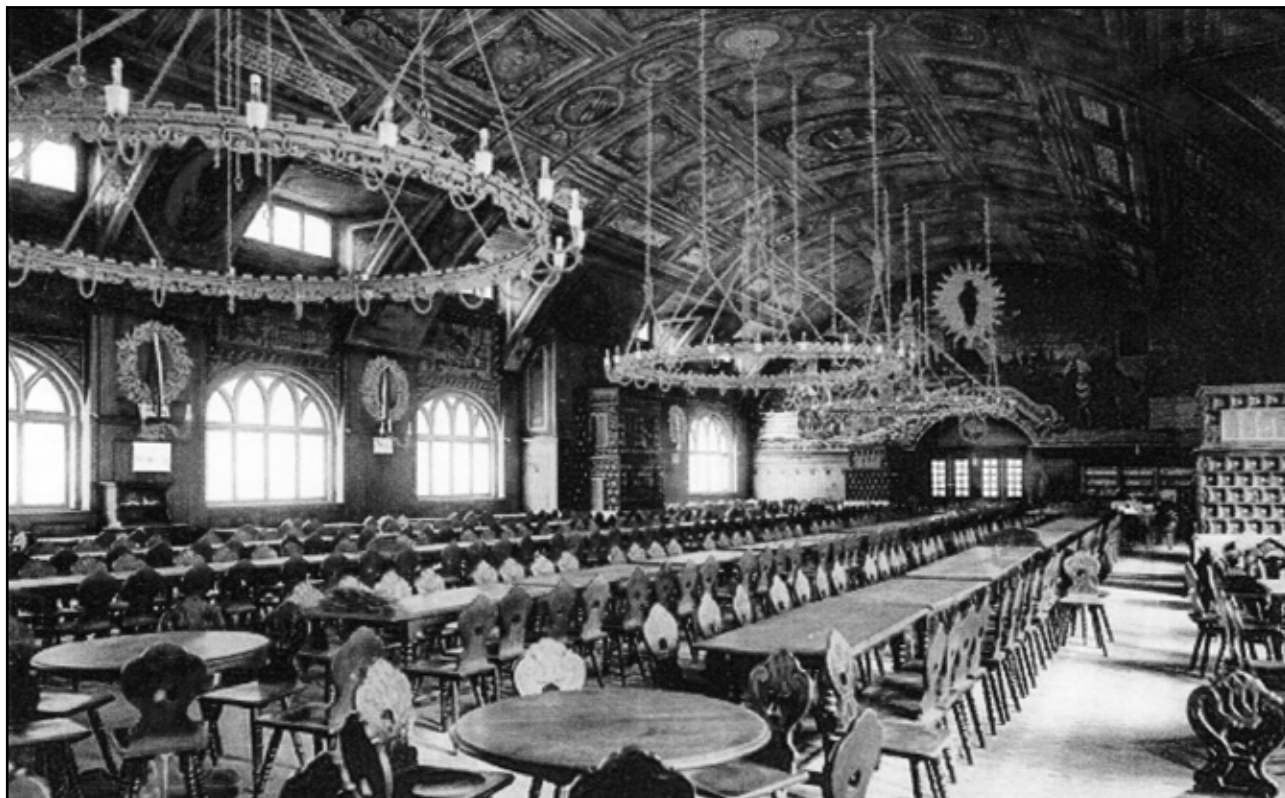
Warlockian enthusiasm: '...it is a dark beer, of a full and deep flavour, a nurse of profound thoughts and large resolve, with a special tang of its own ... It is a beer for great men, to teach them to be greater'. His diary goes on to compare the relative merits of the beers: Hofbräu (for heroes), Pschorrbräu (for philosophers and statesmen) and Löwenbräu (for all good citizens).

He was most impressed with a visit to what he describes as the Mecca of German beer-drinking; the famous Hofbräuhaus '...imagine six Oxford halls rolled into one, with dais removed and five or six oak tables running the whole length ... full of Münchners – men, women, children, soldiers, geistliche, every class, age and creed ... In a spirit of awe and admiration we drank the superb beer, and returned home to ponder in all humility on the meaning of things.'

They noted the prominent sign above the Bierschenke stating that 'My staff are under strict instructions to pour up to the legal level, and honourable guests are urged to bring their incompletely filled mugs back for a top up'. Hugh was impressed that 'the honourable guests act worthily



**Hugh Sidgwick: *The inspiration for Heracleitus* (continued)**



The Hofbräuhaus, Munich – circa 1911

up to the spirit of the invitation.’ On his final visit to the hall he wrote with a mock sense of regret ‘the beer was, as ever, indescribable. It is difficult to write about it without breaking down.’

They took excursions to the countryside by tram and train for extended walks in the Bavarian forest, on one occasion getting lost as night fell. During these days out, when stopping for a rest, Colin would sketch them and later painted Hugh’s portrait.

Whilst in Munich they were able to hear a variety of music, including a mass in the cathedral sung by a fine choir to organ and orchestra and a popular concert where ‘beer and victuals circulated freely’ and Colin committed ‘... the unpardonable sin of drinking another man’s beer, but was not detected’.

They managed to book for the last three concerts in a Beethoven symphony cycle under Ferdinand Lowe<sup>7</sup>, who conducted without a score. Hugh recorded that the Eighth Symphony, ‘which went faultlessly’ was coupled with ‘a perfectly delightful and buoyant *Til Eulenspiegel*’ as well

as Bruckner’s Third Symphony ‘which I had never heard before and do not wish to hear again’.

The highlight for Hugh was the last of these concerts that consisted solely of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony – ‘for the first time I heard it as a real whole, and when the chorus came in it was overwhelming – not from any strictly choral merits, though the singing was excellent: but rather from the sense which obviously inspired chorus and audience alike that this was the real thing – this was what they had come for: to sing Schiller’s *Ode to Joy* as the crown and consummation of the symphony.’<sup>8</sup>

The last four days of the holiday they spent in Nuremberg, ‘But I would not live in Nürnberg for untold sums. It is a museum not a town ... Munich was the big thing and the rest relatively trifling.’ Here they bought tickets to *Pagliacci* but it was followed by the ‘bottomless ineptitude of *Cavalleria Rusticana* ... I had seen it once before, and seemed to remember – I was mistaken – that it had a plot. There came a point when it really seemed as if the story was going to begin, and then the curtain fell

## **Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus** (continued)

instantly, and we went home ... Colin and I sat up for an hour over cocoa (him) and beer (me) and argued about opera as a form of art.

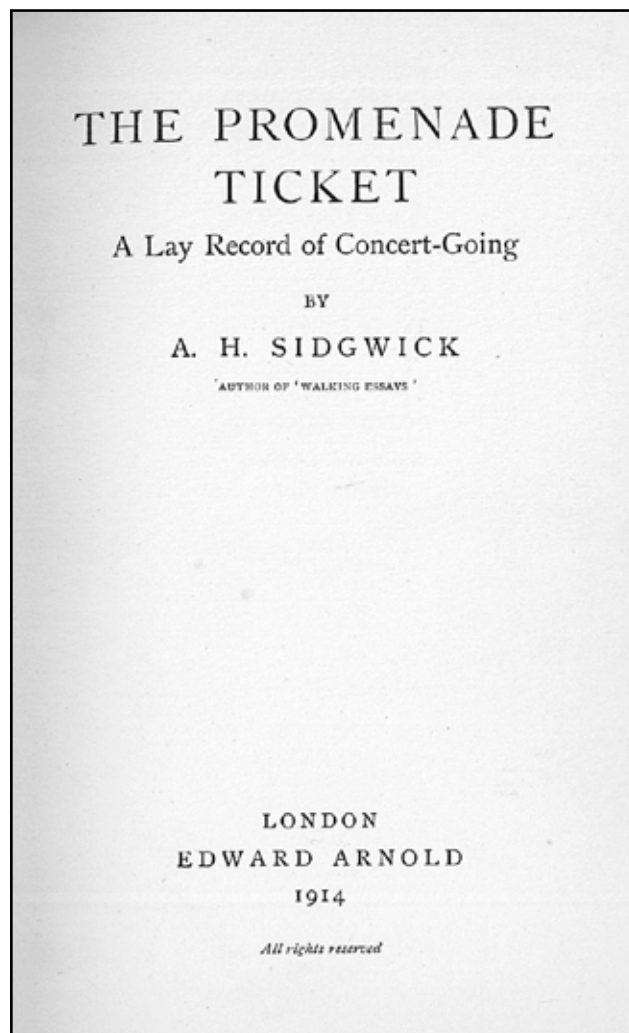
By 1912, Hugh's hard work at the Board resulted in him being appointed the Private Secretary to Sir Lewis Amherst Selby-Bigge, Permanent Secretary of the Board of Education (1911-1925). This placed him behind the scenes of the important work of the department. Selby-Bigge later wrote that Hugh was 'One of the most efficient and promising public servants I have ever met. The chair of the Head of a Government Department is sometimes thorny, and I owe much to Hugh Sidgwick for removing or softening the prickles.' Hugh was clearly highly regarded by his seniors and had fate not intervened he seemed assured of continued promotion to the highest levels in the Civil Service.

### **Interests and Writing**

Despite his busy working life, Hugh managed to find time for his interests: literature, walking and music and was also able to continue with his writing. In his biography of Sidgwick, Tom Patterson<sup>9</sup> provides a complete list of these writings that span the period 1894 to 1917 and comprise around seventy items. These include miscellaneous articles, reviews, critiques and poetry. A substantial portion of these were published in both *The Draconian* and *The Wykehamist* where in the former, he continued to contribute right up until his death. He also was to publish a number of books.

He had a wide interest in literature beyond his Greek studies, and in particular had an extensive knowledge of both Jane Austen (writing an examination paper in 1917) and Charles Dickens, which was the subject of his first book *Selections from Dickens*. This was published in 1909 by Sidgwick and Jackson in their 'Pocket Book Series' and whose intended purpose was in '... tempting the reader, who has forgotten or neglected his Dickens to turn once more to his bookshelf ...'

Walking was one of his main pleasures in life and the subject of his second book *Walking Essays* published by Edward Arnold in 1912 (priced 5s.). He had spent many of his weekends walking in London, the home-counties and in other parts of the country, such as the Lake District, when on holiday. By 1910 he had started to record these experiences that would eventually be compiled into a single volume. This is not a guide book or practical manual of walking, but

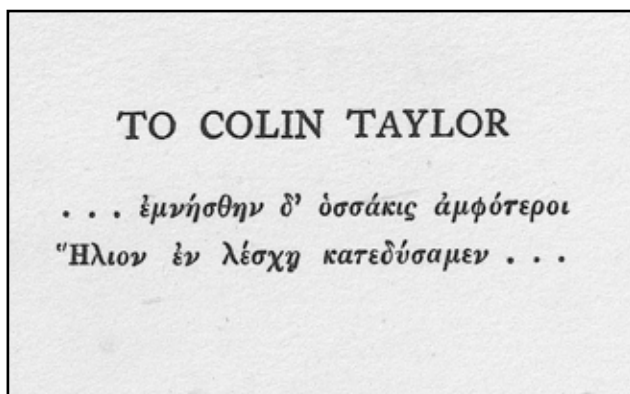


a compilation of thoughts on the subject; looking at aspects of life through a walker's eye and answering the many questions that arise, with a number of digressions.

Hugh was also a devoted music lover and it was at Balliol College, in their Sunday evening concerts, that his interest was first kindled. He was an entirely self taught amateur who sang regularly with the Handel Society and enjoyed singing on his walks (and in the bath!). He became a regular concert goer, particularly at the Proms, where he was a season ticket holder. In 1909 he attended 44 concerts (27 of which were in the last three months of the year).

Deciding to write up his concert notes the resulting book, entitled *The Promenade Ticket – A Lay Record of Concert-Going*, was published by Arnold in 1914<sup>10</sup> (priced 2s 6d). Hugh had first asked Colin Taylor if he could dedicate

## Hugh Sidgwick: *The inspiration for Heracleitus* (continued)



(Opposite) *The Promenade Ticket* frontispiece.  
(Above) the dedication to Colin Taylor

the book to him, feeling that as he had insulted Brahms four times, folk-song about nine times, religion once and marriage twice; it might be considered an affront to a real musician to be associated with the book.

This delightful book is a fictional account of a single Prom season. It starts with a request by an ageing 'Promenader' to his nephew Nigel Clarke, to accept a season ticket to the Proms on condition that he sends his uncle a frank and free account of his impressions of each of the concerts. Nigel is at first reluctant to accept the offer, claiming to know 'little about music and nothing of the technical side'. He worried that his uncle's money might be wasted, particularly as he couldn't guarantee regular attendance. On reflection though, he accepts with the condition that he can share out the task by occasionally lending the ticket to his friends and associates; a suggestion to which his uncle readily agrees.

Nigel is responsible for the bulk of the reviews and—in spite of his modesty—turns out to be a sensitive and intelligent critic, a scholar and a humourist, with singularly catholic tastes.

The other contributors, all high spirited and engaging young people, have more limited musical knowledge and include 'Henry', or H. N. Malins, who is the most irreverent of the commentators and loves a practical joke. J. R. Harrison is perhaps the most consistently amusing, whose criticisms and blunders are occasionally illuminating. Then there is Nigel's cousin, Rhoda, a vivacious young woman with an admiration for Brahms, who thinks all music ended when he died; and her friend Delia, who is an ardent folk-song enthusiast, with strong views on the subject. Lastly,

there are several reviews by two young clerks, whose musical education was severely limited to the pianola and military bands. The groups diverse views occasionally lead to forthright, but on the whole friendly, arguments over post concert 'cake and lemonade' at a nearby café (how the world has changed).

In its advertising literature the publisher recommended the book to 'any amateur who liked comparing experiences with others, and to any professional who liked to feel his superiority over amateurs'. As one reviewer was to put it 'a witty book full of genial criticism – of music, music lovers and would be music lovers'. The book also contains many clear eyed observations on concert going, including a lesson on the need to keep silent during the performance (It seems the world hasn't changed all that much!).

It appears that the opinions Nigel expresses in his reviews are similar to some of those that Hugh had previously conveyed in real life. On Mozart's G minor Symphony Nigel writes: 'a work that stands above all criticism ... Listen to the slow movement is there anything created by man in this imperfect world to touch it'. On Beethoven: '... everything else was obliterated and knocked into a cocked hat by the Seventh Symphony ... It is great, even among his masterpieces, towering above them all. It is the culmination of the Symphony as a form of art'. In Brahms Nigel is less enthusiastic '... that after ten bars or so I say to myself 'Come, now, this is absolutely splendid'; and after fifty bars I say 'I am sure something magnificent is coming soon'; and after a hundred and fifty bars my attention begins to wander and I begin to think what the orchestra is doing and when the end is coming.'

We rely on J.R Harrison to come to the rescue 'What I've heard of Brahms is awfully good, especially the *Brandenburg Concerto*'. His commentaries, so full of errors are often very amusing but are always honestly given. For the slow movement of the *Eroica* Symphony he writes 'It is a grand thing. There is a bit for the oboe in the middle: it has a rather bleating sound, but I like it. Then the first tune comes back again. Most funeral marches seem to cheer up in the middle and then become gloomy again. I suppose the idea is, (1) the poor old boy's dead; (2) well, after all, he's probably gone to heaven; (3) still, anyhow, the poor old boy's dead. I'm afraid this is rather irreverent, but you see what I mean.'



## ***Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus*** (continued)

Colin Taylor, who had assisted Hugh in reviewing the draft text and advising on technical points, later wrote of Hugh that 'had he lived he might have become a first-class critic, for he brought a fresh, highly cultivated, unbiased mind to the subject.'

Warlock, himself no stranger to musical criticism, also seemed impressed with the book and wrote to Colin on 14 January 1919:

A few days ago my copy of *The Promenade Ticket* was returned to me by borrowers, after an absence of more than two years. I have just read it through again and must tell you how pleasant and for the most part how readily sound it all seems.

Musical criticism lost a very possible redeemer in Hugh Sidgwick. It so happened that I was at the moment revising some songs with a view to offering them for publication, including the *Heracleitus* which I sent you when Sidgwick was killed – and a certain passage in his book most happily suggested the right alteration I was vainly looking for (though I am afraid he would not have approved of the song as a whole) ...

We have a hint as to Hugh's opinions on contemporary compositions in one of Nigel's reviews: 'We have had a feast of young composers tonight – clever, interesting, obviously out for big game and obviously quite sincere, but rather hard work for laymen. They assume as commonplace the things we are gradually struggling towards, and start from a point several miles ahead of the farthest we can see. We must not complain; it is their business to do their best, and we have no earthly right to demand that they shall accommodate themselves to our shortcomings.'

This may go some way to explaining Warlock's question as to whether Hugh would on the whole have approved of his setting of *Heracleitus*. The determinedly experimental nature of this song with its strong Van Dieren influence – no key signature or bar lines, and lacking definite tonal centres – perhaps might have proved too difficult for audiences to fully appreciate that early in the 20th Century. It is interesting to reflect that Sidgwick was writing of Beethoven's compositions following a period of less than 90 years since that composer's death. We now view Warlock's *Heracleitus* after a span of more than 100 years.

Hugh's final book was entitled *Jones's Wedding: a Tale in*



Colin Taylor in 1914

*Rhymed Prose, and other Poems*. Here the author provides a string of witty and satirical episodes in the life of a group of his friends, Robinson, Brown and Smith from Oxford that culminate on the occasion of another friend Jones's marriage. Though started before the war it was to occupy Hugh's spare time in France when, as it will be seen, his thoughts were focussed on the subject of marriage. The book was posthumously published by Edward Arnold in 1918 (priced 3s 6d).

### **The Great War**

At the outbreak of war there was the inevitable call for volunteers to fight, but Hugh initially felt it extremely important that the civilian and commercial life of the country must be maintained at all costs. No war could be won without a strong economy to back it up. This view he expressed in a letter to his sister-in-law on 16 August 1914 where he explains:



***Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus*** (continued)



Royal Garrison Artillery Siege Battery

I think Kitchener is getting all the men he wants & given this, every unit taken for military purposes is a unit lost to the economic struggle. Is this a cold-blooded & cowardly view? Personally I am saved moral struggles by being practically ordered by the government *not* to volunteer, and the only thing I can sacrifice for my country is my temper & my holiday.

He initially volunteered his spare time as a Special Constable in London but by 1915, like many of his contemporaries, he was becoming increasingly to feel that he should enlist in the army. He hated the whole idea of war, and wondered what kind of soldier he would make. It was out of a sense of duty that he came to the view that he needed to play his part in the fighting. Only then, if fate permitted, could he return to take a small part in the work of reconstruction.

In the event he was not able to get a release from the Board until the end of 1915 and expressed a preference for the Artillery. On 30 December he was appointed to a temporary commission in the regular army for the duration of the war as 2nd Lieutenant – Royal Garrison Artillery

(Siege Battery). After a period of training at Weymouth, Sheerness and then Lydd, he crossed to Boulogne from Folkestone on 25 July 1916 and was posted to the 126th Siege Battery (R.G.A.).

A siege battery was a unit equipped with heavy howitzers, intended to send large calibre high explosive shells in an elevated trajectory. They were most often deployed in destroying or neutralising enemy artillery and other key targets behind the enemy lines. Hugh's unit were expected to go to near the front line on one day in three and one of his tasks was in supervising the moving of guns and digging in at new battery positions. This often took days of intense work with little sleep until the activity was complete. Then there would be the lengthy periods manning the guns where Hugh once recorded a period of eight hours continuous shooting with only a twenty minute break while the guns cooled.

By contrast, there were also significant periods where the routine of army life in trench warfare, particularly during the winter months, could also be very dull and there was much in the way of spare time. He was to list his

## ***Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus*** (continued)

accomplishments during the war as 1) The Morse alphabet 2) auction bridge 3) tying knots 4) playing chess (he didn't count gunnery). Chess he found fascinating and could quite imagine people making a lifetime study of the game and ending in the lunatic asylum.

Hugh was in due course selected for training to become an adjutant for the battery, a role he felt was 'a miserable clerking and telephoning job, like a bad version of my old job in Whitehall'. The bureaucracy was such that a visiting French officer remarked when one of the numerous official returns came in to be signed 'Yes, England is suffering from a shortage of paper'. His Colonel later asked him if he wanted to be posted to headquarters. Though his mother suggested he'd be safer there, he replied that he would rather go to a battery, calculating, the chances of returning home as 20 to 1 (battery), 25 to 1 (Group) and 40 to 1 (headquarters); so not much in it.

Hugh didn't regret having joined the army, things being what they were he felt it was the right thing to do. But he simply did not believe that he or anyone else in the army was any the better for participating in a war. Throughout his time in France Hugh debated the ethics of war with his siblings Frank and Ethel. Disagreeing with an assertion that war was a good outlet for bodily passions he responded to Frank in a letter of 18 August 1916:

People who talk of the physical value of war suffer from 3 confusions of thought: (1) between training (which is mostly good) & fighting (which is mostly bad & weakening): (2) between ancient warfare (riding a horse & waving a sword) and modern warfare (being shelled for 6 months & getting 20 minutes in the open at the end of it): (3) between the nation as an entity (which may in some sense be said to be strengthened by war, i.e. by becoming more conscious of nationality) and the nation as a collection of individuals, which is obviously weakened by losing its youngest & best ... I do not know if this war will be the last war, but I feel pretty clearly that if it is not, and if the fear of war is not abated, the whole of our civilization is done for: we are beaten & devoured by our own machines ... Finally, I have a strong conviction that to shoot shells & have them shot at you is a damned dirty business unworthy of a man: & that if conditions make it necessary, the conditions must be revised ...

Like many of his contemporaries he came to the fatalistic view that should he be hit by a shell, then all would either be over quickly or if wounded he would at least be sent back to see England again.

### **Special Leave**

On the 31 January 1917, Hugh was given special leave, with orders to report to the Secretary of the Board of Education. He had been recalled for three months to assist in the preparation of a new Education Bill to be introduced by Herbert Fisher (1865-1940)<sup>11</sup>, due to his particular knowledge. The work was hard, but he was able to complete the tasks on time and sat in the gallery of the House of Commons to watch Fisher presenting the bill, which he hoped would eventually lead to an administrative and educational revolution. Writing to his sister Rose, Hugh felt that if the bill resulted in a block grant for elementary education then 'you'll know I have not lived in vain'.

Hugh was able to enjoy his time in England, meeting up with family and friends. He also managed a visit to Colin Taylor, who had been invalided back due to the reoccurrence of a longstanding issue with his knee and was now stationed in Newhaven. This was a huge relief to Hugh as Colin had been in the infantry on the front line, but was now 'out of harm's way'. This posting would, in relative safety, enable him to devote more time to his music.

During this leave Hugh was to meet a young woman, Amphilis<sup>12</sup> whom he referred to as A.G. or 'the amiable girl'. Writing to Colin on the 5 March 1917, Hugh explained:

During the last 48 hours I have come across two of the best efforts of humanity in the way of (a) girls and (b) symphonies. The latter is Schubert's *Unfinished*: the former I don't think you know. But the combined effect has been distinctly cheering – without inebriating, as the poet says of tea. It is a very close thing between the sound of the human voice and even the horns before the reprise in the slow movement. On the other hand (a) has nothing (at present) to compare to the trombones. Notwithstanding, (b) is not really amusing. It's a very open question. It was my 21st meeting with (b) and only my – a pause while I count – 7th (I think) with (a). Still there is a war on, and the need of any immediate decision is (at any rate) deferred:

## Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus (continued)

It later became clear that they both would have welcomed marriage and he had resolved that after the war it was going to be either matrimony, or failing that friendship. In May 1917 he wrote a letter to Amphillis 'to be sent if I am killed' asking her to marry him so that she would have been in no doubt about his intentions. She was described as being exceedingly friendly, shrewd, straightforward, sane and unemotional, an extraordinary person in every sense of the word; which was precisely what he wanted.

### Return to the Front – The final chapter

Hugh went back on the 23 April 1917 and although the return was always going to be tough, he felt he 'ought not to grouse'. He recognised that he had been lucky to have been given the opportunity to be back in England for a significant period, where all had gone rather well for him. Though he initially returned to his original battery, he was soon assigned to various temporary attachments undertaking a variety of tasks before finally becoming attached to the 157th Siege Battery in a different part of the front.

Here he found life rather dull, living in the cellar among ruins. Admittedly there was one day of strenuous activity and one night without sleep in every four or five days, the rest of the time they had little to do other than to occasionally datum the guns. This comprised of firing test rounds from each gun in the battery and correcting those that fell short or beyond the target.

They spent many hours in the cellar reading and playing cards and chess. On the 30 August 1917 he wrote 'For a purely restful and irresponsible holiday I can recommend active service, provided you choose your front carefully. Charming scenery, cheerful company, unlimited food and drink, corps intelligence supplied daily and shelling on alternate Tuesdays...' Despite his apparent humour, with little prospect of any formal leave for the foreseeable future, this must have been a somewhat dispiriting time for him.

By the end of August he was promoted to the post of temporary Captain though he had no military ambition other than to leave the army when peace was declared 'But as things go at present, I shall be a Brigadier by sheer seniority long before that happens' he mused. However, it was only two weeks later that fate was to intervene, as the letter from his Commanding Officer to his Mother Charlotte explained:



Mendinghem British Cemetery at Proven  
(near Poperinghe), north-west of Ypres, in 1919.

On the 16th September 1917 Hugh was on his way by car to Group Headquarters when he was seriously wounded by a bomb dropped in the road from an enemy aeroplane. He received first aid at a dressing station close by, and was sent to 46 Casualty Clearing Station with wounds of buttock and right thigh and knee which were assessed as 'dangerous'. He was operated on successfully but he had been bleeding internally, and was greatly weakened by loss of blood. He was most brave and cheerful, and suffered little pain. He sank during the night and died at 1.15 am on 17th September.

Before he died, he was just able to address a card to his mother, with a somewhat shaky hand. His nurse reported that he never complained, saying he 'felt so comfortable'. Gradually he became unconscious and finally passed away. He was buried in Mendinghem<sup>13</sup> British Cemetery at Proven (near Poperinghe), north-west of Ypres (Grave VII.E.6) in Belgium.

Colin Taylor was one of the first to hear from the family of Hugh's death. In a letter dated 1 October his sister Ethel wrote:

Yours is the 'record' friendship, and he accepted and trusted you blind as one does of the oldest friends. Several times he wrote to me his thankfulness that you were (as he thought) safely out of the worst of it – one companion to be found

## **Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heracleitus (continued)**

again, and to knit on to old times, on his return ... I often think, and shall think, of our sunny time in München together, and the great music, and the cold beer, and getting lost in the Bavarian forest after dark. He loved it so.

In response Colin replied to Ethel's letter on 4 October:

I feel how close Hugh seems. I am inexplicably happy about him. Sadness comes only when I think of his splendid personality withdrawn for the time being; of his earthly companionship lost.

I am conscious of no one who has influenced my life so much. I have that true love for him which is born of admiration and respect. A thousandfold my intellectual superior, he never let me feel it. Instead, he stimulated and drew out the best. And then – how full of life, fun and wit? You know...trusty & lovable as no other has ever been, or is likely to be.

Colin was later to name his son Hugh in memory of his dear friend. They later learned that the injuries would have left him with a severe permanent disability. The idea of Hugh being permanently laid up would have been too much for him to bear, given his love of walking and the outdoors and it may, they felt in the end, have been a mercy that he did not pull through.

It was a sad irony that only months beforehand, Herbert Fisher, had written to Lord Derby<sup>14</sup> requesting that Hugh be given a further release from the army for six months due to an urgent need for more assistance with the Education Bill and other major projects. One can only speculate that had this been granted earlier he might have survived the war.

In a will (un-signed, un-witnessed and prepared at the front) Hugh left Colin Taylor any of his books that he might want, his music and scores went to his cousin and sums of money were left to the Workers Education Association and each of his former schools.

Among the effects returned with his kit were a number of books, including the complete Jane Austen, the Oxford India-paper *Virgil and Horace*, a *Tacitus*, volumes of Stevenson, Belloc and Kipling and perhaps one of his favourite books, MacKail's *Greek Anthology* which included the *Callimachus Epigram*<sup>15</sup>, where he had underlined the words ...ἐμνήσθην δ' ὅσσυκις ἀμφότεροι Ἡλίων ἐν λεσχῇ κατεδύσαμεν<sup>16</sup>



Arthur Hugh Sidgwick – 1917

It would seem appropriate to conclude this article where we started by reproducing the poem, in Cory's translation, from which Warlock set this important and rather poignant song – dedicated to Colin Taylor in memory of Arthur Hugh Sidgwick.

### **HERACLITUS**

They told me Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,  
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.  
I wept as I remember'd how often you and I  
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,  
A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,  
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake;  
For death he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

Φ



## Hugh Sidgwick: The inspiration for Heraclitus (continued)

### Postscript

The connections between Warlock and Sidgwick – through their mutual friendship with Colin Taylor – were admittedly brief. Warlock's letter confirms that they did meet on at least two occasions and as Sidgwick was in contact with Colin Taylor throughout his time at Eton College it is possible that they had met earlier. Warlock was familiar with Sidgwick's writing on music and walking and had he lived longer a friendship might well have developed since they appeared to share a number of interests.

Hugh comes across as a witty, perceptive and rather a likeable person, characteristics he seems to have inherited

from the Sidgwick family. Hugh's niece Anne Baer was later to describe these traits: 'The similarities that ran all through this family seem to be a delight in literature, especially poetry: an ability to write verse, especially parodies: a passion for education, especially female: an inclination towards liberal politics: a love of walking in the English countryside: and an irrepressible verbal wit which they would sprinkle into any conversation, to the consternation of those plodders who could only consider serious matters in serious terms.'<sup>17</sup> A trait their friends termed 'Sidgwickedness'. ■

### Notes

- 1 Sidgwick was elected a member of the Reform Club in 1913.
- 2 Warlock subsequently added the word 'Heraclitus' in the text of the song beneath 'Heraclitus' (without apparently crossing out the original). Both these versions are pronounced Heracl-EYE-tus but some performers seem to find it preferable to sing Heracl-AY-tus.
- 3 Rose Sidgwick co-founded the 'International Federation of University Women' and 'The Rose Sidgwick Memorial Fellowship' still offers scholarships to British women to study in the USA.
- 4 Eleanor Mildred Balfour (1845-1936) was a sister of Arthur Balfour – British Prime Minister (1902-1905)
- 5 Founded in 1877 as the 'Oxford Preparatory School' by a committee of Oxford Dons, it was renamed in honour of St George by a conclave of early pupils. Notable Old Dragons include Sir John Betjeman, Sir Lennox Berkley, Hugh Gaitskell, Nevil Shute, Sir Roger Norrington, John Mortimer and more recently Hugh Laurie and Dame Cressida Dick. A website [www.skipperswar.com](http://www.skipperswar.com) tells the story of the School and its 'Old Boys' in the First World War.
- 6 Lang was speaking at a memorial service held on 30 June 1918 for 'Old Dragons' who were killed in the war.
- 7 Austrian conductor and pupil of Anton Bruckner, who conducted the Kaim Orchestra (now the Munich Philharmonic).
- 8 It was common practice at the Proms at that time to perform the symphony without the final choral movement.
- 9 *Arthur Hugh Sidgwick (1882-1917), Scholar, Educationist, Poet, Essayist – A biography – 2014* (self published), provides an excellent source book for Sidgwick's life and writings.
- 10 The book was reprinted in 1921, 1928, 1936, 1943 and 1945.
- 11 President of the Board of Education (1916-1922). He was a cousin of Virginia Woolf and his sister was Ralph Vaughan Williams' first wife. Fisher's underwear was (posthumously) used to clad the fictitious Major Martin in the deception of the enemy during Operation Mincemeat. The body of Martin required high quality underwear to maintain the deception and the intelligence officers were unwilling to donate their own.
- 12 Amphilis Middlemore (1891-1930) volunteered as a nurse during the war and remained unmarried. In 1930 she threw herself out of an upstairs window. Initially surviving the fall, she was taken to hospital where she quickly repeated the act, this time succeeding. She died on 26 July 1930.
- 13 Located adjacent to 46 Casualty Clearing Station, its name was determined by the soldiers humour rather than location. Dosinghem, Bandeghem and Endingham were considered too near the mark by the military authorities.
- 14 Minister of War between 1916-1918.
- 15 Makail's Anthology translates the epigram as 'THE DEAD SCHOLAR – One told me of thy fate, Heraclitus, and wrung me to tears, And I remembered how often both of us let the sun sink as we talked; But thou, methinks, O friend from Halicarnassus, art ashes long and long ago; Yet thy nightingale-notes live, whereon Hades the ravisher of all things shall not lay his hands.'
- 16 I wept as I remember'd how often you and I had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky. (Translated by Cory.)
- 17 The Sidgwick's from Frank Sidgwick's *Diary and other material relating to A.H.Bullen and the Shakespeare Head Press* – Blackwell 1975.

## Articles

### *Peter Warlock in the Nursery*

Brian Alderson investigates Warlock's *Candlelight*

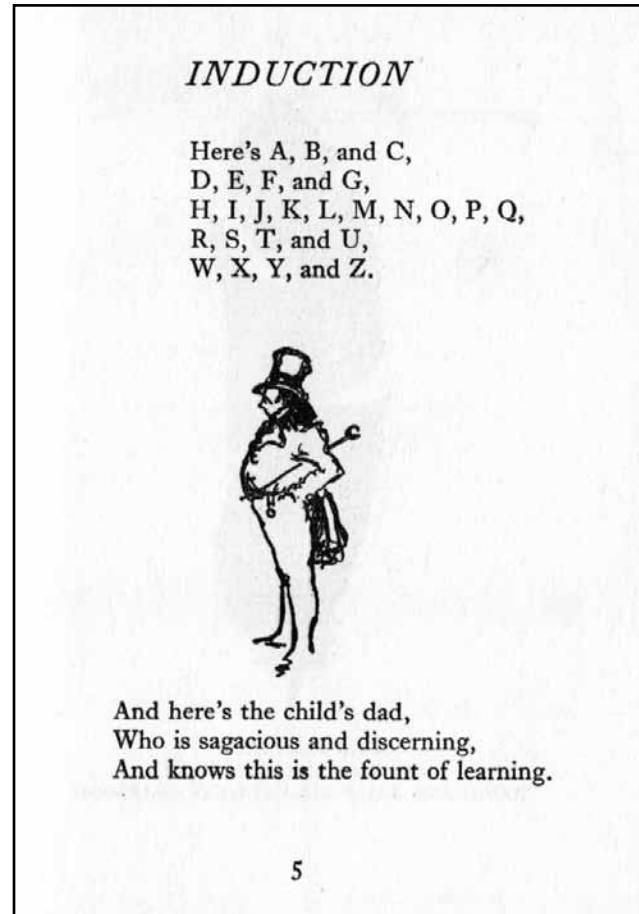
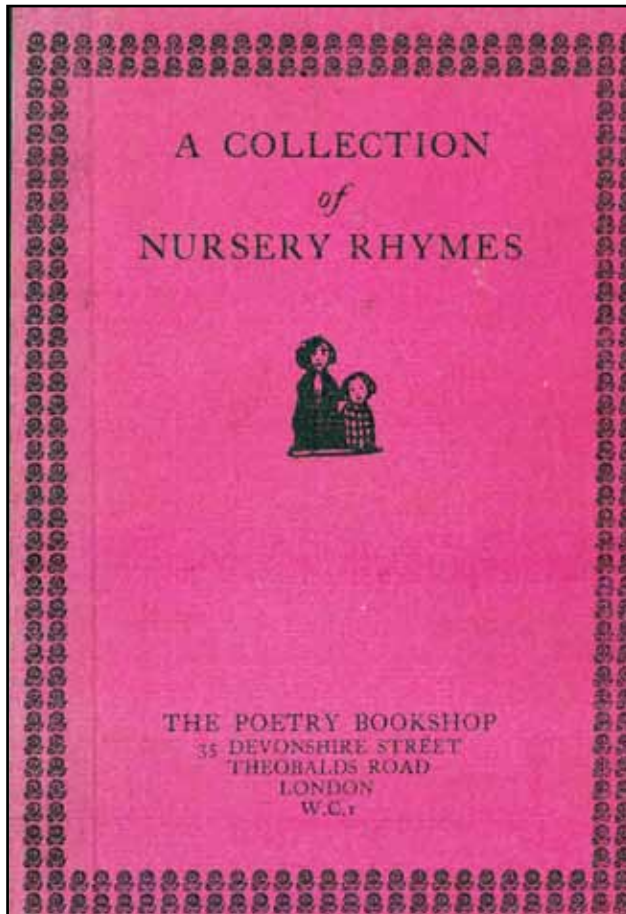


Illustration 1 [left]: The cover of *A Collection of Nursery Rhymes* with binding in scarlet paper boards for the sixth edition of *Nurse Lovechild*, 1922 (Millard 151, mistakenly calling it the fourth);

Illustration 2: Lovat Fraser's pen drawing in the *Induction*.

The twelve *mélodies* (they are hardly a song-cycle) of *Candlelight* were composed in July 1923 and published by Augener two years later. Their textual source was an attractive little book published, as a New Edition by The Poetry Bookshop from 35 Devonshire Street: *Nurse Lovechild's Legacy: being a mighty fine collection of the most noble, memorable and veracious Nursery Rhymes* which were 'embellished by C. Lovat Fraser' and printed by the eminent Curwen Press at Plaistow. The volume contained 44 rhymes, each topped and tailed by vignettes from Lovat Fraser, together with an *Induction*. [Illustrations 1 & 2]

It also acknowledges that 'the collection has been compiled from XVIIIth and early XIXth century chapbooks', a period feature which may well of itself have had some

appeal to Warlock in selecting his twelve settings. The term 'chapbook' is a contested one however, never current in the period that is assigned to it, and it would be interesting to know exactly what sources the compiler (probably Fraser himself) drew upon. Insofar as 'chapbook' is a catchall term for any *libellum* of popular appeal, usually from eight to thirty-two pages long and selling for a penny, they may be numbered in their thousands. (Pepys had a fondness for them, cataloguing them as 'Penny Merriments' and the like.) They would have been read avidly by children before there was a market for children's books as such and once that category came into being in the mid-eighteenth century nursery rhymes would come to be seen as a natural candidate for production.

*Peter Warlock in the Nursery* (continued)

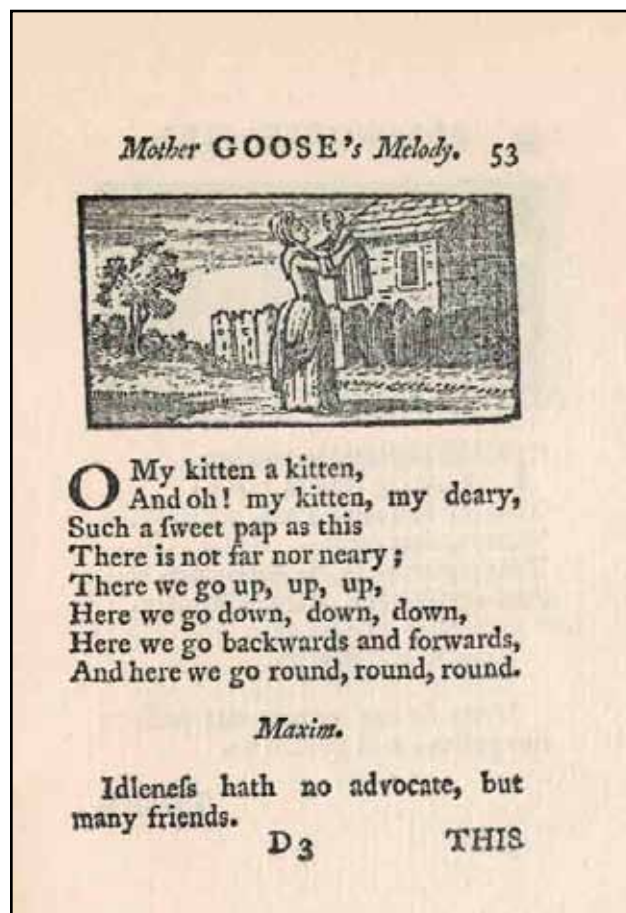


Illustration 3 [left]: Bickham's etching for the first half of *Little Tom Tucker* on p.10 of *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song-Book* (1744), the words stamped in to the plate with punches. Illustration 4: Wood engraving by Thomas Bewick for the *Kitten* rhyme in a facsimile of an early edition of *Mother Goose's Melody*. Irrelevant Maxims occur throughout the book perhaps with a satirical intent.

Although longer rhymes like *The House that Jack Built* provided a complete subject for eight or twelve page children's chapbooks, many others were made up of quantities of shorter rhymes – the chapbooks that Fraser referred to – and drew upon the contents of three larger compendia (in terms of content, but hardly physical size) which form the major historic source for the genre and also the basis for the following discussion.

The beginnings had occurred in 1744 in what I would claim as the Gutenberg Bible of children's literature: a tiny book 83x43mm entitled *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song-Book Voll.II* [sic]. Only one complete copy of this wondrous production is known, at the British Library, with a slightly defective second one in the Cotsen Collection at Princeton,

while no copy at all is known of its initial Vol.I. It came from the engraving press of one George Bickham Junior (who had produced the two parts of *The Musical Entertainer* in 1737-9) and is noted not only for giving the texts of 38 nursery rhymes, most of which are still well-known, but printing them from individual letters punched into the plate and ornamenting them with cuts. [Illustration 3]

On its final page-opening, under the heading of "Tom Thumb and his Nurse" it gives evidence that the rhymes might also feature as both song and dance:

Little Tommy Thumb  
With his little Pipe & Drum  
Is come to give you a Dance  
And Lovechild so Taper



*Peter Warlock in the Nursery* (continued)

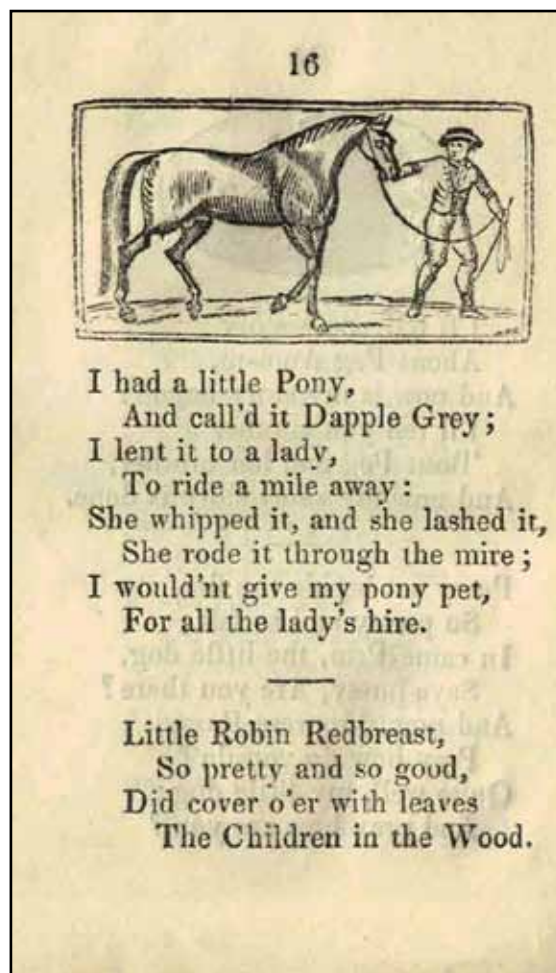
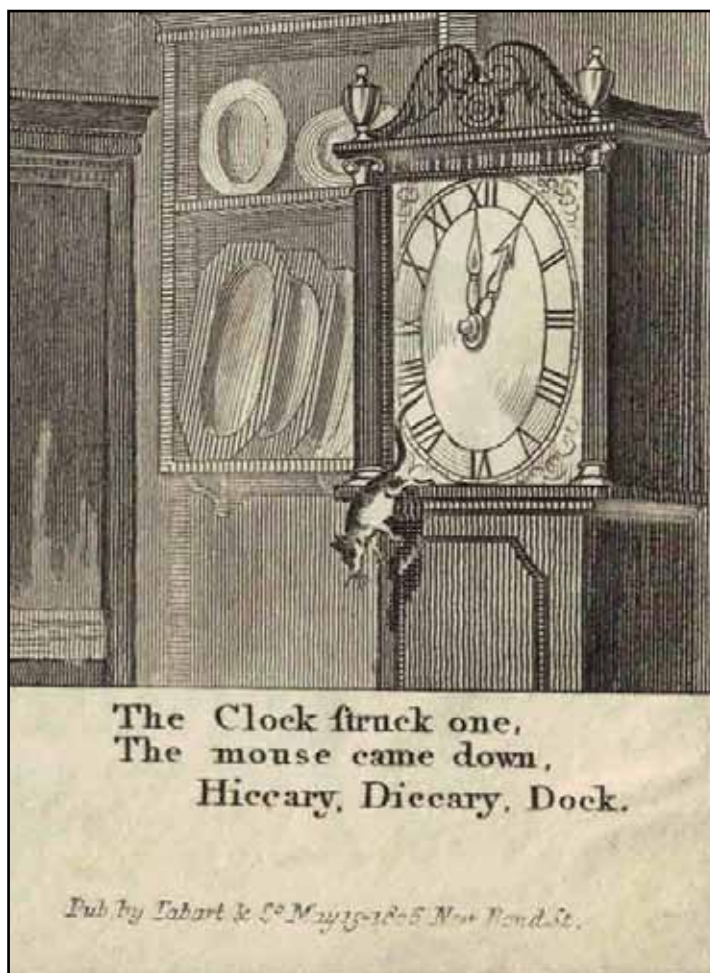


Illustration 5 [left]: Full-page etching for *Hickory, Dickory, Dock* facing page 11 of *Songs for the Nursery* (1808 ed.).

Although the book has 24 plates none of them illustrate a rhyme in *Candlelight*.

Illustration 6: Wood engraving for *Dapple Grey* on the back cover of *Nursery Poems* from the ancient and modern poets (Banbury: printed by J.G.Rusher)

Will show you a Caper  
Dunoyer brought from France.  
She is pleased that you look  
Into her little Book  
And like her Songs so well  
That her Figures you know  
Before you can goe,  
And Sing them  
Before you can Spell.

Three of Warlock's selection originated in this *Tommy Thumb*, the earliest of the rhyme books: *Little Tommy Tucker*, *There was a man of Thessally* and *Kitten my Deary*.

The first two of these come from who knows what oral sources but the third is imported from a printed five-stanza ballad, sometimes thought to have been composed by Swift, which seeks to echo a nurse crooning to a baby. It was first published complete in 1740 in the fourth volume of Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany* to be 'sung to the tune of *Yellow Stockings*', and, because of its length and its form as a sort of recitative, it hardly counts as a nursery rhyme. However, bits of it came to be plundered by nursery anthologists (who may have been leery of the passage where the young Kitten-my-Deary is suckled by the nurse and then fills his nappy) and Tommy Thumb selects three of



**Peter Warlock in the Nursery** (continued)

the stanzas, only one of which is chosen for his setting by Warlock. (In fact, the abridged 'song' was regularly taken up in nursery rhyme collections, becoming almost 'trad'. Curiously though these latter stanzas were printed without their predecessors on two look-alike pages of a little book from a publisher seeking to pre-empt the arrival of the second volume of *Tommy Thumb* in 1744 with a semi-piratical work called *Nancy Cock's Song-Book*!)

An immediate reprinting of that first stanza of *Kitten* appeared in what is probably the most famous and influential of the foundation collections: *Mother Goose's Melody: or, sonnets for the cradle*, entered at Stationers Hall in 1780. Early editions of the book included fifteen 'Lullabies' from 'that sweet Songster and Nurse of Wit and Humour, Master William Shakespeare' but they were preceded by 51 nursery rhymes, each with a framed wood engraving by the great Newcastle craftsman, Thomas Bewick. The three in *Candlelight* that figured in *Tommy Thumb* are also present in the *Melody*, joined by four more, all deriving direct from oral tradition: *I won't be my Father's Jack*, *Robin and Richard*, *There was an Old Man in a Velvet Coat* and *There was an Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket*. [Illustration 4]

Twenty-five years later and into the new century there appeared the third of the great early nursery-rhyme collections: *Songs for the Nursery; collected from the works of the most renowned poets [!] and adapted to favourite national melodies*. This contained no fewer than 111 rhymes, was published in 1805 by a specialist children's bookseller, Benjamin Tabart, and was edited, albeit anonymously, by a writer, Eliza Fenwick, who had worked for both Tabart and William and Mary Godwin in their role as booksellers, and was materially assisted by Charles Lamb. Five of the Warlock choices previously noted are present, including the single stanza *Kitten* rhyme, but with one or two unusual variants: *Little Johnny Tucker...*, *Alfred and Richard were two pretty men...*, while the *Man of Thessaly* is replaced by *A man of our town*. Most significantly for our purposes though, is the first recorded appearance of *How many miles is it to Babylon?* where the questioner wants to know if one may get there 'by candlelight'.<sup>1</sup> *Songs for the Nursery* also has what was to be Warlock's concluding rhyme *Arthur o'Bower* with its instruction 'To be Sung in a High Wind'.

In 1808 Tabart published a now very rare edition of the

book with 24 engraved plates to be sold at 1s 6d or half a crown with the prints hand-coloured. Such differentiated pricing was common at the time and came to be replicated by Lovat Fraser in 1913 when he published his *Flying Fame* "chapbooks" at sixpence each or at half-a-crown "with the decorations coloured by hand". [Illustration 5]

The remaining three rhymes in the Warlock sequence are not found in those three foundation works and come directly from true chapbooks. The Opies' *Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (2nd ed. 1997) which has been something of a crib for this essay gives several obscure sources for *I had a little pony* although the *Nursery Poems* from the chapbook publisher Rusher of Banbury may well have been Fraser's source since it was widely marketed. [Illustration 6]

As for *Little Jack Jingle*, however, and *Suky you shall be my Wife*, these are anomalous. The eight lines of the first may well be 'trad' but Opie (no.26) notes that they were first published as the eighth stanza of a fifteen-verse story entitled *Jacky Jingle and Suky Shingle* published by a specialist in the chapbook trade at the start of the nineteenth century, T.Evans. This man had a technique of taking a traditional nursery rhyme like *Jack Sprat* and embedding it in a crudely-fashioned ballad of his own devising to fill the sixteen pages of his chapbook. Here Jacky is made the joint participant with one Sulky Sue who also turns up in Opie (no.491) 'Here's Sulky Sue / What shall we do? / Turn her face to the wall / Until she comes to.' What Opie does not include however are the lines that Warlock has set from later in the same chapbook with Jacky arguing the case for the couple's marriage: 'For you have got a little pig, / And I have got a sty'.

Evans's little book is very rare, perhaps the only copy being at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, but his stock may well have been known to the York publisher, James Kendrew, whose ha'penny 16-page chapbooks include several titles deriving from Evans. These two rhymes, split off from the other ballad verses, must have appealed to Lovat Fraser because he used them again, separately as occurred with PW's selection, in his picture book, *Nursery Rhymes*, published in 1921 by T.C. and E.C. Jack. [Illustration 7]

As may be seen in the titles for the three foundation collections, the association of the rhymes with music is manifest: a *Song-Book*, a *Melody*, and *Songs for the Nursery*. But for all Mrs Fenwick's assurance in the latter that we are getting songs 'adapted to famous national

*Peter Warlock in the Nursery* (continued)

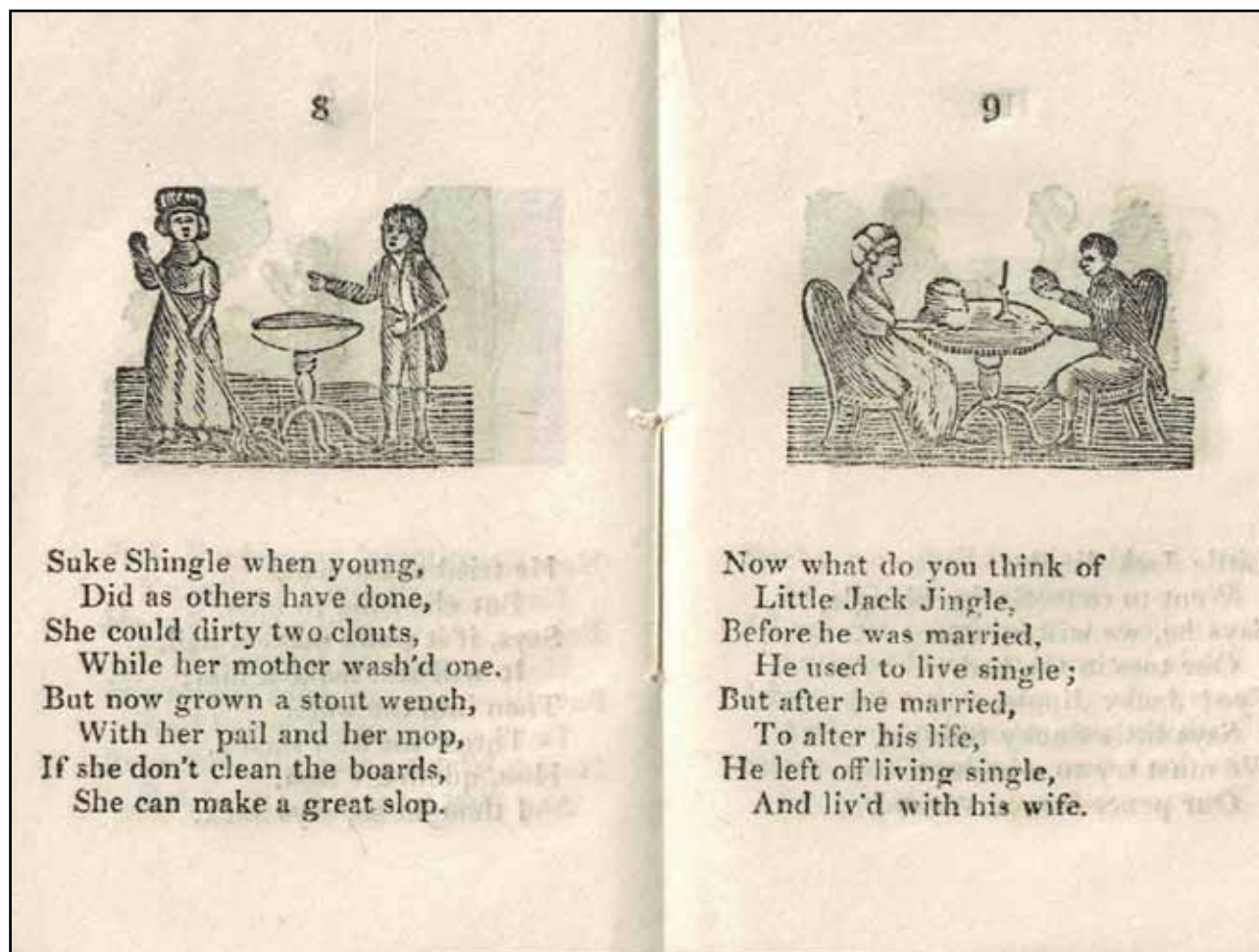


Illustration 7: Wood engravings for the facing pages 8-9 of *Jack Jingle and Suky Shingle* (York: J.Kendrew ca. 1810) one of his ha'penny series. Page 9 is the traditional rhyme but preceded by a stanza knitting it into a 'history' of the couple.

melodies' it is not vouchsafed to us what these may be. Although the 1997 edition of Opie includes an essay by Cecily Raysor Handcock on 'The Singing Tradition of Nursery Rhymes' she is primarily concerned with the often well-known tunes that attach themselves to individual nursery rhymes and ballads (*Lavender's Blue* or *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son*).

It is also clear that the Opies had access to the rhymes that made up *Hook's Original Christmas Box* which came out serially from the music publishers Bland & Weller in three sets in 1796, 1798 and 1800. They were issued as compositions, *Bagatelles for Juvenile Amusement*, set to music by Mr Hook, and with thirty-six rhymes they make

up an impressive representation of the canon. Almost all are in Opie, either as main examples or as notes (only *The Gooseberry Grows on an Angry Tree*, *My Poor Robin* and *Little Musgrave and Marian* are not in Opie, while a note on *When Cockle Shells* omits its relationship to *Waly, Waly*) but since Opie 1997 was published a magnificent recording of the whole of the *Christmas Box* has been issued by Dogstar Records (DS010) performed by Highcliff Junior Choir (Southampton) under the direction of Nathaniel Brawn with David Owen Norris. This is something of a revelation as an authentic performance of the music of those prose Song-Books etc. and, as with PW, their very brief time-span (anything from 0.39 to 2.15 minutes – with *Ding Dong*

## Peter Warlock in the Nursery (continued)

*Bell* almost operatic at 2.09) the performance endorses the charm and comedy of the exercise. (A point is made in an introductory note that Jane Austen copied some of the versions into her manuscript music books.)

The same spirit did not inhabit such Victorian compilations as Edward Rimbault's *Nursery Rhymes, with the tunes to which they are still sung* (ca.1846) or such pictorial books where the music is adjunct to the illustrations as J.W.Elliott's *National Nursery Rhymes Set to Music* (Novello, Ewer & Co. from the Camden Press, ca.1865). *Candlelight* may take its texts from an illustrated nursery rhyme anthology but returns us to the eighteenth century as a rare example of a composer creating a coherent song-sequence with a life of its own.

As such it is of course a song-sequence in miniature like *Hook's Christmas Box*, the twelve rhymes occupying a modest six minutes and twenty seconds in performance (nos. 2.21 to 2.32 in Michael Pilkington's invaluable edition of the 123 poems figuring as PW's solo voice compositions with piano accompaniment). It may be accidental that the first and last rhymes of the sequence are the two from *Songs for the Nursery* but the mysterious *Babylon* and the almost operatic *Arthur o'Bower* (all 32 seconds of it!) make for a degree of planning that sees a feeling for contrasts as the racketty and the domestic or the tender succeed each other. [Illustration 8] The *Kitten* stanza is reprised to make it the second longest song (46 seconds) and its 50 second companion, the charming but less authentic *Suky Shingle* achieves a remarkable beauty as a little love-song.

The fashioning of *Candlelight* has not been much discussed but calls for more attention than its brevity and comparative obscurity suggest. How on earth did so uncharacteristic a work get into Warlock's oeuvre? The autograph is dated July 1923 from Chelsea, just after Warlock had returned from his long stay with his mother in Wales, and, although he is generally regarded as having had very little contact with his son, it would seem that Nigel too was there – five years old when his father arrived chez Mama in 1921. Moreover, although it is very circumstantial, Winifred Baker, about whose seemingly close and friendly relationship with PW one would like to know more, claimed that the rhymes were set for him<sup>2</sup>. Could one imagine an unlikely moment *en famille* when PW played the rhymes with Nigel on his knee? ■



Illustration 8: Lithograph in four colours after Fraser's colour drawing for page 37 of the 1919 picture-book of *Nursery Rhymes*. Arthur o'Bower has become Robin and he seems only slightly wind-blown.

## Appendix

### More on Chapbooks

Although hardly relevant to this article, I should note that 'chapbooks' played an important part in Lovat Fraser's early career when, in 1913, he worked with Ralph Hodgson and Holbrook Jackson on the Flying Fame series of Broad-sides, Chapbooks and Garlands, published from Fraser's house in Roland Gardens, Chelsea. Fraser was at that address, just off the Brompton Road, until his death in 1921 and one wonders if he ever met Warlock? Their

## ***Peter Warlock in the Nursery*** (continued)

interest in the music and/or theatre of the past might have brought them together, not least through Fraser's designs for Playfair's *Beggars Opera* at the Lyric Hammersmith. I have not traced any connections though. *Nurse Lovechild's Legacy*, first published in 1916 in a different form from the 1922 edition, was something of a spin-off from the Flying Fame series and took its title from past references to the nursery rhyme tradition. A true chapbook with the same title had come from Jemmy Catnach, a specialist in street literature, circa 1830, but the only rhyme that matches Fraser and Warlock is *Jack Jingle*, briefly discussed above. Fraser had also illustrated in 1920 a sort of successor to *Nurse Lovechild* for Messrs Selwyn & Blount and the Curwen Press: *The Lute of Love*, mostly seventeenth century lyrics which might well have appealed to Warlock, while in 1919 Fraser had done a quarto picture book for children, illustrated in colour and black and white: *Nursery Rhymes* from the Edinburgh firm of T.C. & E.C. Jack. It had nine of Warlock's selection in it, including both *Jacky Jingle* and, further on, *Suky Shingle*.

### **Acknowledgements**

I am very grateful to Michael Walshe who allowed me to roam amidst his fine collection of Warlockiana and to John Mitchell for advice on aspects of PW's biography. Jonathan Cooper kindly provided me with a transcript of the very rare Catnach *Nurse Lovechild*.

### **Notes**

- 1 I find this to be one of the strangest of all nursery rhymes and it inspired one of the most magical of all illustrations in Mervyn Peake's *Ride a Cock Horse and other nursery rhymes* (1940).
- 2 I am grateful to John Mitchell for pointing out how tenuous the claim may be. It seems that Copley paid a visit to an aged Andrew Booth-Clibborn who spoke of the tenderness in some of Warlock's music and instanced Winifred Baker as citing the example of *Candlelight*. Dubious as that may sound, it is odd that he should have picked so obscure a piece as an example and that moreover at a time when Warlock may have been in contact with her in London. (In his tremendous edition of the *Collected Letters of Peter Warlock*, Barry Smith rather misleadingly implies that Warlock did not return to a residence in London till 1925 but Warlock himself referred to Chelsea as his address in 1923.)

## **Candlelight**

### **1. How many miles to Babylon?**

How many miles to Babylon?  
Three score and ten  
Can I get there by candlelight?  
Aye, and back again.

### **2. I won't be my father's Jack**

I won't be my father's Jack,  
I won't be my father's Jill,  
I will be the fiddler's wife  
And have music when I will.  
T'other little tune,  
Prithee, love, play me  
T'other little tune.

### **3. Robin and Richard**

Robin and Richard were two pretty men,  
They lay in bed till the clock struck ten.  
Then up starts Robin and looks at the sky:  
"Oh, brother Richard, the sun's very high.  
You go before with the bottle and bag,  
And I will come after on little Jack Nag."

### **4. O my kitten**

O my kitten, a kitten,  
And O my kitten, my deary,  
Such a sweet pap as this  
There is not far nor neary.  
Here we go up, up, up,



***Peter Warlock in the Nursery*** (continued)

Here we go down, down, down,  
Here we go backwards and forwards,  
And here we go round, round, round,

**5. Little Tommy Tucker**

Little Tommy Tucker  
Sings for his supper;  
What shall he eat?  
White bread and butter.  
How will he eat it  
Without e'er a knife?  
How will he be married  
Without e'er a wife?

**6. There was an old man**

There was an old man in a velvet coat,  
He kissed a maid and gave her a groat,  
The groat was cracked and would not go.  
Ah, old man, would you serve me so?

**7. I had a little pony**

I had a little pony,  
His name was Dapple Grey:  
I lent him to a lady  
To ride a mile away,  
She whipped him, she lashed him,  
She rode him through the mire;  
I'll never lend my nag again  
For any lady's hire.

**8. Little Jack Jingle**

Now what do you think of little Jack Jingle?  
Before he was married he used to live single;  
But after he married to alter his life,  
He left off living single and lived with his wife.

**9. There was a man of Thessaly**

There was a man of Thessaly  
And he was wondrous wise:  
He jump'd into a quickset hedge  
And scratch'd out both his eyes.  
And when he saw his eyes were out,  
With all his might and main  
He jump'd into another hedge  
And scratch'd them in again.

**10. Suky, you shall be my wife**

Suky, you shall be my wife,  
And I'll tell you why:  
I have got a little pig,  
And you have got a sty.  
I have got a dun cow,  
And you can make good cheese  
Suky, will you have me?  
Say "Yes," if you please.

**11. There was an old woman**

There was an old woman went up in a basket  
Seventy times as high as the moon,  
What she did there I could not but ask it  
For in her hand she carried a broom.  
"Old woman, old woman, old woman," said I,  
"Whither, o whither, o whither so high?"  
"To sweep the cobwebs from the sky,  
And I shall be back again by-and-by."

**12. Arthur o' Bower**

Arthur o' Bower has broken his band:  
He comes roaring up the land.  
King o' Scots with all his power  
Can't stop Arthur o' the Bower.

## Reviews

**Peter Warlock 125th Anniversary Concert** – 8 October 2019, St John the Baptist, Holland Park, London.

Special Guest: Professor Peter Heseltine – Grandson of Peter Warlock

**Michael Graves**



**Peter Warlock**  
125th Anniversary Concert  
**8th October - 7.30pm**  
St John the Baptist Church, Holland Road, W14 8AH



Miles Lallemand - Piano  
Lydia Lallemand - Piano  
Christopher Mackay - Bass  
Aves Cantantes - Choir

A concert of song and piano works to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of British composer Peter Warlock's birth.

**Tickets on the door: £10**  
Contact: [Info@rosamondroseproperties.com](mailto:Info@rosamondroseproperties.com)



Rosamond Rose welcomes members of the audience  
(Photo: Peter Heseltine)

This enterprising concert had been devised completely independently of the Warlock Society. As such it was extremely heartening to see an all Warlock concert dedicated solely to our composer in his 125th anniversary year. I was also delighted to learn that Professor Peter Heseltine, grandson of Peter Warlock, would be attending the concert and also delivering a short address.

The concert was motivated, promoted and hosted by Rosamond Rose, who, although not a member of the Society (she is now) does have connections with the world of Warlock. Rosamond had known Peter Heseltine's mother and had attended the Warlock Society's 100th anniversary events at the Savoy Hotel in 1994. She has known Peter ever since then. A further connection is her friendship with our President Dr Barry Smith, who she met several times in Cape Town. Indeed, Barry sent his Best Wishes for the evening which were printed in the programme. Rosamond is also a member of the Aves Cantantes choir, who would be performing that evening.

The musical side of the evening was devised by Miles Lallemand, Director of Music at St Luke's, Uxbridge Road, London where he runs the parish choir and his own chamber choir Aves Cantantes.

The opening song was *Music, when soft voices die*, expertly sung by Edward Woodhouse (tenor) and accompanied by Miles. We were then catapulted into the feel good factor of the *Two Cod-pieces for Piano Duet* (Beethoven's *Binge* and *The Old Codger*), as sibling Lydia Lallemand joined Miles at the piano.

*As ever I saw* and *The bayley berith the bell* came next, sung by Aves Cantantes. I was interested to see that *The bayley* was performed as a unison choir item, but it worked well, was touching and tender, and conveyed a sense of mystery.

The *Folk-Song Preludes*, arranged for organ and played by Benjamin Pearce-Higgins, was a world première performance. I was impressed by the inevitable power of the organ, but on balance I felt that the rhythmic elements of the pieces were lost in the milieu of sound compared to

*Peter Warlock 125th Anniversary Concert* (continued)



Aves Cantantes Top: Female voices of the choir in rehearsal. Below: The male voice section.  
(Photos: Peter Heseltine and Michael Graves)



## **Peter Warlock 125th Anniversary Concert** (continued)

the percussive accents that inevitably come to the pieces when played on a piano.

*My Sweet Little Darling* was sung from memory by Ximena Abello (soprano). She had a lovely voice, and clearly engaged with the music. Then it was the turn of Christopher MacKay (bass) who sang *Captain Stratton's Fancy* and *Milkmaids* with great gusto.

An addition to the advertised programme were two Elizabethan songs: *A doleful deadly pang* (Strogers) and *Guichardo* (anon), which were sung by Miles (counter-tenor). Both were exquisite.

Another world première in the programme was John Mitchell's piano arrangement of Warlock's *Serenade for Strings*. A few days before the concert Miles had asked me if there were any unpublished works of Warlock's, if such existed, that he could incorporate into the programme. I got in touch with John Mitchell to see if he knew of anything we might be able to offer and he suggested his piano arrangement of the *Serenade*, which had never previously been performed. Having already scanned John's arrangement into the Society's AMR, I was able to email a PDF of the score to Miles straight away.

Hearing this arrangement for the first time, I thought it was masterly and, given that Miles had only six days to prepare, amongst all the other material he would be performing, he had understood it perfectly and really did do it justice. John acknowledges that it is a very difficult piece to play. Pleasingly, Miles wishes to include the *Serenade* in his repertoire for future performance. John was sorry that he was unable to get to the concert, but was thrilled to hear our feedback, especially regarding his arrangement.

The women of Aves Cantantes then chose to sing three songs in unison, *Lullaby*, *Piggesnie* and *Adam lay ybounden*, the latter two being slightly on the slow side, but then I suppose we are probably more accustomed to hearing *Piggesnie* charging along at a rattling good pace!

Edward Woodhouse then sang *Yarmouth Fair*, refreshingly without the usual theatrical gestures we often see in the performance of this song.

Miles was then joined again by Lydia for the piano duet version of *Capriol*. They worked well together and the performance was great fun.

The last group of songs from Aves Cantantes were *The First Mercy*, *Walking the Woods*, *What Cheer?* and *Where*

*Riches is Everlastingly*. They were good choices and had obviously been made very carefully.

Christopher MacKay returned for the rollicking *Cricketers of Hambledon*, and those Warlockians present inevitably joined in with the chorus most heartily.

The final song was the solo version of *Belthlehem Down*, possibly a rather gloomy choice for the last song of the programme, but Edward and Miles really brought out the anguish of it and it worked. I feel sure that it left the audience feeling that Peter Warlock was a serious and sensitive composer despite the drinking songs, of which there had been thankfully few.

The programme drew from a variety of Warlock's output which demonstrated his versatility and diversity admirably. Miles Lallémant and his team are to be congratulated on having put together a fine tribute to Warlock in this 125th anniversary year. ■



Miles Lallémant (left) with Professor Peter Heseltine  
(Photo: Michael Graves)



**Peter Warlock 125th Birthday Concert** – 30 October 2019, The Clothworkers Hall, University of Leeds.

University of Leeds International Concert Series

**Michael Graves**



The Clothworkers Consort of Leeds, directed by Steve Muir, in the Clothworkers Hall

(Photo: Michael Graves)

We are very pleased to have welcomed the University of Leeds' School of Music to the 'family' of music schools who host Peter Warlock Birthday Concerts. This, of course, was a special year as we celebrated Warlock's 125th birthday. The concert, which was on the actual date of Warlock's birthday, was part of the University's International Concert Series and consequently attracted a sizable audience. This is always a bonus because a relatively concentrated body of Warlock's music reaches a healthy contingent of the general public as well as the students contributing to the concert. The University's performance venue, part of the School of Music's facilities, is the Clothworkers Hall, formerly a church, and now converted into a fine concert hall.

The evening proved to be a great success. Warlockians present were myself, David and Sara Lane, Claire Beach, Bryn Philpott, Brian Collins, Kathleen Bentley and Catherine Griffett, who came with her granddaughter Daisy. The evening began with a tour of the Music School's

facilities, which included practice rooms, music technology suites and recording studios. The University is a Steinway School and there are 28 Steinway pianos in regular use. Our very own, Kathleen Bentley, an alumnus of the University's School of Music, greatly enjoyed the tour and recounted many anecdotes from her time as a student. Kathleen can also remember singing in the Clothworkers Hall as a school girl when it was still a church.

The concert programme was split into three sections. The first consisted of a selection of solo songs with piano accompaniment followed by four pieces for piano. The evening concluded with a body of choral music from the University's chamber choir, the Clothworkers Consort.

Interestingly, most of the first section had been devised to juxtapose several of Warlock's songs with settings of the same texts by other composers: *Fair and True* was paired with Cyril Scott's setting, *Sleep* with Gurney's and *Music, when soft voices die* with Frank Bridge's.

## **Peter Warlock 125th Birthday Concert** (continued)

University of Leeds International Concert Series



*Left: Kathleen Bentley recounts anecdotes about her student days at the university as Warlockians are given a tour of the University's music facilities. Right: Steve Muir, Director of the Clothworkers Consort*  
(Photos: Michael Graves)

The two settings of *Fair and True* were sung by Megan Dennis, final year BMus Performance student; *Sleep* by Annabel Astridge, second year BA music student, and *Music, when soft voices die* by Hannah Bown, postgraduate student studying for her MMus Performance. The latter setting by Bridge included a viola, played by undergraduate Simon Rowland. Then Nina Phelps, a final year Maths and Music student sang Warlock's *Take, o take those lips away*.

The songs were competently performed, all the voices being relatively free from vibrato, which I have to say is to my taste. But then we were to be shaken to the core. Elizabeth Hardman, studying for her MMus Performance degree, riveted us to our seats with an incredibly powerful rendering of Warlock's *Rutterkin*. What a stage presence she has, and there was no shortage of vibrato here! It comes as no surprise that Elizabeth's heart is in opera.

All of the above songs were accompanied by Daniel Gordon, the University's Repetiteur who also played for the section of piano music. First was Warlock's *Valses reves d'Isolde*, then, Chris Pelly, Concert Series Administrator, joined Daniel for the piano duet versions of *Two Cod-pieces* and *Capriol*. The piano section of the programme was concluded with Daniel playing the *Five Folk-Song Preludes*. As the University of Leeds is a Steinway School, it was surprising to note that piano students were not involved in any of the evening's performances.

*[There are many reasons why this might be, including constraints of the curriculum. We encourage music schools to host birthday concerts in order for students to engage with the music of Warlock. But I have been concerned for some years now that we might be asking music schools to serve us rather than us serving them. Accordingly I have been critically analysing the pros and cons of holding these concerts, particularly in October, from the perspective of music schools. I will enlarge on my conclusions in the full Chairman's Report due in the autumn Newsletter.]*

The concert was brought to a conclusion by the chamber choir, the Clothworkers Consort, directed by Steve Muir, again accompanied by Daniel Gordon. Warlock was represented by *Mourn no moe*, *Call for the Robin Redbreast and the Wren*, *The Cricketers of Hambledon*, *Lullaby*, *Milkmaids*, *The Night*, *Twelve Oxen* and *Maltworms*. These had been split into two groups which sandwiched two works by Hans Gal, *Cradle Song* and *Madrigal*. They were a revelation and I believe the choir will be issuing a CD set of the complete choral works of Gal in due course.

Our sincere thanks go to the students, staff and alumni of the University of Leeds School of Music, and particularly to Michael Allis, who did the lion's share of the preparation and organisation for this memorable evening of music. It was a fitting celebration of Peter Warlock's 125th birthday, especially as it was to the very day. ■

***Launch Event of the book Kaikhosru Sorabji's Letters to Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock)***

**Michael Graves**



Gabriel Keen performing Warlock's *Folk-Song Preludes* (for the *Sorabji Sonata*, Gabriel required a page-turner!).  
(Photo: Michael Graves)

The intimacy of the 1901 Club proved to be the perfect venue for the launch of *Kaikhosru Sorabji's Letters to Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock)*. [Ed: See review on page 33] There were essentially two sets of enthusiasts coming together, those followers of Sorabji and, of course, a group of Warlockians. Brian Inglis, co-editor of the book, greeted us as we arrived, made us all very welcome and after a libation in the bar we congregated in the lower recital room for the evening's entertainment.

Brian had asked me if I would provide the welcome at the start of the evening. My task was an easy one as our President, Barry Smith, the other co-editor of the book, had asked me to read out his message of greeting:

Warmest greetings to you all.

First of all let me thank you all for being here for this happy occasion to celebrate the launch of a new book – 'Sorabji's letters to Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock)'.

As you can imagine I would so very much like to have been with you enthusiasts and supporters of Sorabji and Warlock and their compositions and writings on music. Unfortunately Cape Town is some 6,000 miles south of you

and to get here and back requires 'much fine gold' – to quote the psalmist.

So I am most grateful that Michael Graves, Chairman of the Warlock Society, has agreed to step in to represent me at this celebration today and read these few words on my behalf.

I think it is always an excuse for celebration when a new book on composers such as these two appears. We must be grateful that publishers like Routledge are prepared to consider including books like this in their catalogues and also print a soft-cover edition as well.

Certainly the Sorabji Archive and the Warlock Society have been extremely supportive in printing this particular book. Those of us involved in the promotion of the music of Warlock and Sorabji are delighted that the opportunity of reading and learning more of them and their music is part of our task in our respective organisations.

There are also many people to thank for the appearance of this book: First of all my co-editor, Brian Inglis, who had the idea of the subject and who very kindly invited me to join him in this project. I could not have wished for a better



**Launch Event of the book *Kaikhosru Sorabji's Letters to Philip Heseltine* (Peter Warlock) (continued)**



Left to right: Mark Oldfield, Christopher Scobie and Gabriel Keen with Brian Inglis applauding on the right of the picture.  
(Photo: Michael Graves)

man – especially as we had to work in two continents. It was, of course, useful for us to meet up for a few major sessions in London – and here I would like to thank my good friend, David Jordan, who has brought a considerable bit of South Africa to his welcoming London home in Daleham Mews. I owe him a great deal in his offering a home from home on all my researching trips over many years. It's good to know that he will be here with you all tonight.

I would also like to thank the members of the Warlock Society Committee, especially Michael Graves, the chairman who will be representing me tonight. Over the years they have supported me in all my writings and this has been more encouraging than perhaps they realise. Thanks to their trust they are supporting my present project – *Letters to Heseltine* – so, as they say – watch this space. Alistair Hinton of The Sorabji Archive has also given valuable support and expert advice – we are all also very grateful to him as well. Sorabji could not have a better supporter.

So please enjoy this evening – the music and the friendship. I shall be thinking of you all.

Barry Smith

Spirited applause ensued and the mood of the evening was set. Brian Inglis started the evening by delivering an informative and appropriately illustrated introduction to the book of letters which included some welcome biographical details about Sorabji and Warlock.

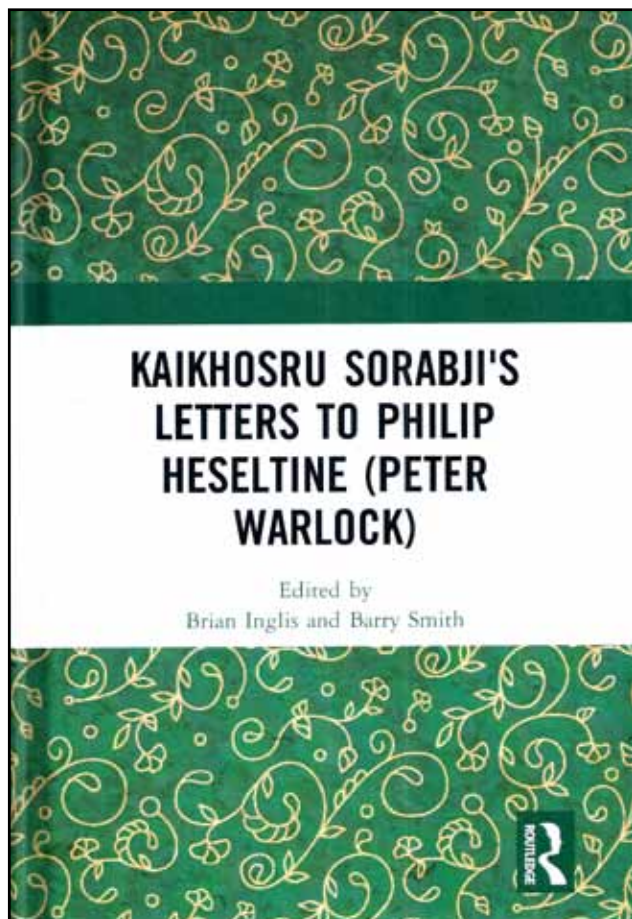
Then came the recital. Warlock's music was very much the 'opener' prior to Sorabji's monumental *Sonata no 1 for Piano* (1919). Mark Oldfield (baritone) and Christopher Scobie (piano) performed four Warlock songs: *My own country*, *Sleep*, *The Cloths of Heaven* and *Yarmouth Fair*. Gabriel Keen then took to the piano to play Warlock's *Folk-Song Preludes*. The songs and the *Preludes* were executed well, although the power of the piano at full tilt in that relatively small recital room was almost too much.

Then the moment arrived – Sorabji's *Sonata*, which was indeed monumental. Gabriel Keen's virtuosity was jaw dropping, although I must admit that the music itself was difficult to take in on a first hearing. However, I was very pleased to have had the opportunity to hear it and over time I have become more curious. Yes, I would very much like to hear it again. I reckon that counts as a success? ■

***Kaikhosru Sorabji's Letters to Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock)*** – edited by Brian Inglis and Barry Smith

Routledge (Abingdon & New York) 2020

**John Mitchell**



It is probably inevitable for Warlock aficionados that there is an immediate element of regret about this publication in that, unlike Barry Smith's excellent *Frederick Delius and Peter Warlock – A Friendship Revealed* (OUP, Oxford, 2000), where both letters to and from the two composers are included, in this latest publication we have only a one-sided trail of correspondence. However, it must be said immediately that any blame here lies entirely with Sorabji himself. Soon after Warlock died in 1930 it was his friend Arnold Dowbiggin who began to gather in biographical material from those who had known the composer. He had approached Sorabji accordingly, presumably enquiring about any correspondence he may have had with Warlock, and in a return letter to Dowbiggin (dated 28th February 1933) this is how Sorabji responded:

Most unhappily I have no letters at all of our dear Philip's,  
I only wish to goodness I had. I have an inveterate habit of

destroying all letters as soon as they are answered as they do accumulate so, and in a small London flat one has no room to spare. But I need hardly say how much I regret my habit in the case of Philip. He actually wrote me a great number, and for at least a year or more<sup>1</sup> before I met him in the flesh, we were in the habit of corresponding at enormous length, as far back as his Oxford days – round about 1912<sup>2</sup> if I remember aright.

Having recorded that drawback, in the present volume the two editors – Brian Inglis<sup>3</sup> and our President, Barry Smith – do as much as possible to contextualise Sorabji's letters in a number of ways. Following a brief Foreword by the Master of the Queen's Music, Judith Weir, (who describes Sorabji and Warlock as an 'unlikely pair'), Brian Inglis contributes the opening section of the book. In this extended Introduction he delves into various aspects, concerning mainly Sorabji<sup>4</sup>, and focuses on a number of thematic strands that crop up in the letters. These include Sorabji's race, religion and sexuality; various personnel and encounters mentioned in the correspondence; his beginnings as a composer and the development of his style; and his and Warlock's mutual interests and differences. The text, which is generously footnoted, is often thought provoking, and makes for very interesting reading. It provides a very adequate and perceptive background for what is to follow.

The second, and most substantial part of the book, is a transcript of the correspondence that survives from Kaikhosru Sorabji to Peter Warlock. In total there are 38 items, mainly letters, a few of which are quite inordinately long, but the collection also includes three postcards. Barry Smith has contributed the editorial input, and as with the earlier section of the volume, it is most generously footnoted with Barry's invariable fine attention to detail. The correspondence is conveniently divided into three parts:

### Part 1

Sorabji's first letter dates from 3 October 1913, and what lay behind its impetus was an article by Philip Heseltine that had appeared shortly before in the 1 October issue of *The Musical Times*, which drew quite a fervent response from the then totally unknown Sorabji. His letter is pleasingly set in context by the inclusion (as Appendix 1) of the article in

***Kaikhosru Sorabji's Letters to Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock) (continued)***

question by Warlock: *Some reflections on modern musical criticism*. Sorabji's ensuing letters, penned, one senses with fire and enthusiasm, give the impression of the writer being something of an Intense Young Man<sup>5</sup>. The last letter in this section takes us up to late June, 1914, and during the previous nine months Warlock and Sorabji had met each other<sup>6</sup> for the first time.

**Part 2**

There is then a gap of about ten weeks until the next letter appears, and during that intervening time the First World War had begun. The second part of the collection begins with a letter dated 8 September 1914, and this section contains half of the extant correspondence (19 items), running up to June 1917. Around this latter time Warlock was residing in Cornwall again, and soon afterwards he made his conscription-avoiding flit to Ireland, where he stayed for a whole year. Associated with this may well lie an explanation as to why Sorabji's letters to him ceased (or so it would seem) for a period of two and a half years.

**Part 3**

Accordingly, the third part begins with Sorabji's letter from 26 January 1920, which hints at the writer's relief at having made contact with Warlock again. This final batch of letters covers that brief period when the relationship between the two men took something of a more professional turn in the form of a couple of articles from Sorabji for *The Sackbut* (at the time being edited by Warlock), and a performance of his *Piano Sonata No.2* organised by Warlock at the second Sackbut-promoted concert in November 1920. The final letter, written whilst Sorabji was on holiday at a hotel in Bournemouth, and dated 28 July 1922, is one of the shorter ones, and deals with more business orientated matters. After that the correspondence appears to have ceased abruptly, the reasons for this being open to surmise<sup>7</sup>.

Although Warlock's side of the correspondence is lacking, what Barry Smith has done is to intersperse the Sorabji letters fairly regularly with extracts from many relevant ones that Warlock had written to other correspondents. These go some way to throw some light on the Sorabji letters, and possibly some of the content of Warlock's lost replies. Also inserted at appropriate points in the narrative of the Sorabji letters are a few extracts from articles and letters to journals, etc., that add extra context for the reader.



Sorabji 1945

(Photo: Joan Muspratt)

I have deliberately not gone into any detail to describe the subject matter of Sorabji's letters, partly because to do so fairly comprehensively would be beyond the scope of this review, and partly to keep the reader guessing as to the varied content of the letters. I will, however, provide three extracts to give a flavour of what is in store, which if nothing else will provide an illustration of Sorabji's lively writing style. Each has been selected almost at random from one of the three letters sections:

We must be astonishingly alike in temperament and it is inexpressively delightful to me to find someone so completely sympathetic as yourself. I hope that having so to speak 'broken the ice' you will continue to write to me now and again and I will reply with alacrity. I know only his *Piano Concerto* and *Das Messe des Lebens*<sup>8</sup> of Delius but I think they are magnificent – *épatant* – as the French would say. I would willingly give all of Beethoven's piano Concertos for Delius' one! [30 October 1913]



**Kaikhosru Sorabji's Letters to Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock) (continued)**

I have also been reading some extremely absorbing pamphlets published by the ILP [Independent Labour Party]. I have got all the most interesting concerning the manufacture of the war by the various groups of blackguards who 'govern' the wretched peoples of Europe. The sight of thousands of young men going off to sacrifice their lives, and inflict on others (when not receiving themselves) hideous suffering and mutilation fills me with horror: and to think that it is all for the sake of the skins and pockets of the bloody swines who 'run' countries and peoples for their own profit! Oh! It is hideous! Horrible!<sup>9</sup>

[24 August 1915]

Last night I was at L.S.O. [Strauss's] *Heldenleben*. Ye gods how that work shows up the Stravinsky's the Holst's the Pissés<sup>10</sup> and co...and it's 23 years old into the bargain...the performance was a disgrace. Willie Walton who told me he was at the rehearsal this morning said that the whole time over 4 hours was taken up with the macro-cosmohydrocephalic Universe of Holst<sup>11</sup>. Willie and S.<sup>12</sup> promenaded the Corridor doubled up with laughter...if only you had been there. Surely a feeble production never diarrhaeoad from the pen of British Composer??? I had also at that concert an interesting lesson in bacteriology two creations of God – I suppose – came and buttonholed Willie under my nose in a manner that made one think of a very ill-trained bad mannered charwoman laying dishes in front of one – he afterwards told me they were Herbert Howells whose music gives me pains in my Bowells<sup>13</sup>[sic] and Armstrong Gibbs. [8 November 1921]

On a personal note here I would record how pleased I have been to be able to read Sorabji's letters again, but now in transcript form. When I was researching material for my Sorabji and Warlock article that appeared in Newsletter 92, the letters were only available to me (via the Sorabji Archive) as photocopies of Sorabji's originals. Unlike Warlock's beautiful small handwriting, by contrast it has to be said that Sorabji was a bit of a scrawler, and accordingly I did find trying to decipher many of his letters a time consuming and frustrating experience (see the scan of part

(4.)  
of a paradoxure — otherwiz fulfil  
sympathetic and naturally intelligent.  
"the limitation of the human ear!" Why the body  
should I consider them when conscious for  
such limitation in my own ear? Because  
one of the principles for certain form of musical  
design is a continual alternation of relationship  
between why should I, who, exist in a realm  
entirely outside those principles be contented

Scan of part of one of Sorabji's letters to Warlock

of one of his letters to Warlock). We have to acknowledge and thank Barry Smith for his diligence and perseverance in transcribing what was often a barely legible text into something that is readily readable.

At the end of the book are four appendices. The first has already been alluded to, and the remaining three consist of Sorabji's article for the October 1921 *Medical Times* on *Sexual Inversion*; Warlock's article on Sorabji that appeared in the 18 August 1923 issue of the *Weekly Westminster Gazette*, and his entry on Sorabji included in the 1924 *A Dictionary of Modern Music & Musicians*; and Sorabji's obituary notice for Warlock that he wrote for *The New Age* (18 January 1931). The volume has eleven illustrations which include recent photographs of Sorabji's London residencies from which he wrote to Warlock, and music examples from Sorabji's compositions. Warlock is represented by the photo of him taken on the verandah of the Crickley Hill bungalow in August 1915 (the photo caption has Warlock being 21 at the time, but in fact he was still in his twentieth year).

**Kaikhosru Sorabji's Letters to Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock) (continued)**

Having welcomed this new volume so far, it would be remiss of me not to mention a few aspects of its production/quality/value for money that are less favourable. The book runs to only 170 pages, and with a price tag of an unbelievable £115 (!! ) it has to be said it is grossly overpriced for the ordinary reader. One can only assume at this stage that Routledge is aiming its sales at libraries and other institutions. I have heard that in due course the publication will be available as a paperback, and I hope it might then be priced more sensibly at around £15 to £20. As to readability of the text, as one with more 'aged eyes' these days, I would have preferred a larger font size to have been used; the pages do generally look a bit cramped. Splendid and exhaustive as the footnotes are, my preference would be to have them literally at the foot of the page to which they refer, whereas in this volume they are lumped together at the end of each section, which makes for a more tedious reading experience. There is no traditional dust jacket for this hardback (but maybe that's the trend now), and the durability of the product is questionable:- in the review copy I have the boards are already becoming slightly detached from the endpapers, and I do wonder whether, in the fullness of time and with much usage, the volume may even begin to fall apart.

**Notes**

- 1 It was actually less than six months! i.e., from their first exchange of letters in October 1913 until they first met in March 1914.
- 2 In fact Warlock was at Christ Church College, Oxford, from October 1913, not 1912.
- 3 Composer, and Senior Lecturer in Music and BA Music Programme Leader, Department of Performing Arts, Middlesex University.
- 4 but there are occasional reflections made about Warlock, such as how his failure with *The Sackbut* may have resulted from his '...lack of experience and understanding of running a commercial publication', adding that Warlock's idealism ran aground '...on the hard, jagged rocks of economics as well as cultural politics.'
- 5 Born in 1892, Sorabji was 21 at the time.
- 6 at a London concert, the date of which has not been definitely identified, but it may well have been either 20 or 23 March

Finally, and notwithstanding the above reservations about production, etc., can the book be recommended to PWS members? I suppose the first thing to observe is that if there is any expectation to find anything significantly new about Warlock within its pages, then there will inevitably be some disappointment in store. At the risk of stating the obvious, the volume is more likely to appeal to Sorabjians rather than Warlockians for the central thrust of its contents. However, I would say that I found it a very engaging read with much of interest along the way, and to quote part of the opening summary from the book: Scholars, performers and admirers of early twentieth-century music in Britain, and beyond, will find this book a valuable addition to the literature. Certainly worth acquiring as and when it gets released at a much more acceptable and attractive price! ■

**Acknowledgment:** The Sorabji Archive is gratefully acknowledged for the quotes from Kaikhosru Sorabji letters to Peter Warlock that appear in this review.

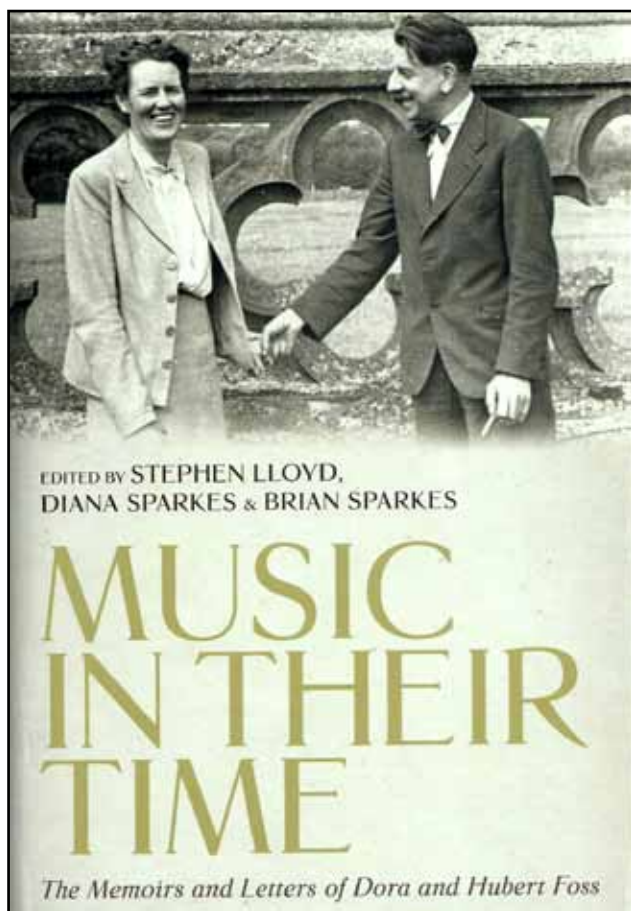
[Ed: Some readers may wish to have a go at deciphering the extract of the Sorabji letter illustrated on page 35. A transcript can be found on page 46]

- 1914 (see the article in *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter* 92 [Spring 2013], page 10).
- 7 Some thoughts on this are provided in the aforementioned article in *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter* 92, pages 7 and 8.
- 8 Delius' *A Mass of Life*
- 9 Had Sorabji been writing a month or so later his letter may have been brimming with even more ire and indignation at the senseless slaughter of thousands at the disastrous Battle of Loos.
- 10 A derogatory reference to Arthur Bliss
- 11 A cryptic reference to *The Planets*
- 12 Sacheverell Sitwell
- 13 I wonder if Warlock may have recalled Sorabji's choice of words here when he penned that scurrilous limerick about Howells?!

*Music in Their Time: The Memoirs and Letters of Dora and Hubert Foss*

Edited by Stephen Lloyd, Diana Sparkes & Brian Sparkes – The Boydell Press (Woodbridge) 2019

John Mitchell



By the end of 1922 Peter Warlock had eighteen of his solo songs in print: the first dozen, several of which he had composed in Ireland, were published by Winthrop Rogers in 1919/1920, and a further six by Augener Ltd. during 1922. Early in the following year Warlock encountered someone who was to have a major impact in establishing him with a significant new publisher: Oxford University Press, that went on to issue 32 of his songs over the next eight years. The person in question was Hubert James Foss, and he and Warlock first became acquainted at one of Poldowski's London concerts on 31 January 1923<sup>1</sup>.

*Music in Their Time* takes the cue for its title from Hubert Foss' third book, *Music in My Time*<sup>2</sup>. Foss – if indeed his name is recognised at all by today's music profession – is probably best remembered in connection with Oxford University Press, and perhaps unsurprisingly the book's substantial Introduction is penned by Simon Wright, current Head of Rights & Contracts (Music), OUP.

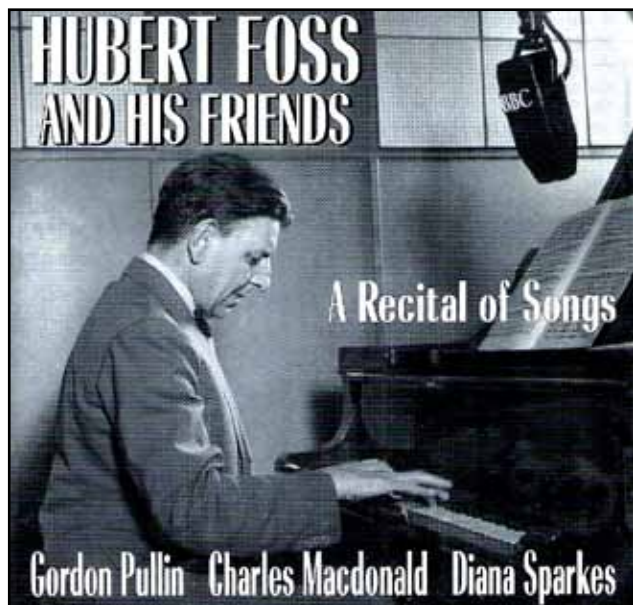
In it he explains how Foss almost single-handedly got the publisher's sheet music department off to a flying start from scratch in 1923, and it describes in detail some of his great achievements in establishing OUP as an important player in the field of issuing and promoting contemporary music. Even today OUP remains the only major university press that has a thriving music publishing division. The success of Foss was not just in getting new<sup>3</sup> composers' wares in print; he also had a great influence on their production, having a particular interest in typography and music cover design. Foss spent the best part of twenty years with OUP, lasting up until 1941 when there was something of a crisis. It would seem that he was, in a way, a victim of his own success, overreaching his department financially, which led to his much lamented resignation from an enterprise to which he had made such an enormous input.

In this Introduction some of Foss' many other accomplishments are touched on, including his wide ranging gifts as a writer. Apart from several books (perhaps most important here was his 1950 study on Vaughan Williams – the first full length book on this major composer), he was a prodigious writer of music reviews and articles for such publications as *The Listener*, *The Gramophone*, and the *Penguin Music Magazine*. Another area where he made a marked contribution was in broadcasting: with Percy Scholes he was one of the first to give regular talks on the radio featuring various topics connected with music and composers. Less well known is that Foss was both a poet and a composer, and towards the end of the book there is reproduced a small selection of his verse that he dedicated to his wife, Dora. As a composer it would seem Foss was quite active during the 1920s, and in 1998 a commemorative CD<sup>4</sup> was recorded which contained eight of his songs; a combination of six original compositions along with a couple of his arrangements of traditional material.

Hubert Foss was born at Croydon in May 1899 and was the thirteenth child from a middle class family. Educated at Bradfield College, Berkshire, he went on to win a scholarship to Pembroke College, Oxford, but was unable to accept it because of financial constraints. This was in 1917, and upon leaving school it seems he went straight into the army as a second lieutenant<sup>5</sup>. He was discharged soon after the end of the war, and spent brief periods in teaching and journalism.



**Music in Their Time: The Memoirs and Letters of Dora and Hubert Foss (continued)**



Wed in 1920, Foss' first marriage was not a success<sup>6</sup> (he and his first wife lived at that cottage in Eynsford, which he eventually passed on to Warlock in due course!), and a few years later a professional relationship<sup>7</sup> with the singer, Dora Stevens, blossomed into a romantic one; the couple were married in July 1927. Dora Foss, as she then became, outlived her husband by twenty five years<sup>8</sup>, and fortunately she retained his various correspondence and much else besides. Having inherited this very significant cache of archival material, Foss' daughter Diana, with the editorial assistance of her husband Brian Sparkes and the writer Stephen Lloyd, has allowed its contents to be selectively fashioned into what comprises the principal part of this new volume.

After Simon Wright's Introduction there follows Dora Foss' Memoirs, which begin by focusing on her early life and developing career as a singer. She reveals how she met Foss, and following their marriage, how the successful venture they had enjoyed together as singer and accompanist was scuppered by a diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis that she received in 1935. There is then an account of her husband's life, and luckily here, Foss left some autobiographical reminiscences which have been selectively incorporated, thus enlivening an already interesting text. These include, at the age of eleven, his first experience of a live orchestra when he attended a

rehearsal of *Hiawatha* conducted by his fellow Croydon resident, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, and how at his home in Rickmansworth he would play energetic games of deck tennis with such luminaries as Sir Henry Wood, William Walton, and Sir Hamilton Harty.

What follows and constitutes the bulk of the remainder of the 282 pages, are numerous items of correspondence. These are grouped into two sections, each featuring individually the many friends and associates that the Foss couple's lives touched upon. The first of these sections, and probably the most significant, is what might be loosely termed 'the inner circle', where the correspondence involved (interspersed with Dora Foss' linking commentary) is more substantial. The letters are not just from those concerned, but also some that were exchanged between Hubert and Dora that relate to those particular persons, and which often throw a fascinating and contextual light on them. To give an idea here, the correspondents include such names as John Barbirolli, Constant Lambert, E.J. Moeran, Donald Tovey, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Henry Wood,<sup>9</sup> and perhaps most importantly, William Walton. Running to 44 pages, the part that deals with the last named will appeal especially to 'Waltionados'. Much of it relates to Walton's *First Symphony*, which Foss was instrumental in seeing through the press, and with the composer confiding over the compositional setbacks he had had with the work.

With this first section dealing almost exclusively with musicians<sup>10</sup>, the second one is dubbed 'The Wider Circle', and its longer list of names ventures out somewhat into the literary world, including entries on several writers (such as G.K. Chesterton, D.H. Lawrence, and Thomas Hardy). However, the bulk of it is again devoted to musicians, including Britten, John Gardner, Ethel Smyth, and Tippett. Unlike the earlier section, Dora Foss had not left any commentary, and accordingly the entries here are expertly and concisely introduced by the book's editors. (It has to be said that some of the correspondents' letters are quite short, and where more of the interest probably lies with the introductions!).

Looked at as whole, these various letters and commentaries make for a very engaging reading experience. The emotional range of their content is pleasingly broad, varying from the quite serious, via the factual, to the

*Music in Their Time: The Memoirs and Letters of Dora and Hubert Foss (continued)*



Dora Stevens and Hubert Foss (photographed in 1922)

humorous (where, for example, there was an occasion when E.J. Moeran, on visiting the Fosses, insisted on one of his piano pieces being played over and over and over again – he clearly couldn't get enough of it!). The collection provides in its way an excellent panorama of a corner of the arts world during the inter-war years, and a clear impression is formed that Hubert Foss in particular was quite a prominent figure in the musical life of Britain at the time. Many of the letters are published here for the first time.

At this point some of our keener Warlockian readers might possibly be asking themselves: 'The above is all very well, but what of Warlock?!'. I must admit that before acquiring the book I had wondered whether there might be any new information about him and Hubert Foss, and so it was a pleasing start to discover there were five or so pages headed *Philip Heseltine/Peter Warlock and 'The Warlock Gang'*. The greater part of it reproduces an article, written by Foss in November 1952 (about six months before he died) for the *London Symphony Observer* entitled *Phases of the Moon – The Warlock Gang*. Within it Foss looks back somewhat affectionately to when, three decades earlier, he came to rent the Eynsford cottage, and how, when he moved to another property in Otford, a few miles further south along the Darenth Valley, he passed on his former abode to Warlock in January 1925. Dora Foss records that

whilst thus living in fairly close proximity, her husband and Warlock saw much of each other. The article continues with Foss' remembrance of the Eynsford *ménage* during Warlock's time there, with mentions of Gray, Lambert, and Moeran along the way, and concluding that the Warlock Gang represented a lost age, and with a regret that we were unlikely to '...look upon their like again'.

The remainder of this section devoted to Heseltine/Warlock is largely taken up with two letters that the Fosses had received from 'our' composer. One was a short note he had penned to Dora Stevens in October 1925 (ie, before she was married) concerning his song *Consider* (of which she seemingly gave the first performance), and the other<sup>11</sup> a letter to Hubert dating from about a year earlier<sup>12</sup>. The latter is of a conciliatory nature (beginning 'My Dear Hubert') concerning some 'absurd business' with their mutual friend Cecil Gray, and reading it in isolation it would be quite puzzling to decide exactly what it was about. It has been put forward that it related to a wrangle over Gray's 'rubbishing' of Holst in his book on contemporary music which OUP believed unpublishable, and there is a detailed footnote explaining this line of thought. This may well be the case, and probably is, but one is left slightly wondering by the hint of grovelling in Warlock's letter, and where he suspects that Foss might doubt his word of honour.

***Music in Their Time: The Memoirs and Letters of Dora and Hubert Foss* (continued)**

In her Memoir Dora Foss records how the friendship between Warlock and her husband was ruptured permanently by a quarrel they had over a personal matter, with it not being related to their musical interests. She reiterated this view in a letter (dated 18 April 1963) to the late Ian Copley in which she wrote: 'My husband wrote a number of articles on Warlock, and, of course, knew him well at one period, but as happened with all Warlock's friendships, there was a quarrel and for the last years of Warlock's life, all his business with the O.U.P. was done with Norman Peterkin...I never met him [ie, Warlock] myself, though I saw him frequently at concerts.' We shall probably never know the nature of the quarrel or exactly when it occurred, although we can be pretty certain it would have happened before 26 September 1929, for when writing to Bruce Blunt, Warlock's disgust at his former friend is quite evident: 'Many thanks for the photograph of Mr Fossferine<sup>13</sup>. I had occasion to write a lengthy formal complaint about the little beast to Humphrey Bumphrey<sup>14</sup> the other day, but, of course got no satisfaction. However, I have told the Oxford Press that I shall never again have any dealing with them<sup>15</sup> ...'

Despite their falling out, Hubert Foss retained his very high regard for Warlock as a songwriter till the end of his life. His wife recalled in her Memoir that one of the last of Hubert's lectures she attended was on Warlock songs, with Sinclair Logan singing the illustrations. Had he lived longer, her husband may even have written about Warlock in a more substantial way – in her aforementioned letter to Ian Copley, Dora Foss explained that '...My husband had no definite plans to write a book on Warlock. At the time of his death he had begun to collect material for a book on Lambert – I think he might have done something about Warlock's life & works eventually as he felt Cecil Gray's book only told part of the story – so to speak.'

There are no appendices as such in the book, but there are some interesting 'extras' at the end. One of these reprints a number of tributes to Hubert Foss written after his early death in 1953, including a very substantial one from Herbert Howells. A short selection of Foss' poems has already been mentioned, and it is pleasing to learn

via the Discography that there are in existence recordings of both Dora as a singer and Hubert as an accompanist. When Dora died in 1978 the Eulogy at the thanksgiving service was given by Avril Wood<sup>16</sup>, and a transcript of this is also included. The volume is very adequately illustrated with a mixture (25 items) of photographs, and copies of original letters (including the one from Warlock alluded to in Note 11).

As usual with wares from The Boydell Press, this book is excellently produced. One aspect I was glad about, and unlike the Sorabji Letters volume reviewed elsewhere: the footnotes are placed on the pages to which they refer, thus avoiding a lot of 'to-ing and fro-ing'. But, as with the Sorabji Letters volume, if one is looking for something completely new about Warlock, there is very little in it that is not already available elsewhere. That having been said, the book can be warmly recommended, particularly to anyone especially interested in English Music of the Twenties, Thirties, and Forties. A good read, but it does have a moderately high price tag of £45! ■

**Further Reading/Listening:**

For those with smaller pockets, there is a much condensed precursor of *Music in Their Time* in the form of a 100 page softback book published by OUP in 1998 to celebrate 75 years of their Music Department. *An Extraordinary Performance – Hubert Foss, Music Publishing, and the Oxford University Press* was written by Duncan Hinnells, and covers some of the same ground. At the time of writing secondhand copies are available through [www.abebooks.co.uk](http://www.abebooks.co.uk) at less than £5. Through the same source, there are also copies of Foss' *Music in My Time* that can be purchased at around £5.

Pre-owned copies of the CD *Hubert Foss and His Friends* can be obtained at the time of writing from [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) at around £10.

**Acknowledgment:**

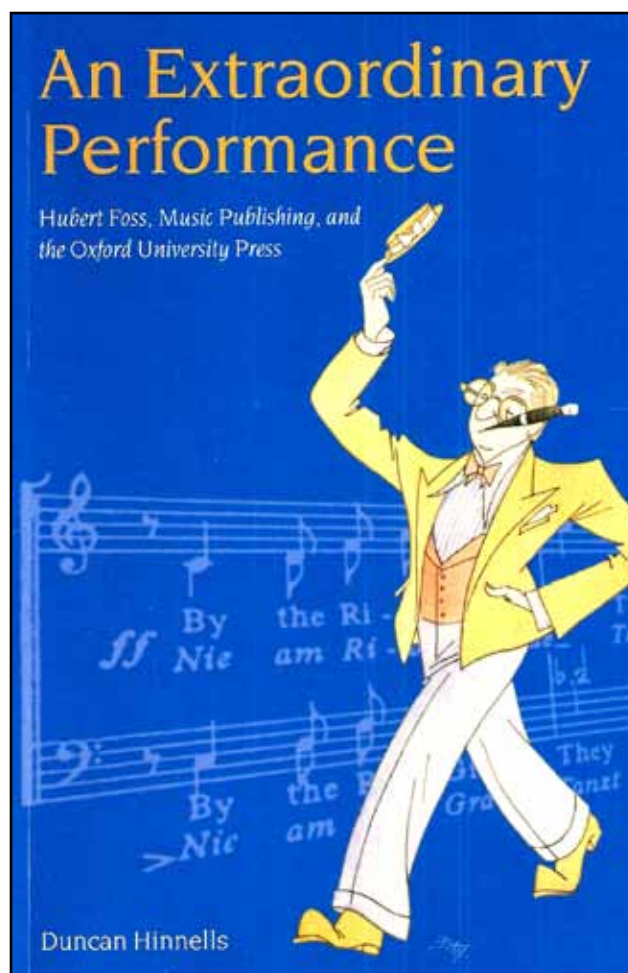
The Hubert Foss Archive is gratefully acknowledged for the photos of Hubert Foss and Dora Stevens that are reproduced in this review.



**Music in Their Time: The Memoirs and Letters of Dora and Hubert Foss (continued)**

**Notes**

- 1 At which John Goss gave the second performance of *The Curlew*.
- 2 *Music in My Time*, Rich & Cowan, London, 1933. This book, along with Constant Lambert's *Music Ho!* (also 1933), if not quite sequels to Cecil Gray's 1924 *A Survey of Contemporary Music*, do have some overlap of intent. I have often wondered, if Warlock had lived on for another two or three decades, whether we may have had a book from him on the subject of contemporary music. One would love to have known, for example, what his exceptional critical faculties might have made of such figures as Tippett and Britten!
- 3 Apart from Warlock, OUP also went on to publish works by Walton, Lambert, Vaughan Williams, and some of the earlier ones of Britten.
- 4 It was issued to mark the 75th anniversary of OUP's Music Department. Entitled *Hubert Foss and His Friends* [HJF 001CD], the album also included single songs by Warlock; Walton; Britten; Ireland; Tippett; Vaughan Williams; Gurney; and Howells, together with readings by Diana Sparkes.
- 5 Whether as a volunteer, or as a conscript, I have been unable to ascertain. It was, of course, around this time that Warlock avoided conscription by fleeing to Ireland!
- 6 The couple were granted a divorce in 1925, but it was via his first wife that Foss met Vere Collins, then the Educational Manager at OUP, who gave him his first job with the publisher as an educational sales representative to public schools.
- 7 Amongst other things Foss was fine accompanist.
- 8 Foss died in 1953, aged just 54, whilst his widow, who despite suffering with ongoing poor health, survived until 1978.
- 9 Sir Henry was a fairly near neighbour when the Fosses lived at Rickmansworth in Hertfordshire.
- 10 The exception here being Edith Sitwell.
- 11 This forms one of the illustrations in the book, where a photocopy of Warlock's original is included.
- 12 Both of these are not 'new', in that they are included in Volume 4 of Barry Smith's *The Collected Letters of Peter Warlock* (the Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2005).
- 13 This is most probably a reference to Phosferine, a patent medicine that was on the market during Warlock's day. I can



well remember it being still available in both tablet and liquid forms during my early days in pharmacy. It was one of those supposedly revitalising cure-alls, but if I recall correctly the formulation was merely that of a commonplace multivitamin preparation!

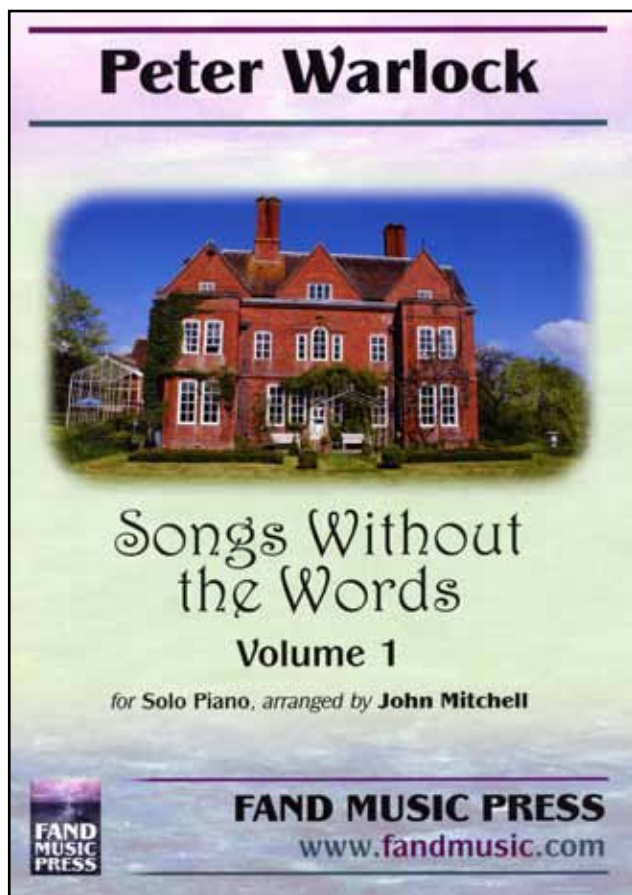
- 14 Humphrey Milford, Head of OUP's London operations.
- 15 Warlock's determination remained resolute here, but the irony is that after his death in 1930 his three last original songs (*The Frostbound Wood*; *After Two Years*; and *The Fox*) were all published by OUP in 1931!
- 16 Daughter of Sir Henry Wood.

## Reviews

### ***Peter Warlock: Songs Without Words Volumes 1 & 2 for Solo Piano***

Arranged by John Mitchell; published by Fand Music Press

**Jonathan Carne**



A precedent for the creation of these editions was, according to the foreword, the adaptation of *Milkmaids* for piano by the composer's friend Alec Rowley. The two volumes comprise nine songs in each. As the title suggests, the words of the songs are not included but brief notes about the literal context of each piece are revealed on the inside covers. Each volume includes a balanced selection of pieces in terms of tempo and style. Warlock's particular fondness for medieval and Elizabethan settings is evident together with a sprinkling of pieces inspired by modern poets such as *Late Summer* and *The Fox*. Each volume is rounded off with rousing potboilers: *Captain Stratton's Fancy* and *Fill the Cup, Philip* respectively.

The editions are attractively presented with slightly different pictures of *Cefn Bryntalch* on each cover. We are reminded that it was here, in his family home in mid-Wales, that half of the songs in these collections were composed. The layout of each piece is very clear both in print quality

and the spacing between staves. Metronome markings have been suggested, though fingering advice has been omitted (perhaps wisely). The arrangements have been devised carefully in order to make them approachable for competent pianists.

*Peter Warlock Songs Without the Words* are not 're-creations' in the virtuosic manner of Liszt's transcriptions of German lieder, but rather 'user-friendly' pieces in which the vocal lines and harmony are captured without losing the essential density of the parts. The arrangements tend to be easier to play than are the original accompaniments. *Sleep* might be an exception because a keen attempt has been made to preserve all its contrapuntal lines. A good pianist will not find it difficult to bring out the voice part in each song. Where the vocal line is not located in the uppermost part and, especially, where it crosses other parts, the pianist is usually reminded of its location via marks of emphasis and diagonal lines. Occasionally, descant figures are shown in small print in a similar manner to those found in Warlock's *Folksong Preludes*. Hand stretches have sometimes been rendered more manageable: arpeggiated chords (apart from those requested by the composer) are therefore infrequent in these editions. All of the pieces are presented on two staves except for occasional bars in *Thou Gav'st Me Leave to Kiss and Rest, Sweet Nymphs* in Volume 2 where an extra treble staff is added to make the inclusion of high chords easier to read. Diffident pianists could leave out these notes to begin with!

A question arises as to the value and purpose of these arrangements and to whom they might be of interest. Firstly, they are a 'hands-on' resource for Warlockians, most of whom will know the originals: an *aide-memoire* for those familiar with the vocal lines and the poetic context. Secondly, they may provide a resource to music students wishing to explore the unique harmonic language of Peter Warlock. In particular, the extract from *The Curlew – The Lover Mourns for the Loss of Love* would provide a welcome two-stave reduction from the full score. Thirdly, singers with pianistic skill might find them helpful when browsing for new material. Essentially, these arrangements are ideal for the domestic pleasure of English Song aficionados and for study.

## **Peter Warlock: Songs Without the Words** (continued)

Even without the words Warlock's songs convey a musical logic which can speak for itself. Lovers of English Song may compare Warlock's setting of *Sleep* with that of Ivor Gurney. Both are, of course, great masterpieces. Gurney's *Sleep* is deeply personal and perhaps lays greater emphasis on vocal expressiveness and word-setting. Warlock's setting is hugely impressive in terms of its unified style, its exotic harmony and purely musical construction. Its contrapuntal texture, of which the vocal line is but one part, has an expressive affinity with chamber music. The piano arrangements of *Sleep* and the other songs in these volumes are able to work rather well as solo pieces by virtue of their harmonic strength coupled to purposeful, often dance-like rhythms and varied textures.

With any form of musical arrangement there may be gains and losses. *The Night* is one of Warlock's most extraordinary songs. In the final verse, the 'wings of night' are evoked by huge chords spread between deep tonic pedal notes and the bell-like toll of syncopated dominants (inverted pedal notes) above. An anguished vocal line clashes alarmingly, at times, with the highest notes of the accompaniment. The terrifying beauty of this passage owes much to the fact that the voicing of its upper parts lies 'beyond the pale' of traditional harmony. The peculiar alchemy which makes what is 'wrong,' 'right,' lies in the profound way Warlock blends two distinct sound types, that of the voice and that of the piano, resulting in a new type of dissonance which owes its effectiveness, as much to *timbre* as it does to pitch. It is impossible to achieve this effect on one instrument in a way that makes artistic sense. Pragmatically, John's arrangement side-steps this issue by pairing the underlying chord progressions satisfactorily with an 'uncontested' vocal line: as Wittgenstein might have said, 'whereof the piano cannot speak, thereof it should remain silent.'

I will enjoy returning to these volumes and will keep them in my music case. The beguiling harmonies of *Mourn no Moe* or *Sweet and Twenty* might lend cheer to a dull Friday afternoon during the absence of a piano student. Better still, a post-prandial rendition of *Rest, Sweet Nymphs* would be a fine piece to share with friends ... especially those too sozzled to sing! ■

### **Contents of the two volumes:**

#### **Volume 1**

*The Bachelor;*  
*Late Summer;*  
*The Night;*  
*Adam lay ybounden;*  
*The Lover Mourns for the Loss of Love;*  
*Sweet Content;*  
*A Sad Song;*  
*Lullaby;*  
*Captain Stratton's Fancy.*

#### **Volume 2**

*The Birds;*  
*Thou Gav'st Me Leave to Kiss,*  
*Piggiesnie;*  
*The Fox*  
*Sweet-and-Twenty;*  
*Sleep;*  
*Rest, Sweet Nymphs;*  
*Mourn No Moe;*  
*Fill the Cup, Philip.*

The grading for pianists is from 5 to 8.

The two volumes of **Peter Warlock: Songs Without Words**, can be purchased individually or together from Fand Music Press (via their website: [www.fandmusic.com](http://www.fandmusic.com)) at £11.50 per volume (+ p&p)

**However, paid up members of the Peter Warlock Society** can order the volumes **directly** from John Mitchell (**not** via the Fand website) at the special price of £9.00 including UK p&p (overseas orders will incur additional postage at cost, depending on the destination).

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## Harold Rutland and his connection with Sorabji and Elizabeth Poston

### Michael Graves

It's amazing how things keep cropping up! I was sorting through the Society's AMR the other day when I came across two items that referred to a man who was obviously known to both Elizabeth Poston and Kaikhosru Sorabji – one Harold Rutland. The two items are: an inscription on the inside of a copy of Sorabji's book *Mi Contra Fa*. (see below) and a post card sent to Rutland by Elizabeth Poston on 2 June 1947 (see p.45 opposite).

The inscription on the fly leaf of *Mi Contra Fa* looks like "To my dear old friend (in friendship ???) Harold Rutland! (sic) from his boys (?) Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji." Second competition in this edition: Who can decipher the inscription? Let me know.

### Harold Rutland

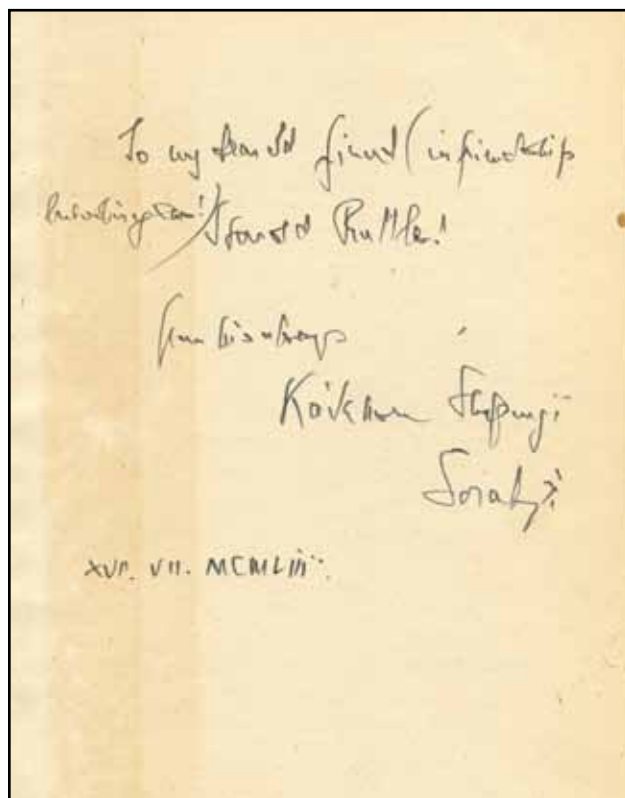
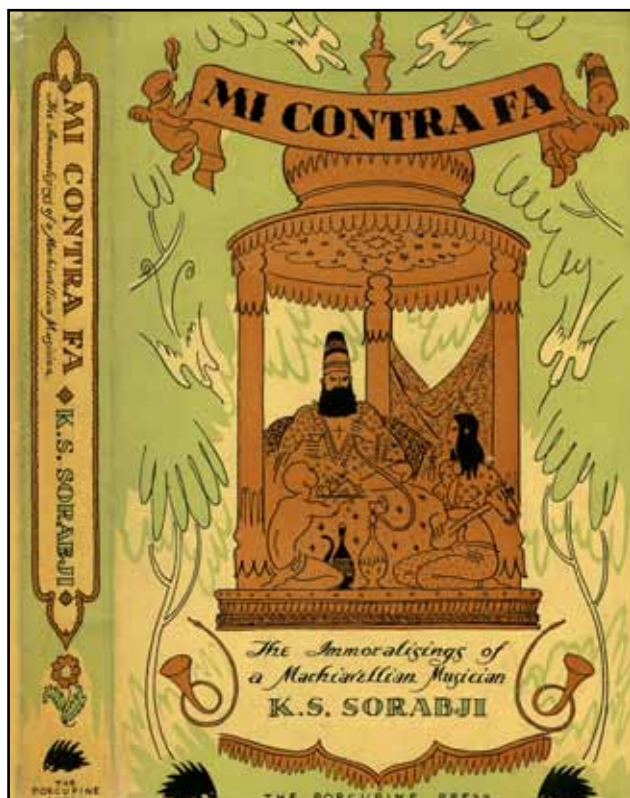
We have only scant information about Harold Rutland. He was a pianist, music critic and composer, was born 21 August 1900 in London and died there 23 July 1977. In the late 1920s he performed as a pianist along with singers and quartets for early BBC broadcasts. He knew Sorabji and was the dedicatee of Sorabji's piano work, KSS43 *Fragment*, a three minute piece which Rutland performed

in the Aeolian Hall, London, on 12 October 1927. With the Sorabji connection in the 1920s, one wonders whether Rutland and Warlock ever came across each other.

Rutland worked at the BBC from 1941 to 1956, writing hundreds of programme notes, synopses and descriptions of programmes about music for the *Radio Times*. In 1956 he delivered a piece, *Music Profile – Peter Katin*, on BBC's Third Programme Sunday morning *Music Magazine*. As late as 1968 he was advising on Elgar's violin and cello concertos as part of the BBC's *Building a Library* series.

During his time at the BBC, he would have known Elizabeth Poston. During the war, Poston had played a leading role in the BBC, at first working in the European Service under Churchill and the War Office for the liberation of the allied countries. She then played a leading role in the founding and development of the BBC's Third Programme.

Rutland left the BBC in 1956 and became editor of the *Musical Times* from 1957 to 1960. He championed the music of John Ireland and was President of the John Ireland Society from 1960 till his death in 1977. He wrote the book, *Trinity College of Music: The First Hundred Years*. ■



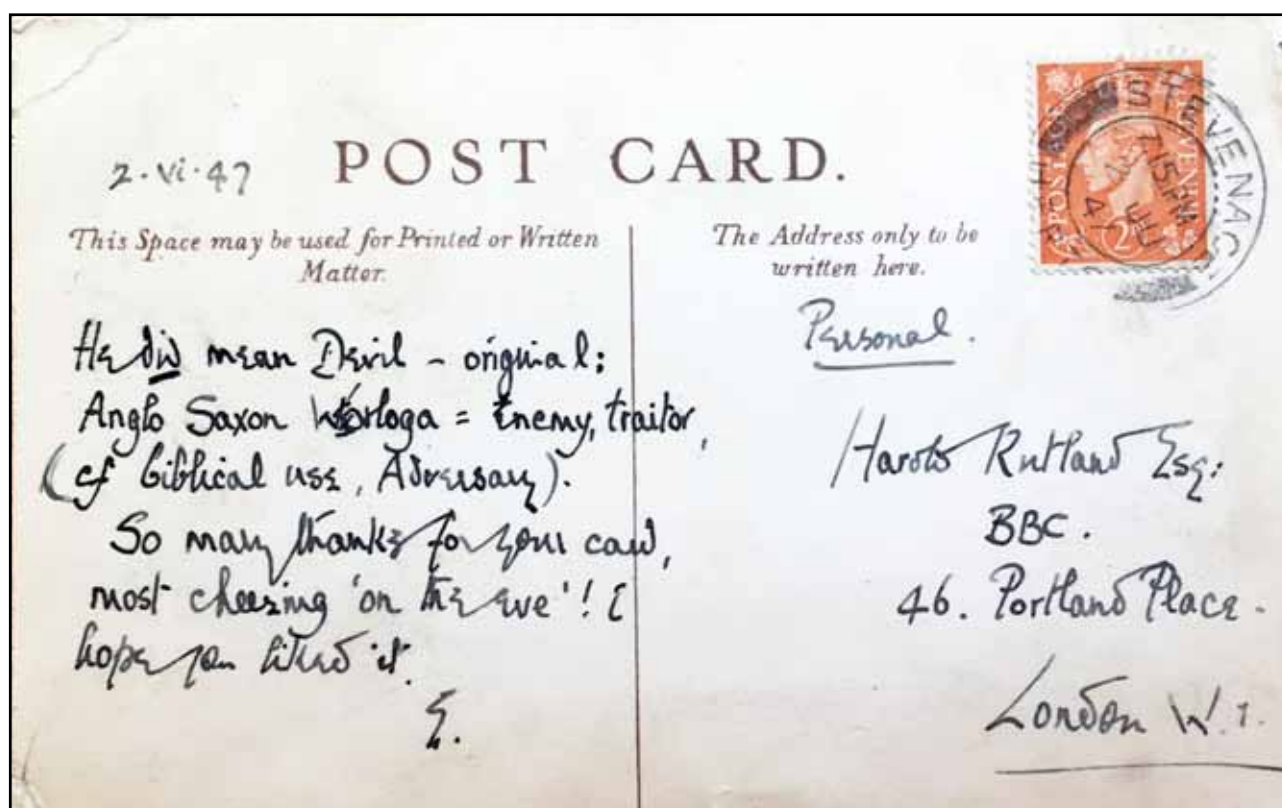
# Harold Rutland and his connection with Sorabji and Elizabeth Poston

## Post card from Poston to Rutland, 2 June 1947.

Elizabeth Poston and Harrold Rutland had presumably been discussing Heseltine's use of the pseudonym 'Warlock'. The post card to Rutland indicates the results of some basic research she had conducted on the subject.

However, it is not clear what Poston might be referring to when she says 'most cheering "on the eve"!'

A scan of the card together with a transcript are reproduced below. ■



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Post mark – Stevenage

He did mean Devil – original:  
Anglo Saxon Warloga = enemy, traitor,  
(cf biblical use, Adversary).  
So many thanks for your card,  
most cheering 'on the eve'! I  
hope you liked it.

E. [Elizabeth Poston]

Personal

Harold Rutland Esq.  
BBC  
46, Portland Place  
London W1

## Letters to the Editor

### Hal Collins woodcut

Dear Michael,

Thank you for Newsletter 105, which is full of good news. It is excellent to see that a more professional approach to the Society's promotion is being sought: despite many people's hard work and dedication, I have long felt that we were often regarded as amateurs in comparison to the supporters of (say) Finzi or Ireland. Also of course, thanks to Patrick's generous bequest, the glad tidings of the likely completion of many long-cherished projects such as the pictorial 'Life'.

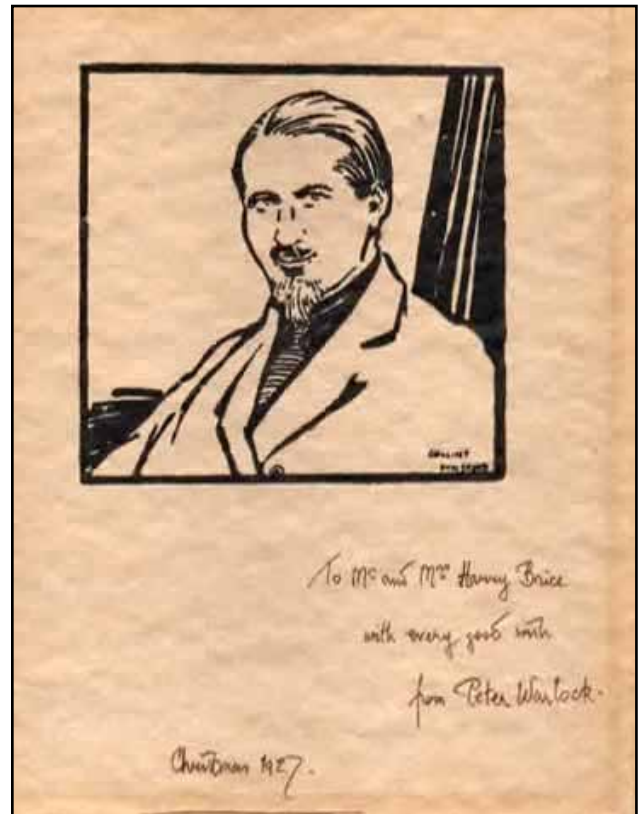
I don't know if the attached scan of the Christmas card that Warlock sent to Harry Brice in 1927 would be of interest to members? No doubt there are other original copies of Hal Collins' woodcut around, though I have never come across them.

I bought the card from May & May (of blessed memory) around 1990 but I don't know anything else about the provenance.

Best indeed,

(Dr) Andrew (Plant) [by email]

[Ed: Harry Brice was the Landlord of The Five Bells in Eynsford at the time Warlock lived in the Eynsford cottage.]



The Hal Collins woodcut that Warlock sent to Harry Brice as a Christmas card in 1927.

### An Old Song for small orchestra on BBC Radio 3

Dear Michael,

When I came down to breakfast this morning the first thing I did, as is my wont, was to turn on BBC Radio 3 and try to identify, or failing that guess, the music being played. This morning it was obviously an unfamiliar work by Delius. However when the programme ribbon came round it read 'Now playing Peter Warlock: *An Old Song for Small Orchestra*'. (Had I turned on a couple of minutes later it would have been a completely unguessable work by a living Polish composer, while the ribbon announced the Purcell work used by Britten for his *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*.)

Best Wishes,

Rodney Burton [by email 18.i.2020]

### Continued from page 36 – The Sorabji Letter

For those wanting to know if they deciphered the extract from the letter that Sorabji sent to Warlock correctly, here is the transcript:

... of a paradoxure – otherwise quite sympathetic and reasonably intelligent. 'The limitations of the human ear!' Why the bloody hell should I consider them when conscious of no such limitations in my own ear? Because one of the principles of a certain form of musical design is a continual alternation of contrasting sections why should I, who, exist in a realm entirely outside those principles be controlled by ...

**Congratulations if you got it right!!**

**There is another short piece of Sorabji's writing that needs some clever person to decipher because we cannot. Please see pages 44.**



## Letters to the Editor



### A Message from the British Library

Richard Chesser, Head of Music at the British Library, and former colleague of Patrick Mills, was dismayed to read about the supposed response of the British Library to David Hammond's approach regarding manuscripts of Warlock's songs, *The fox* and *The Cricketers of Hambledon* [see *Newsletter 105* page 27]. Richard asked if he could send this brief message to members of the Peter Warlock Society to explain what happened:

*I was shocked to read on page 27 of the Autumn 2019 Newsletter that a donation of Warlock letters and manuscripts had been offered to the British Library, but rejected. On investigation, to my horror, this turned out to be true. Due to a misunderstanding entirely on the part of the British Library, the nature and importance of the material was not appreciated, and the offer was not referred to the Music Department, where it would have been enthusiastically and gratefully welcomed.*

*I am delighted, however, that the material has found a safe home at Eton College, where it will be cherished and made available to interested researchers. Warlock is one of the most important figures in British music of the early 20th century, and Eton is without doubt a very appropriate repository for the works of one of its musical luminaries. But I hope the Society's members are reassured to know that the national library will also continue to do all it can to preserve and promote Warlock's legacy in ways that the Society's founder, and my former colleague, Patrick Mills, would approve.*

**Richard Chesser**

Head of Music, British Library

Richard and I had arranged to meet in the British Library in March, but Lockdown prevented it. However, we shall be rearranging the meeting as soon as is practicable and there will, in due course, be a piece in the *Newsletter* about the BL and its work in preserving and promoting Warlock's legacy.

**Michael Graves**



### The Earlier Magpie ...

Further to my article *An Earlier Magpie* [*Newsletter 105* page 16], readers may be interested or amused to know that a snippet of further information has since come to light. Writing to Arnold Dowbiggin on 25 March 1931, E.J. Moeran (who took down the words and music of the song from John Drinkwater) went on to add to what he had described in an earlier letter: 'By the way, Drinkwater's "Magpie" words were altered by himself and are different in places to "The Mohawk Minstrels". Several of Drinkwater's amendments would scarcely bear printing!'

**John Mitchell**



## Lockdown Halt in Hullavington

Your Newsletter Editor takes a breather and welcomes you to his garden



*Top:* Will this year see the start of the garden railway project?

*Middle row:* Laying turf; The silver birch I planted as a sapling in 1980, now towering above my studio; Tomatoes and spinach ready to be potted up and planted out.

*Above:* The weather has been so warm this year that slow worms appeared quite early. This was my first sighting on April 12th, Easter Sunday. She stayed put long enough for me to grab a camera. Isn't she beautiful?

*Right:* Herbs coming along OK.

