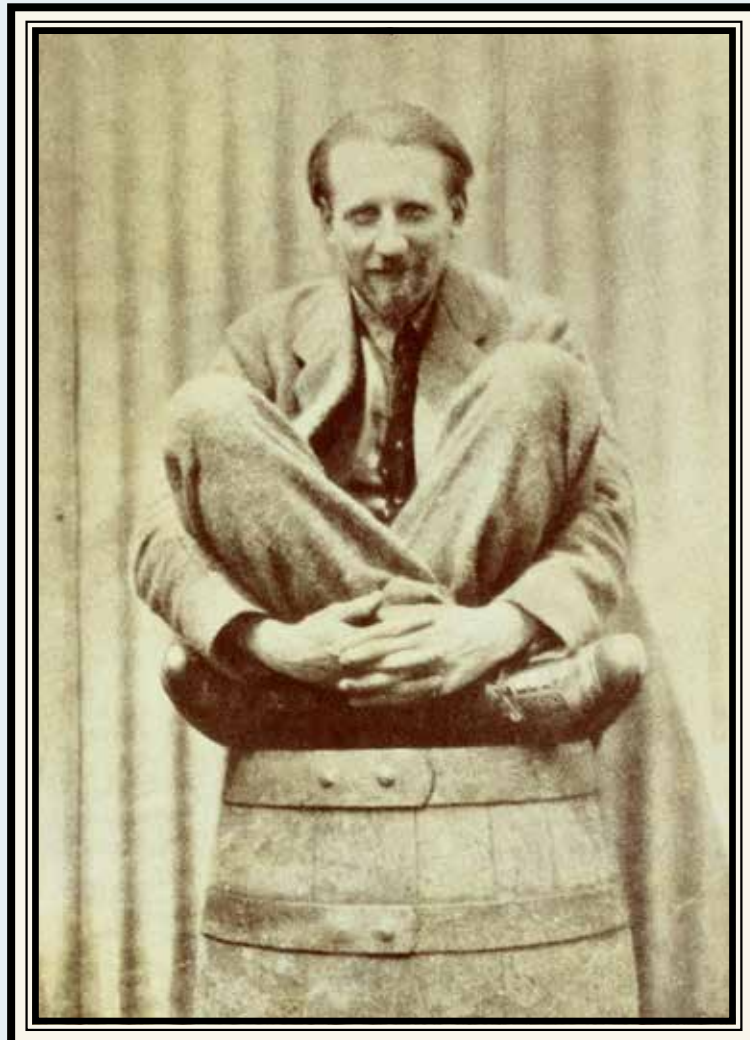


Peter Warlock Society

Newsletter 108

Third (now eased) Lockdown Edition

Spring 2021



Chairman and Editor: Michael Graves

Peter Warlock Society

President: Dr Barry Smith

Chairman: Michael Graves 43 The Street Hullavington Chippenham Wiltshire SN14 6DP
Tel: 01666 837334 Email: pwsnewsletter@yahoo.com

Vice-Chairman: David Lane 6 Montagu Square London W1H 2LB
Tel: 020 7486 1673 Email: davidn.lane@virgin.net

Hon. Secretary: Claire Beach Please send any postal mail for Claire c/o the Chairman.
Email: pwssecretary@yahoo.com

Hon. Treasurer: John R G Mitchell 22 Ethelburga Drive Lyminge Folkestone Kent CT18 8JJ
Tel: 01303 864341 Email: johnrgmitchell@gmail.com

American Representative: Richard Valentine 6B Aspenwood, Ballston Lake, New York 12019 USA
Tel: (001) 518 209 8052 Email: richval1951@gmail.com

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Editorial

Welcome to *Newsletter 108!*



I am very pleased to be able to issue yet another full edition of the *Newsletter* – the third one to appear since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March over twelve months ago.

As ever, my hope is that you are all keeping well in body, mind and spirit. Our lives have been disrupted on a scale beyond our imagining over the last twelve months. However, as I write, the vaccination roll-out is progressing well and there is cautious optimism that we are reaching a point where things may change for the better. Let us hope that live performances of music can soon be enjoyed by real audiences!

Annual General Meeting

You will see on the back cover and inside back pages that the 2020/21 AGM, re-arranged for 15 May this year, has had to be postponed again for obvious reasons. The new date is Saturday 9 October and the plan is to follow as closely as possible the original plan for May 2020. I look forward to being able to see many of you there.

Live performances of music featuring Warlock

One aspect of the planned AGM is, of course, the concert of music in the evening. This will be a combination of music by Warlock and Elizabeth Poston. There are three other concerts taking place this year that primarily consist of Warlock's songs. The details are overleaf on page 4.

PWS projects and initiatives

I am pleased to say that we have made good progress on a number of initiatives and projects, despite the restrictions of the last twelve months. Here are a few: 1. the publication of the *Soprano Songbook*, 2. completion of a detailed specification for a fully revised website, 3. planning future Warlock concerts, 4. working towards a set of commercial recordings of Warlock's entire output, 5. forging links with the British Music Association Japan.

Full details of these and all our work will be included in the Officer Reports, which will be delivered at the AGM and included in the Autumn edition of the *Newsletter*.

A big 'Thank You'!

Before I outline the contents of this edition, I should like to thank all of you who sent me Christmas cards and messages by email, to thank me and the Society for the CD ROM of all editions of the Society's Newsletters. It was thoughtful of you to respond and very good to hear from you.

This edition

John Mitchell has again been busy (no surprises there) and after spotting a possible connection with Warlock, he conducted some research into the little known world of Geraldine Mucha (p.5).

Giles Davies has, for many years, been conducting research into another relatively unknown personality, that of Warlock's friend, John Goss, who was, of course, the dedicatee of several of Warlock's songs. Giles' article looks at Goss's unpublished memoirs (p.10).

Two years ago the composer and PWS member Gary Higginson wrote a piece, *A Warlock Fantasy*, for oboe, clarinet and bassoon, which he dedicated to my very own Garden Wind Trio. Gary describes his approach to writing the piece (p.24).

The article about the Hambledon Brass Bands by Gavin Holman (Newsletter 107 p.33) prompted Silvester Mazzarella to add further information about the band and the 1929 New Year's Day cricket match (p.26). This is followed by a look at a new book, *British Army Music in the Interwar Years*, by PWS member, Major David Hammond (p.30).

The afore mentioned *Peter Warlock, A Soprano Songbook* is reviewed by Jane Hunt (p.31) and an account of the evolution of the songbook is described in detail by Jonathan Carne (p.34). Details of how the songbook can be obtained are on p.33.

In the final review Derek Foster appraises another arrangement for piano solo made by John Mitchell. This time it is Meoran's *Whythorne's Shadow* (p.38).

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 inside front cover. I hope you enjoy reading this edition.

Keep well, stay safe!

Michael

Forthcoming Events

I am sure we are all delighted to see that live performances may soon start to enjoy live audiences, albeit with safe distancing.

Friday to Monday, 28-31 May 2021

English Music Festival

Horsham, West Sussex

There will be a 'Peter Warlock' recital at:

11am, Monday 31 May: St Mary's Church, Horsham

Gareth Brynmor John (*baritone*)

Christopher Glynn (*piano*)

The concert includes:

Peter Warlock: *A lake and a Fairy Boat; Wind from the West; Take, O take those lips away; The Cloths of Heaven; When as the Rye; Mourne no moe; There is a Lady Sweet Content; The Bachelor; Rest, sweet nymphs; Hey Trolly Lolly; Ha'nacker Mill; The Night; My own country; Belloc's Fancy; Maltworms; The fox; Sleep*

Frederick Delius: *Five Songs from the Norwegian*

Arnold Bax: *To Eire; The White Peach Shieling Song; A Milking Sian*

E.J. Moeran: *Seven Poems by James Joyce*

Tickets: £20 available by post by using the EMF booking form, or online at: www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk/2021-may-festival/box-office.php

This concert will also be streamed.

.....
July 2021

The London Song Festival

Hinde Street Methodist Church, London W1U 2QJ

Friday 2 July.

There will be a 'Peter Warlock' recital with songs and readings from his letters as part of the 2021 LSF.

Guy Elliot (*tenor*); Kieran Rayner (*baritone*)

Nigel Foster (*piano*) David Milton (*reader*)

The concert includes:

Consider; Pretty ring time; Rantum Tantum; Passing by; Dedication; And wilt thou leave me thus; The lover mourns the loss of love; Herecleitus; The Singer; The Water Lilly; Piggiesnie; The contented lover; Music when soft voices die; Sleep; Ha'nacker Mill The Night; My own country; Autumn Twilight; Take O Take; Thou gav'st me leave to kiss; I hold love's head; The Fox.

Time and Tickets – tbc

www.londonsongfestival.org

This concert will also be streamed.

.....
Saturday and Sunday, 9 & 10 October

Peter Warlock Society Annual General Meeting

See pp 46-48

.....
Late October 2021, date and venue tbc

Luci Briginshaw (*soprano*); Eleanor Meynell (*piano*)

There will be a recital in late October to launch the all Warlock CD of songs for soprano by Luci Briginshaw and Eleanor Meynell. The concert will be a celebration of Warlock's birthday, which falls on 30 October.

More information will be made available in due course.

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If you know of any concerts or events that include Warlock, or have a Warlock related interest, then please email details to pwsnewsletter@yahoo.com, or phone 01666 837334.

Articles

Warlock, Webster, and Geraldine Mucha

John Mitchell



Geraldine Mucha: formal portrait by Patricia Booth

“Geraldine who?” is a comment I can imagine flitting through many readers thoughts as they glance at the title above! Mentioning the name to several musical friends, not one of them had come across this lady composer before, and my own recent acquaintance with her music only came about by chance. I happened to be listening to a radio programme about the garden of the late Derek Jarman¹, in which readings were interspersed by recordings of seemingly unconnected pieces of music. One of these, completely new to me, immediately grabbed my attention, being a rare example of a piece of relatively contemporary music that I could pretty well grasp the essence of on a single hearing. The work concerned was Geraldine Mucha’s *Overture to The Tempest*, dating from 1964. It made sufficient impression that I felt moved to find out a bit more about the composer, and whether there might be a commercial recording of the *Overture* available.

Investigating the latter first, it turned out that a recording of *The Tempest* overture was available on a fairly recent CD of music exclusively by Geraldine Mucha. Acquiring the album my attention was immediately drawn to one of the works I saw listed in the contents: three John Webster Songs, written for soprano and orchestra. What was especially remarkable was that the three lyrics selected by the composer were the very same ones that Warlock used in his Three Webster Dirges: ‘Hark, now everything is still’ (Warlock’s title here being *The Shrouding of the Duchess of Malfi*); *Call for the robin-red-breast and the wren*, and *All the flowers of the spring*. It struck me that the element of coincidence was just a bit too unlikely here, and I wondered whether there might possibly be some sort of tenuous link between Geraldine Mucha and Peter Warlock. Clearly if any sort of link existed a clue to it may well be revealed in the details of her life story, and a brief account of the latter which follows is interesting in some of its unusual features.

She was born Geraldine Thomson in London in July 1917 of mixed Scottish/New Zealander parentage: her father was the Glaswegian concert baritone, Marcus Thomson (who taught singing at the Royal Academy of Music), and her mother, Maisie Evans², was a singing-actress who appeared in several West End shows at the time. Geraldine’s exceptional musical talent was very evident from quite early on, and from 1929 onwards she received some informal music tuition from Benjamin Dale and Arnold Bax. In 1935 she became a composition student at the RAM, where her tutors included Alan Bush and William Alwyn along with Dale. One of her first successes was music to a ballet entitled *Nausicaa*, and Constant Lambert, viewing it later on, was much impressed, but adding that he was ‘...sceptical it could have been written by a woman’ (one suspects something of a prevalent begrudging attitude to female composers at the time!). With the advent of the war in 1939 Geraldine interspersed her continuing RAM studies with work as a telephone switchboard operator.

In the spring of 1941, staying with her aunt in Leamington Spa, at a local party she happened to meet the Czech writer and war correspondent Jiří Mucha³, who was working in England with the RAF at the time. It seems likely a whirlwind romance blossomed between them as they were married⁴ the following year. With the ceasing of hostilities in 1945 the couple moved from London to

Warlock, Webster, and Geraldine Mucha (continued)



The first page Geraldine Mucha's score of *Sixteen Variations on an old Scottish Song*.
(Reproduced with grateful acknowledgment to the Estate of Geraldine Mucha)

Warlock, Webster, and Geraldine Mucha (continued)



Geraldine Mucha composing in her home at Hradčanské Náměstí in Prague. The photograph has been formally set up using spotlights, clearly visible in the mirror, which are casting hard shadows from the vase of flowers, lamps and crucifix.

Mucha's home city of Prague. All went well until 1950 when, because of his wartime collaboration with the Allies, Mucha was deemed an enemy of the now 'Iron Curtain' state, and imprisoned for three years. During that time Geraldine vacated to a rural location by way of keeping a low profile, eking out an existence as best she could with her young son. On her husband's release from captivity, they moved back to Prague when she was able to get more actively involved in composition again as well as in the

musical life of the city. As a composer she became fairly well known in Czechoslovakia, and although she enjoyed regular summer stays in a property she had near Aberdeen in later years, her reputation as a composer failed to take off here in the UK, largely because of being out of sight behind the Iron Curtain. After the death of her husband in 1991, she continued to live in Prague, and died there in October 2012, having just attended a concert of her work a couple of weeks earlier to celebrate her 95th birthday.

Warlock, Webster, and Geraldine Mucha (continued)



Geraldine Mucha

I believe a Mucha/Warlock connection, if indeed such exists, probably may have come about via Arnold Bax. Through the school she attended Geraldine had become friends with Bax's daughter, Maeve, which led to the latter's father becoming interested in the musical ability of this gifted young lady. Being a phenomenal sight reader, Bax was able to play through Geraldine's compositions at the piano and discuss them with her. She later recalled that 'He always took my music seriously.' She had gained from her father an interest in Elizabethan literature which may have facilitated her discovery of the work of John Webster, but could it have been more likely she had been introduced to the *Three Dirges* by Bax? He and Warlock had been good friends, and he would have been well familiar with Warlock's *a cappella* settings, particularly *The Shrouding of the Duchess of Malfi* as, in a letter⁵ to Warlock he had described it as '...a masterly piece of tragic writing.' He went on to note his pleasure at being able to '...find someone writing harmony that to my mind is obviously sincere and imaginative and flexible.' It has been recorded how Bax had influenced Geraldine's approach to harmony, and it is quite

conceivable he may have used Warlock's Webster Dirges as superb examples of inventiveness in this area.

In the same way that Warlock's three settings of Webster may be thought to contain some of his most advanced writing, it would seem that Geraldine Mucha's take on the same texts was similarly amongst her most adventurous compositions. I have played the recording of her three John Webster Songs a few times now, and I have to confess they are not that easy to get into, maybe lacking the directness of expression of Warlock's grim settings. Although essentially a tonal composer, in this work Geraldine often seems to teeter on the edge of atonality. Another aspect that I for one found rather challenging on the ear was the surfeit of *melismata* in this work, and of course, by contrast Warlock used this technique very sparingly, largely sticking to a one-note-per-syllable approach. Whether Geraldine, when she began to compose the work in 1975, was in any sense inspired by Warlock's settings of fifty years earlier, is difficult to say; her composition certainly doesn't display any obvious influence of 'our' composer. Perhaps she may have heard the then fairly recent Pearl recording (1972) of Warlock's

Warlock, Webster, and Geraldine Mucha (continued)

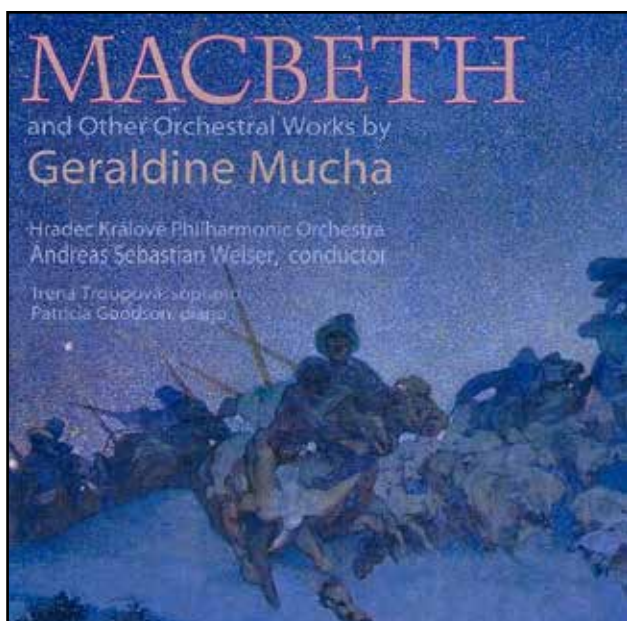
choral music which contained two fine performances of his Webster Dirges⁶ – suggestive of directing her thoughts, possibly?

Apart from these songs, and *The Tempest* Overture mentioned above, the other works on the Geraldine Mucha CD⁷ are her attractive 1960 *Piano Concerto*, a ballet suite, *Macbeth* (1965) and *Sixteen Variations on an Old Scottish Song*⁸ from 1954, her most substantial and well written work for solo piano. I have to say these three items make for

an easier listening experience than the *Three John Webster Songs*. As enterprising as the album is in showcasing some of Geraldine's work, it maybe gives a slightly skewed overall picture in that chamber music comprised a sizeable chunk of her output (including, for example two string quartets, a Nonet and a Piano Trio), none of which is represented. That small reservation aside, this CD is generally a pleasing and engaging one of music by a significant British composer who has been largely forgotten in her homeland. ■

Notes

- 1 Derek Jarman (1942-1994): film director, stage designer, artist, and author amongst other things.
- 2 She had a leading role in the very successful First World War show, *Chu Chin Chow*; it had an astonishing run of 2,238 performances! However, she would not have played in the entire run as she had given birth to her daughter Geraldine 11 months after the show had opened in 1916.
- 3 Son of the famous Art Nouveau artist Alphonse Mucha, whose designs became very popular during the Flower Power era of the 1960s.
- 4 At the time they met Jiří Mucha was a recent widower. He had had a very short-lived marriage – just two months – to another composer, Vítězslava Kaprálová (1915-1940), a fellow Czech who had been the muse and mistress of Bohuslav Martinů.
- 5 Part of which is quoted on pages 265 and 266 of Cecil Gray's Memoir: *Peter Warlock* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1934).
- 6 *All the flowers of the spring*, and *The Shrouding of the Duchess of Malfi*.
- 7 ArcoDiva UP 0192 2231, available via Amazon at the time of writing. It was produced in 2017 by way of celebrating Geraldine Mucha's centenary.
- 8 The song being the well known *Ca' the yowes*.



Another CD of Geraldine Mucha's music has emerged since the above article was penned. Details of both CDs can be found at www.geraldinemucha.com/recordings and can be purchased from Presto Music at www.prestomusic.com

Articles

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs ~ Two shall be born

Giles Davies



Above: 'Early days at His Majesty's Theatre',
Mabel Gill, circa 1925

Right: John Goss, (photo: Claude Harris of Regent Street)



Written in Japan during the 1930's, from the period of the singer and writer John Goss's highly engaging and satirically witty novel *Cockroaches and Diamonds*, the unfinished and unpublished life story of John and Mabel is both an important personal and social testament.

If John Goss (born 1891) had lived to a ripe old age, (he died in Birmingham in 1953, without doubt as a result of his heavy smoking and drinking!), perhaps this unpublished autobiography might have included the inter-war years and his memories of Warlock, Moeran and Van Dieren. It is worth remembering here that it was John Goss himself, favoured mouthpiece for many of Warlock's own songs and good drinking friend, who sang Van Dieren's *The Long Barrow* and some of the composer's favourite Lute Songs at the memorial concert for Warlock at London's Wigmore Hall. Post Warlock's death, he is hardly mentioned at all in any of Goss's surviving memoirs and few surviving correspondences. The shock of Warlock's early death

hit his close circle so hard at that time, few ever seemed comfortable discussing this period.

Nevertheless, there are some fascinating revelations from a life lived through theatre and music, together with recollections of life during the times of the Boer War and the outbreak of World War I. Goss's political interests in Socialism, his noteworthy and brutally honest feelings on the Suffragette, Rationalist and Fascist movements are handled deftly and most colourfully. As always with Goss's style, a wonderfully wry and unbridled sense of humour is a constant source of enjoyment. This is all captured in Goss's rich and beautifully expressed English. He begins his story in Japan, where his wife Mabel was stationed at the British Embassy. This he does with pictorial vividness. These words might well be the starting point for a screenplay by Fritz Lang or Josef von Sternberg in the 1930s.

It was a hot night in Tokyo. The two who have written this book were entertaining a friend during a break in her

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs (continued)

journey from Canton to the Japanese mountains whither she was going in search of health. We lounged idly in the upper room of a native-style house that overlooked the British Embassy, a room that had been so far 'Europeanised' as to contain some wicker chairs, an electric fan and a cocktail shaker with accessories.

The first famous acquaintance we hear of is the Irish Playwright and Critic, George Bernard Shaw.

I was once introduced to George Bernard Shaw. He gazed down at me quizzically and seemed to probe an elusive memory. "Ah," he said, "you are either the prize-fighter or the singer."

I was flattered that the great man had, as it were, so much as half-identified me, but was puzzled that complete recognition had been baulked by an obscure middle-weight champion who had been in his grave for more than half a century. I confessed to being the singer. "I am not sure that you made the wiser choice," he commented. "Recently I was walking in the Piazza del San Marco with Richard Strauss, the composer."

The third member of our party was a gentleman named Gene Tunney¹. A cosmopolitan crowd whirled about Mr Tunney, anxious to see him, to touch the hem of his garment, to obtain his autograph. They were entirely unmoved by the presence in their midst of the world's greatest musician and the world's greatest playwright. "Young man, I think you would have been better advised to become a prize fighter."

Goss's earliest childhood recollection was a family move to Pellet Grove, Wood Green, and then at the age of eight another move to New Southgate. Here we read of music as a profession within his family.

The nomadic habits of the Goss tribe require an explanation and this demands that I say a little about my father's family. Grandfather Goss, as a young man, had been a piano-forte maker, but later joined the Royal Navy as a ship's-carpenter. I only saw him once or twice and he bore not the slightest resemblance to the gruesome creature of the old Ballad.

Goss's father was from a long line of London carpenters, though it seems an ancestor had tarnished the family name somewhat.

One ancestor had impaired the respectability by going into 'service' and allowing himself to be pensioned off by some lordling in consideration of marrying in haste a pregnant chamber-maid. My Father was, I think, ashamed of this

blot on the family name, not because of the scandal or the complaisance, but because good working class stock had suffered debilitation by a decadent, aristocratic infusion.

Goss also gives us some superb descriptions of his childhood area of New Southgate with rich details worthy of Dickens, the vibrancy of local street life particularly well captured in vivid language.

St Paul's Road was a superior little street that pretended to have no connection to the intestine to which it was the appendix. In the winter, the adjacent district provided all the close-companioned, dramatic, odiferous joys of urban life-lighted shops, noisy pubs, street fights, weddings, funerals, Police raids and Bank Holiday jubilations.

The possibilities of Hadley Woods were endless, trees to climb, forts to build, acorns and horse chestnuts to collect, and bunches of wild flowers to gather for mothers as a peace offering to avoid punishment for torn clothes or over-stayed leave.

Goss also recollects the songs that were sung during the Boer War period (1899-1902).

The Boer War was at this time in full swing and journalism, then as ever, turned every British reverse into a virtual victory, and each time our gallant generals overcame the crafty Dutch farmers by the methods of the Duke of Plaza Toro², the flags waved and the bands played. They were stirring times. We sang *Sons of the Sea*, *Cook's Son*, *Duke's Son*, *Son of a Belted Earl*, *Break the News to Mother*, and a comic song about a patriotic parent, who Christened his child with all the names in the news, that ran something as follows:

The baby's name was Kitchener, Carrington, Methuen, Kekewich, White; Kronje, Kruger, Vaal, Majuba, etc, etc. It was a lovely war. We youngsters joined in the popular pastime of killing Kruger with our mouths (and) with a will, and on Guy Fawkes day we burned the luckless president in effigy.

Before moving on from the Southgate of his childhood, Goss also recalls the Spring Carnival which sounds like it was something of a lavish yearly event.

There were all the usual Carnival trappings, set pieces on carts, cyclists on hobby-horses, clowns, fairies, minstrels, macrophallic monsters on inadequate human legs, and large and unstable cut-outs of John Bull and Britannia, two symbolic creations then at the height of their popularity - all

John Goss's *Unpublished Memoirs* (continued)

richly illuminated by thousands of Chinese lanterns.

It is worth remembering that the London of Goss's childhood, in the last decade of the 19th Century, is still very much the London of Dickens and Chaplin. One of the most engaging facets of Goss's memoirs are his merits as a pictorial guide, with carefully etched vignettes of places and people, in a similar vein to his wonderfully varied locations and characters in his satirical novel *Cockroaches and Diamonds*.

A few years later, the family is relocating again, this time to Enfield.

It must have been somewhere in my tenth year when, on the wings of paternal optimism and the old nostalgia, the Goss family moved out to Enfield, then a peaceful, almost eighteenth century village about twelve miles to the North East of London, and for a time we inhabited a small house not a hundred yards from where, a century earlier, Keats had spent his pugilistic boyhood.

Goss does not remember this time with great warmth, his Father was down on his luck and unable to find lucrative work.

Piano-making was something of a seasonal occupation at the best of times, but now my father spoke of an industrial crisis, and cursed Joe Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes louder and longer than ever. He would walk into Camden Town daily and make enquiries at all the piano factories that were concentrated thereabouts.

He took twopence with him every morning, which he could spend either of food, railway travel or beer and tobacco. He usually did the sensible thing and walked home, hungry.

On the following family move to Hornsey, Goss becomes determined to be a success at his new school, both in sports and scholarship. 'In Hornsey I put away childish things and became fired by ambition', words which have something of a Biblical resonance.

It is from this period we have one of the most important memories of a live musical performance in Goss's formative years, when he attended a performance of Handel's *Messiah* at the Great Hall at Alexandra Palace.

I stood transported almost to tears. I had never imagined that such sweet sounds could come from a human throat or have such a disquieting effect on a small boy's stomach. The singer's name, so the programme told me, was Ben Davies,



It was the 'sweet sounds' of Ben Davies' voice that had such a profound and lasting effect on the young Goss.

and when he sat down I waited impatiently for the other unnecessary noises to pass, so that I might be transported again. It was my first glimpse of beauty as something positive. It made me feel a little sick. But for good or ill a seed was sown.

Goss indeed had the very good fortune to hear one of the finest British tenors of this era excel in Handel. Ben Davies (1858-1943) made his debut at Covent Garden in Gounod's *Faust* in 1892, and greatly impressed George Bernard Shaw in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in the same year. He would also take part in the epic first performance of Sir Arthur Sullivan's 1886 Cantata *The Golden Legend*, at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, where Sullivan first met librettist W.S. Gilbert

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs (continued)



John Goss at the piano.

many years earlier. He was also responsible at the invitation of the composer, of creating the title role in Sullivan's 1891 Opera *Ivanhoe* at the Palace Theatre.

Conductor Sir Thomas Beecham recalled his singing, writing 'His was a voice of uncommon beauty, round, full, and expressive, less inherently tenor than baritone, and, like all organs of this mixed genre, thinning out perceptibly on top'. No surprises then, that in adult life Goss still remembered the profound effect Ben Davies's performance in Handel's *Messiah* had had on him in his childhood.

Following his school years, Goss won a scholarship in 1913 to Ruskin College, Oxford University. Prior to this he had spent time as machine operator at Cadbury's Chocolate

Factory in, Birmingham, (the family had moved from London due to financial difficulties) and following this he decided to have his voice trained. He recalls meeting the composer Sir Granville Bantock (1868-1946) at the Birmingham School of Music, where he applied for studies, but this period seems to have been one of some uncertainty both concerning his direction and future employment. His description of Bantock's character is amusing and extremely well etched.

With the instigation probably coming from Geoffrey Franklin I was, about this time, persuaded by friends to do something about having my voice trained. I had done some untutored singing in the district which had not

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs (continued)



Granville Bantock

been unfavourably received. Anyway, I was sent to see Mr Granville Bantock, the chief of the Birmingham School of Music. He was a bulky, bearded man whose clothes gave the impression of having been woven from his own hirsute clippings, and, as he sat absent-mindedly strumming the piano, he looked like a provincial edition of the Brahms of the well known caricature, even to the cigar. He did not ask me to sing. He may have been in the presence of the voice of the Century but that possibility didn't interest him. He played several chords and demanded that I name their ingredients. How far my guesses were even approximately correct he didn't tell me.

Goss continued his vocal studies privately, and took no further interest in studying at the Birmingham School of Music. He studied with Mr St Clare Barfield, a singing teacher with an excellent reputation, and furthered his studies also with the talented musical sisters, Winifred and Dorothy Taylor. This was Goss's initial period of the

discovery of both the English and German Song repertoire, and the sisters encouraged his interest in Song and would accompany him. 'They also introduced me to 'modern' literature, and through them I came to know H.G.Wells, Anatole France, Upton Sinclair and other of the socially minded novelists of the period.'

The next chapter focusing on his student days in Oxford, is one of the meatiest parts of Goss's early memoirs, although he seems to have had incredibly mixed feelings about both University life and Academia. However, he found some like minded undergraduates and now confident in his capabilities as a vocalist, indulged in some performing activities, recalling one highly amusing bucolic event:

I joined the Oxford Folk Society and together with a handful of undergraduate enthusiasts and a few local spinsters I went around the rural vicinity giving concerts to the villagers. We dressed in farmers' smocks and milkmaid costumes of an earlier period and, in voices of a linked

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs (continued)



John Goss in 1914

sweetness long drawn out we sang *Admiral Benbow*, *The Shooting of his Dear* and *Turmot Hoeing* to the sons and daughters of their original composers. The scene must have been beyond laughter, tears, and irony; too “dumbstruck” to utter even a groan.

Goss also discusses the Suffragette Movement during his Oxford period as follows.

Particularly there were women. The last vestiges of Victorian decorum were at that time being rapidly frizzled up in the fires of the Suffrage movement, and women of the middle and upper classes were becoming fearfully and wonderfully emancipated. Anne Veronica, Hilda Lessways, Anne Whitefield and others of Ibsen's broodlings were fast pushing their mother's off the stage and grabbing all the limelight.

Goss had planned on leaving Oxford to travel to Leipzig and to further his studies there. He had become good friends with Herr Sassenbach who was the General Secretary of the

German Trade Unions who had offered Goss guaranteed employment on arrival. ‘To us, he was a merry soul with quaint grammatical constructions and a fondness for English Ale.’ Unfortunately, the outbreak of War in Europe made this an impossibility, and it is clear that Goss was devastated that he would be unable to study in the City of Bach and Mendelssohn, or explore the Gewandhaus and the Auerbach Cellar.

Meanwhile, I was to polish up my German. I was going abroad, to revel in a new life after office-hours, that is – of which the poetry of Heine, the wanderings of Wilhelm Meister and the moist Heimweh of Fraulein Becker had aroused the most romantic expectations.

At the outbreak of the First World War, (1914-18) Goss recalls his general low mood and an incident with an excruciatingly painful toothache;

One Sunday evening I made my way to the Bull Ring, the city's well-known open-air forum. In a nearby street I passed a mob glumly wrecking a Baker's shop said to be owned by a German. My mind was burdened with many problems; in addition, I was troubled with a nagging tooth. As I turned away from the worldly maelstrom, an acquaintance fell into line beside me and tried to engage me in conversation:

“What's the matter,” he asked.

“Toothache”, I replied.

“You're lucky,” he said, “I'm a dentist. Come up to my place and let's have a look at it”.

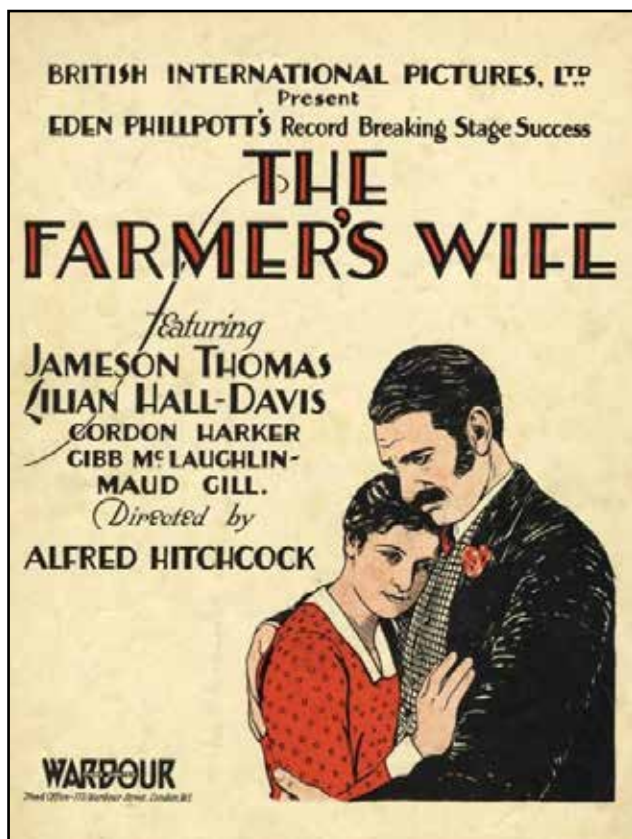
He extracted the offending tooth, gave me a drink, and charged me a shilling.

I walked up the Bristol Road with a numbed and painless jaw and a mind from which a wearisome burden had fallen. Joyously I kicked the dead leaves out of my path as I went. Suddenly everything has become perfectly clear, and, miraculously relieved of all misgivings and self-probings, with no other audience than the street lamps and the stars, I made my bid for sanity in a world gone mad.

On a more positive note, Goss was to become friends with the Stuart Vindens. Stuart and Maud Gill were both members of Barry Jackson's Birmingham Repertory Company. Maud's sister Mabel would later become Goss's wife. She first met him briefly at a Theatrical performance in Birmingham.

One evening, during the interval of a play, Maud introduced me to her sister. I noted that she had a small mouth, heavy

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs (continued)



Clockwise from top left: The poster for Hitchcock's film *The Farmer's Wife*; portrait of Maud Gill; the film set of *The Farmer's Wife*. Maud Gill is seated at the tea table with co-star Jamieson Thomas and Alfred Hitchcock (in trilby hat).

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs (continued)



FRÈRE JACQUES

Not slowly. (Round for four voices.)

1. 4.

Frè - re Jac - ques, Frè - re Jac - ques
 (d : r | m : d | d : r | m : d ||

2. 3.

Dor - mez vous? Dor - mez vous?
 (m : f | s : - | m : f | s : - ||

3. 2.

Sonnez les ma - tin - es, Sonnez les ma - tin - es
 (s : j | s : f | m : d | s : j | s : f | m : d ||

4. 1.

Dig, din, don. Dig, din, don.
 (d : s, | d : - | d : s, | d : - ||

255

Top: This Albert Rutherston illustration in the *Weekend Book* provides a graphic flavour of the era. Above: Goss contributed vocal melodies (without accompaniment) and words for the traditional songs which were included in the *Weekend Book*. Beneath the text the pitches are printed in Solfège, or Sol-Fa.

lidded eyes and long fair hair that was plaited and bound about her head like a nimbus. She seemed a very still and contained young lady, and we had little to say to each other. We parted when the curtain rose. There was nothing in the incident to warn me that it had decided the future course of my life, or that one day it would provide me with the excuse for bringing the story of the days of my nonage to its determined and indeterminate close.

Maud Gill (1883-1950) is remembered today for her appearance as Thirza Tapper in Alfred Hitchcock's 1928 Silent Movie, *The Farmer's Wife*, a role she was to revisit on the London stage in 1931. She was also the author of her own theatrical autobiography, *See the Players*, in which she recalled working with many stars including Sir Cedric Hardwicke. (1893-1964).

Instead of his planned work and studies in Leipzig, Goss had the good fortune to be engaged for his first concert party tour as a public entertainer, travelling to Shrewsbury for rehearsals for a tour of Welsh seaside

resorts, Piers and Pavilions. 'We were called *The Buskins*, a title designed presumably to catch both the cockney and the classical ear'. Moving on and finding his first job in London, Goss tells us, 'My thirteen shillings and four pence a month did not go far'. This job was as a Porter in the Junior Constitutional Club, Piccadilly. During his time in the West End of London as 'a minor flunkey', Goss yet again vividly recalls the London of the early 20th Century.

Motor transport and the habit of eating in public had not yet brought the suburbs flocking to the West End, and Piccadilly, an hour or so after nightfall, was a comparatively peaceful thoroughfare. Four-wheelers and Hansoms lined the Green Park side from the newly built Ritz Hotel to Hyde Park corner. At the call of a whistle (a single blast for a four-wheeler and a double blast for a Hansom) one of these would, from time to time, swing across the road, pick up passengers and vanish.

The somewhat murkier nocturnal world of central London is also remembered through fine and atmospheric details.

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs (continued)



Left: Goss with his daughter, Barbara, on the beach. Right: Barbara with son Andy

As the evening advanced, pedestrians became fewer and more confined to club members, servants and prostitutes. Vice, in those days, did not lurk in shop-doors and shadows and dart, a cajoling menace, on the prowling male. It flaunted itself, as though of right, full in the public gaze. Unashamed and anything but naked. Those were the days of picture hats, effervescent bosoms and bottoms that followed their owners at a distance and had considerable lateral play. Perhaps for real ladies these protuberant fashions had passed or were on the wane, but the Cyprians (actually they were mostly French and German, I believe) had taken to them with a will, and emphasized their secondary sexual characteristics to a startling degree.

Goss's first forays into the world of Theatre, were for the company of Forbes Robertson, as a supporting juvenile player. Forbes Robertson, (1853-1937) was considered by many to be the finest Hamlet of the Victorian stage. Goss's recollections are particularly resonant for those

with an interest in Victorian Theatre in London at this time. He warmly remembered this company as happy and friendly.

During the years I was on the stage I was a humble member of the company in seven productions and never lost the thrill I had in listening to Forbes Robertson from the wings whenever I was free to do so; and there is no line in *Othello*, *Hamlet* or Shaw's *Caesar* that I can hear in my mind with any other stress or intonation than his. He had, as a performer, a melancholy charm, a romantic presence, a very beautiful voice and a subtle intonation.

Goss is also working with the famous actor and producer Beerbohm-Tree (1852-1917) around this time.

He was, I thought, a fine producer. I rarely met one who could so sensitively draw out from his artists (for he was never dictatorial) the meaning and spirit of a phrase. Goss continues to discuss his youthful life on stage at some length, with many pages on working at His Majesty's

John Goss's Unpublished Memoirs (continued)



Mabel Goss (nee Gill), on her 100th birthday and the bust of John Goss by E R Bevan

Theatre in London. At this time, he also recollects the Socialist movement for which he was to give his staunch lifelong support.

The British Socialist movement in those days had passed through its Age of Innocence. It was now busy erecting its

Tower of Babel. Deep cleavages in method and direction were already evident and were increasing daily.

The Postscript from John and Mabel's unfinished memoirs is a fitting remembrance of their wedding day. They had initially met in Birmingham, and it was here Goss would pass away at the age of 62, on his return from Canada.

His daughter Barbara also lived there following the Second World War with Nutty her horse and young son Andy. ■

Notes

- 1 Gene Tunney was a well-known prize-fighter at that time.
- 2 The Duke of Plaza Toro is a character in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Gondoliers*, who 'led his regiment from behind'.

Acknowledgements:

I am hugely indebted to Cam Trowsdale, an enthusiastic Canadian musician, who was most kind in sharing John and Mabel's unpublished memoirs with me. Thanks to the emergence of these original typed papers, we can finally applaud all John Goss's achievements in music and theatre outside of the 'Warlockian circle', and say goodbye once and for all to the shadowy figure whose name was once known only as a footnote in composer biographies.

[Ed. There is more about Giles Davies and his diligent research on the somewhat neglected figure of John Goss on the following pages.

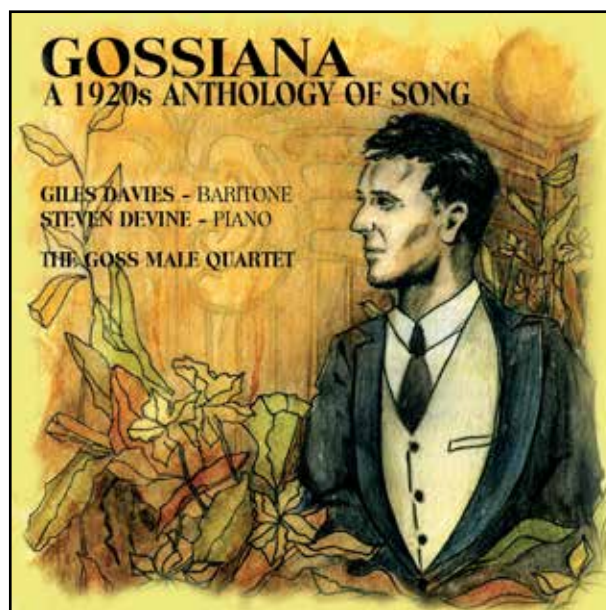
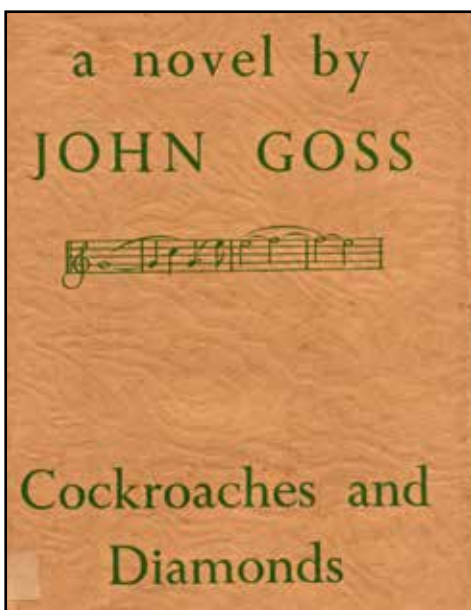
Also: John Goss's grandson, Andy Low, is selling a signed copy of *Cockroaches and Diamonds*, an original edition with a handwritten dedication to Goss's daughter, Barbara. The asking price will probably be in the region of £150-200. Contact andrew-low@orange.fr for more information.]

Giles Davies and his research into John Goss

Michael Graves

Giles Davies (pictured below at St Brelade's, Jersey during lockdown in 2020) has been researching the life and times of John Goss since 2005, when he played John Goss on screen in Tony Britten's film of 2005, *Peter Warlock, Some Little Joy* (see photos opposite). He also produced the song album

Gossiana, A 1920's Anthology of Song (2007), and an Audio Book of Goss's novel, *Cockroaches and Diamonds* (2013). He has extensively studied Goss's own manuscripts (see pp22-23) and digitally remastered his own personal 78rpm shellac records of Goss singing.



Giles Davies and his research into John Goss (continued)



Top: The set of Tony Britten's film *Peter Warlock: Some Little Joy* at the Bell Inn, Norfolk, 2005. Inset: Giles as John Goss and again (below).



Giles Davies and his research into John Goss (continued)

John Keats *The Stranger 'lighted from his steed* B van Dieren

smthly, not too slow! slower!

The stranger 'lighted from his steed, and ere he spoke a word,

He seized my lady's hand, and seized it all unheard -

the stranger walked in to the hall, and ere he spoke a word,

He kissed my lady's cheek, and kissed her all unheard -

Above and opposite:

One of many copied scores in Goss's hand; this one is of Bernard van Dieren's *The Stranger* 'lighted from his steed.

Giles Davies and his research into John Goss (continued)

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged paper, consisting of four systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The lyrics are written in a cursive hand below the vocal line. Performance instructions such as dynamics (mp, mf, pp, ppp), tempo markings (slow!, a tempo, mezza voce - molto semplice!), and phrasing (ten! still slow!) are interspersed throughout the score. The lyrics include: "the stranger walked in to the tower, but my la - dy", "first did go, eye, hand in hand in - to the tower, where my lord's re - as", "my la - dy's maid had a silken scarf, and a golden ring had", "she a kiss from the stranger got as off he went a gain on his fair pal - lacy". At the bottom right, there is a handwritten note: "The I Love - previous to".

Articles

Some Notes about A Warlock Fantasy Op 192 for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon

Gary Higginson



Gary Higginson (left) and Michael Graves share a joke with the audience at the 2015 AGM concert held in the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Whitney-on-Wye, which Gary had kindly organised for the Society.

(Photo: Chris Sreeves)

Over the last decade or so I have been delighted to be asked to write several pieces for various woodwind ensembles. But my earliest work for such a group dates back to as long ago as 1979 and is for the standard Wind Quintet, which of course includes a French horn. But since 2008 I have composed a Divertimento Woodwind Quartet, using tunes by Mozart and a Woodwind Trio, entitled *Fantasia of Soweton Melodies* for flute, oboe and bassoon.

Also, previous to these works I've composed a Sonata or single-movement pieces for flute and piano, flute and harp or for solo flute (these latter have been published by Fand and recorded on Sheva SHE 209), two Clarinet Sonatas, one for Oboe and one for Bassoon. As a flautist (but of moderate abilities) I have always enjoyed writing for woodwind and feel a close affection for the entire family.

In the summer of 2018, I read a Newsletter article by our Chairman, Michael Graves, that made reference to his friends, The Garden Wind Trio (oboe, clarinet and bassoon). My imagination immediately took fire and as I was singing several songs of Warlock at the time, everything came together and *The Warlock Fantasy* was born.

It is a five minute piece which has its being in the following way:

I chose songs which I have particularly enjoyed singing in the last few years and ones I thought quite intriguing in their melodic material which, I felt, seemed to transcend the conventional song-type melodies normally associated with English music.

It starts with that captivating song *Piggensnie* with its rising thirds, heard here in the oboe and accompanied beneath, by rather archaic perfect fourths [Fig 1]. This folds into *The Bachelor*, the melody now on the clarinet. I discovered with much delight that they work well when combined [Fig 2].

The next two tunes are broken up and played alternatively in G major and G minor they are *The Droll Lover* and *Mr Belloc's Fancy*. The tunes are also split between the three players. Towards the end we have a couple of brief quotations from *The Cricketers of Hambledon*, a song that particularly appeals to me as I had been a keen cricketer in my youth, later an umpire and a continued cricket supporter in later life. The opening tunes return after that but in a truncated form before the final coda.

There are also fragments of other Warlock melodies worked into the texture but I will keep those a secret for the players and audience to spot. After all, it's meant to be a fun piece, in all kinds of ways, for everyone concerned.

Some Notes about A Warlock Fantasy (continued)

Playfully, with fun ♩ = c.100

Oboe
Clarinet in B \flat
Bassoon

mf
mp
mf
sim
mf
sim

Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.

f
mf

Fig. 1: Bars 1 - 6

Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.

mf
mf

Ob.
Cl.
Bsn.

Fig. 2: Bars 34 - 37

The work was completed on September 5th 2018 and I hope of course that one day the Garden Wind Trio will perform it, but a group of young musicians here in Herefordshire, are hopefully, doing so later this year and a recording may well be made. ■

Footnote from Michael

The Garden Wind Trio was delighted to receive *A Warlock Fantasy* and we would like to take this opportunity to thank Gary for dedicating the piece to us. We have had great fun working through the score and look forward to returning to

the piece when circumstances allow us to meet for practices! We have to admit, like Gary, that we are ‘of modest abilities’ and that the piece is challenging for us. However, we like to be stretched and we very much look forward to performing the piece in due course.

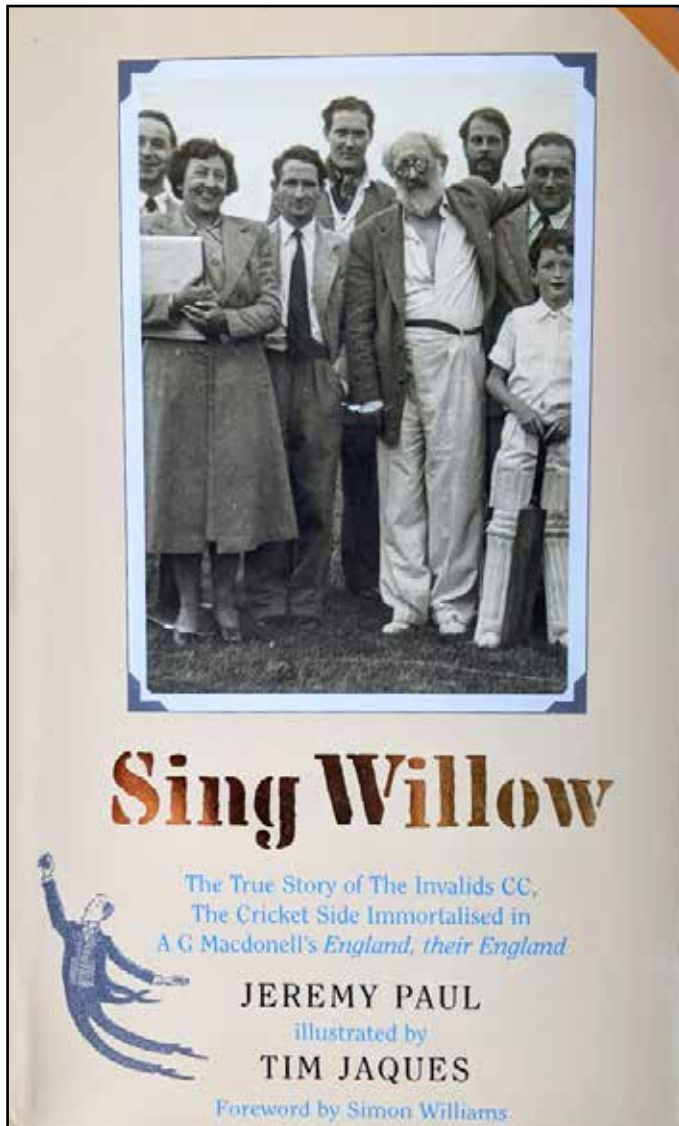
I received *A Warlock Fantasy* from Gary as a hand-written score and have created a Sibelius file on the computer for Gary, so he now has a professional looking score with separate parts for the three instrumentalists.

For further details contact the composer at:
Higginson.g.m@gmail.com.

Articles

More on the Hambledon Brass Band and the 1929 New Year's Day Cricket Match

Silvester Mazarella



I was interested in Gavin Holman's article about the history of the Hambledon Brass Band, and the famous 1929 New Year cricket match. It sent me back to an article I researched and wrote myself about that event many years ago [see *PWS Newsletter No. 80, Spring 2007*]. My own interest, thirteen years ago, was more in the teams who played in the match, helped by the useful history of the still active Invalids Cricket Club, published in 2002 by one of their later members, the television script writer Jeremy Paul, whom by coincidence I knew at school, when he was known as 'Jeremy Paul Roche'.

I would like to add a little to Holman's brief account of the game, which he claims was 'published widely'. In fact

there seem to have been not one but at least three such published accounts of the match (including the fact that play was temporarily interrupted by a hunt crossing the field). Though these accounts may owe something to each other.

The 'Invalids' were of course then and still are not a scratch side, but a regular 'wandering' cricket team, only playing away matches, since they have no home ground of their own. The Invalids had been founded in 1919 by John (later Sir John) Squire in honour of several players wounded in the First World War. Squire (1884-1958), a poet and literary critic, had been in 1919, and still was in 1930, editor of a periodical known as *The London Mercury*, in which he championed the group of rather conventional poets then generally described as 'Georgian' and sometimes sniffed at as the 'Squirearchy'. Squire could scarcely be seriously described a 'sportsman', and he had no talent whatever as a cricket-player. His dropped catches in the field were legendary, and he duly contributed one on the present occasion at Hambledon. On the other hand he never had any problem in assembling a mainly literary team of competent players. Jeremy Paul cites Patrick Howarth in *Sing Willow*:

Patrick Howarth records that W. T. S. Stallybrass, a cricketer of some ability, was recruited to strengthen the team on a tour of the west country and calculated that he had 39 catches dropped off him in a week, mostly by Squire in the slips, 'where his short-sightedness afforded the maximum handicap.'

A more recent example of a similar wandering team organised and led by a cricket 'nut' with no sporting talent was the 'Vic Lewis' eleven of the 1970s, organised and led by the well-known jazz-loving former band leader, who also collected cricket club ties and had a serious interest in contemporary classical music, especially from Russia and Scandinavia. Squire, though no more a great poet than a great cricketer, did have a talent for writing effective verse parodies, one of which Warlock had set to music some years earlier. This was *Mr Belloc's Fancy* ('At Martinmas, when I was born, hey diddle, ho diddle do'). One wonders what Squire and Warlock said to one another when they met on New Year's Day, 1929.

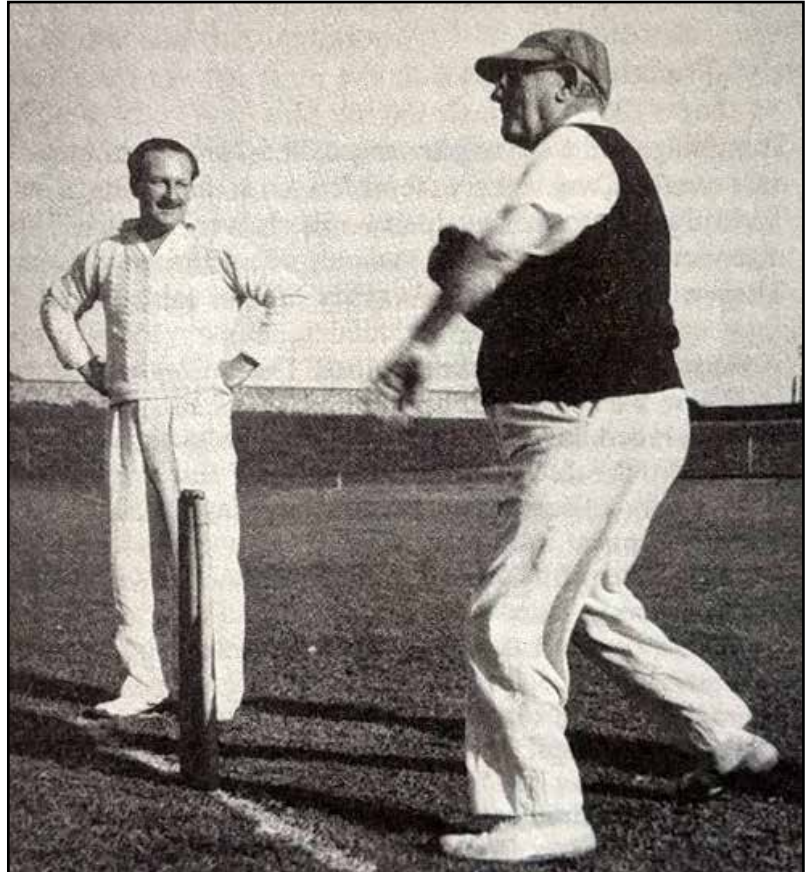
More on the Hambledon Brass Bands and the 1929 New Year's Day Cricket Match (continued)

Among those who played in that match was A.G. Macdonell, who not many years later, inspired by the Dickens of *Pickwick Papers* and his own experiences of playing for Squire's Invalids, was to write what has been described as the funniest-ever account of an English village cricket match in his gently satirical *England Their England* (1933). In that account, Squire appears thinly disguised as 'William Hodge, editor of *The London Weekly*', together with members of his team. Ironically, this lover of rural England was to be killed in the war by a bomb in Oxford.

A player who made a more considerable contribution in terms of runs and wickets on January 1st, was the leading literary agent A. D. Peters (1892-1973), of German-Danish origin, but addicted to cricket since his school days in England. Also playing for Squire was Howard P. Marshall (1900-1973), who would become the BBC's first radio cricket commentator, and as such be professional ancestor of John Arlott, Brian Johnston, Henry Blofeld and Jonathan Agnew. Another writer, Ralph Straus (1882-1950), was said to have been so keen to play in this match that he drove six hundred miles and survived a car accident to get to Hambledon in time for the game, though sadly, when his turn came to bat, he was run out after scoring a single run. The Invalids wicket-keeper on this occasion, Walter Monckton (1891-1965), had been a close university friend of Edward, Prince of Wales and was to mediate between the Prince and Prime Minister Baldwin during the abdication crisis of 1936. Twenty years later, in the 1950s, he became a cabinet minister in the administrations of Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden.

A detailed account of the extraordinary New Year's Day cricket match is included in *Sing Willow*:

Perhaps the most eccentric of Squire's match fixing, if that is the word these days, was the game played on Broadhalfpenny Down, Hambledon, cradle of cricket, on New Year's Day 1929.



J. C. Squire attempting to bowl

This was against the Hampshire Eskimos, and the motive for it was a resentment that football had invaded the summer months. The spirit in which it was played was described in *The Times* as 'Pickwickian, without descending into farce.'

The noted cricket historian, writing in *The Times* in 1989, tells the tale ...

It was a cold crisp day with a sky as blue as if on a June morning and a sun casting robust black shadows. A crowd of some 2000 had arrived by car, charabanc, bicycle and shanks's pony, while a lorry had brought a group of Squire's own supporters. All this activity needed a policeman on point duty at Broadhalfpenny Down. Cinematograph crews and legions of photographers clicked away as Squire tossed up four times with E. Whalley-Tooker, the Eskimos' captain, for their benefit.

Everyone declared that a hundred would be a good score, and Dudley Carew from *The Times* reported, 'a man who

More on the Hambleton Brass Bands and the 1929 New Year's Day Cricket Match (continued)



The coin was tossed four times for the benefit of photographers and cinematographers.

made 20 would be a hero'. The Invalids' innings was opened by B. Walton O'Donnell, conductor of the Wireless Military band, who was soon joined by A. D. Peters, the famous literary agent, of whom (Waugh wrote) publishers, editors and authors all stood in awe.

Peters, with 20 runs, qualified for Carew's accolade, and O'Donnell had just failed to when the proceedings were interrupted by the sight of pink huntsmen and the sound of a horn. Major Talbot-Ponsonby, Master of the Hambleton Hunt, had arranged a meet and high up on the Hambleton Hill they passed by. It did not take much imagination, Carew thought, to contemplate 'the squat formidable figure of Squire Osbaldestone among the hunt', an old print had come to life with square-backed motor cars not far removed from stage coaches and chauffeurs standing around who might be translated into coachmen.

Soon A. G. Macdonell came to the wicket and, 'although light-heartedly determined on a six' left for a single. R. Strauss had motored down from Scotland across Shap in winter to find himself run out for 1.

Walter Monckton (later Lord Monckton, the barrister and politician who got embroiled in the abdication of a reigning monarch) made 10, and Squire was left 0 not out.

Invalids had made 89. Despite the strength of the sun, little remained of the short winter day. The opposition went out immediately to bat. Lowe's bowling suggested 'surreptitious practice' as three Eskimo wickets fell for 9 and they seemed destined to retreat to their igloos in despair. Then on H. Clark became, in Carew's notion of things, a double hero by making 42 and Squire brought On the literary agent and the band conductor, and that effectively was that. Invalids coasted home by 11 runs. Squire's opposite number, Whalley-Tooker, was similarly let not out, a gallant fighter playing in midwinter at the age of 65 and who would turn out against Eton Ramblers later in the year. He

had had a game for Hampshire in 1882, and perhaps more important, he had revived the old Broadhalfpenny ground where his ancestors had played, and he had had the ploughed up land returned to a cricket field.

While Howat keeps his eye on the ball, Carew's attention, as might have Henry Blofeld's, lurched back to the hunt.

Across the field they passed, and as they passed and one lost sight of them one knew one had been enriched by an emotional experience which might not betray its full value until the end of many years. After the match had restarted they came once more back clearly to the sight and vigorously to the imagination. Across the fields below the down they went streaming after a fox found as conveniently as though it had been carried in the pocket of the whip.

After the match, when the Bat and Ball proved a sad deceiver, everyone repaired to the George for supper. And the last word must go to Sir John himself, who wrote:

It was over before tea-time. The wind grew increasingly bitter and nobody had the temerity to suggest a second

More on the Hambledon Brass Bands and the 1929 New Year's Day Cricket Match (continued)

innings. Gradually the cars and charabancs melted away and the down relapsed into solitude. But the proceedings were not over. Anybody who has read Mr E. V. Lucas's delightful book, *The Hambledon Men*, knows that they, who could cope with All England on the cricket field, were equally capable of coping with All England when it came to eating and drinking. It is to be feared that the 18th century dinners ended rather more bibulously than is the modern habit.

But at that famous old hostelry, the *George* at Hambledon, the two teams, the umpires and certain supporters did their poor 20th century best. Every sort of suitable health was drunk. A song [*The Cricketers of Hambledon*], composed by Mr Peter Warlock, to rollicking words by Mr G. H. B. Blunt, was rendered at frequent intervals. The company then removed themselves to a delightful upper chamber, with roaring open fires. Here the Hambledon Brass band, which had been playing *John Peel* and such tunes with unabated vigour all day on the blasted heath, were sitting in their peaked caps, with their immense trombones and bombardons, ready to renew the fray. In the presence of Mr B. Walton O'Donnell, probably the best military band conductor in the world, they rose to the occasion, assisted by an occasional moistening draught, playing every tune they were asked for. Finally, the cornet soloist gave a magnificent rendering of *The Lost Chord*.

Would the fixture become an annual event? No.

'It is always a mistake to endeavour to repeat perfection,' Squire said firmly.



Play is halted as the hunt invades the cricket pitch.

In 1994 the Peter Warlock Society made a reminiscent jaunt to Hambledon, as reported by Dr Brian Collins, then editor, in *Newsletter No. 55*, pp 14-15. This also was recalled in *Newsletter No. 80*, together with a parody of the Bruce Blunt/Warlock song *The Cricketers of Hambledon*, beginning 'The Hampshire Jaunt to Hambledon in autumn '94 / Was gravely making music when the skies began to pour,' etc etc; its 3 verses and chorus containing references to Society members prominent on what must have been a sadly watery occasion. ■

Bibliography:

Paul, Jeremy: *Sing Willow, the True Story of the Invalids C.C.* published by The Book Guild, Lewes, 2002.

This book contains among other things a photograph on p 13 of Squire trying to bowl, and on pp 20-23 a discussion of the 1929 New Year's Day match).

Macdonell, A.G.: *England, Their England*, 1933, and subsequent reprints.

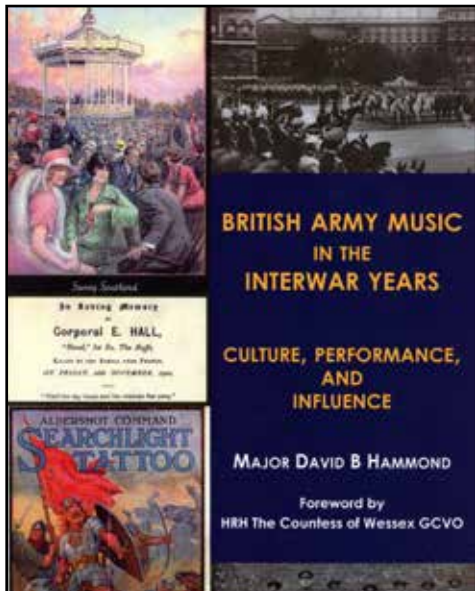
The village cricket match is described at length in Chapter Seven.

Reviews

British Army Music in the Interwar Years: Culture, Performance, and Influence

by Major David B Hammond

Michael Graves



A rare photograph of Ivor Gurney with the Band of the 2nd/5th Gloucestershire Regiment in 1915. Gurney is on the back row, fourth from the right.

It may seem odd to be reviewing a book about military music as we don't normally associate Peter Warlock with the military. Whilst seemingly not of direct relevance to Warlockians, the book is a social history of the music profession in Warlock's time. With around 7,000 full-time bandmen serving in the British army in the interwar years, this approximated to one third of the total number of musicians in the music profession in the United Kingdom. The War Office was the largest single employer of professional musicians in the country.

One of the subjects covered in the book is that of pitch and how standardisation emerged. Several standards were in use in the 19th century and the disastrous 'Scutari incident' of 1854 has become well known, where massed military bands performed *God Save the Queen* in different keys and arrangements. The British army standardised on a high pitch of A=452.4 in 1878 as this seemed to give the general sound a sharper, more urgent quality. However, in 1896 Henry Wood's Queen's Hall Orchestra started performing with newly purchased low pitched instruments in order to come into line with the low French 'diapason normal' pitch of A=439. Read on!

I particularly found the section on the BBC of great interest. The 'wireless' was a new technological development and was introduced to the public in the UK in 1922. At

that time it was the British Broadcasting Company, a manufacturing company that existed to profit from the sale of wireless sets. This situation very soon became unworkable due to increased competition from foreign manufacturing companies. The BBC as we now know it, the public service British Broadcasting Corporation, was licensed by the Post Office and received its Royal charter in 1927. Their remit was to 'inform, educate and entertain'. However, there was a great deal of tension between the BBC's rather serious Presbyterian director, John Reith, and those who favoured a more popular approach to the music the BBC was broadcasting. The story is absorbing.

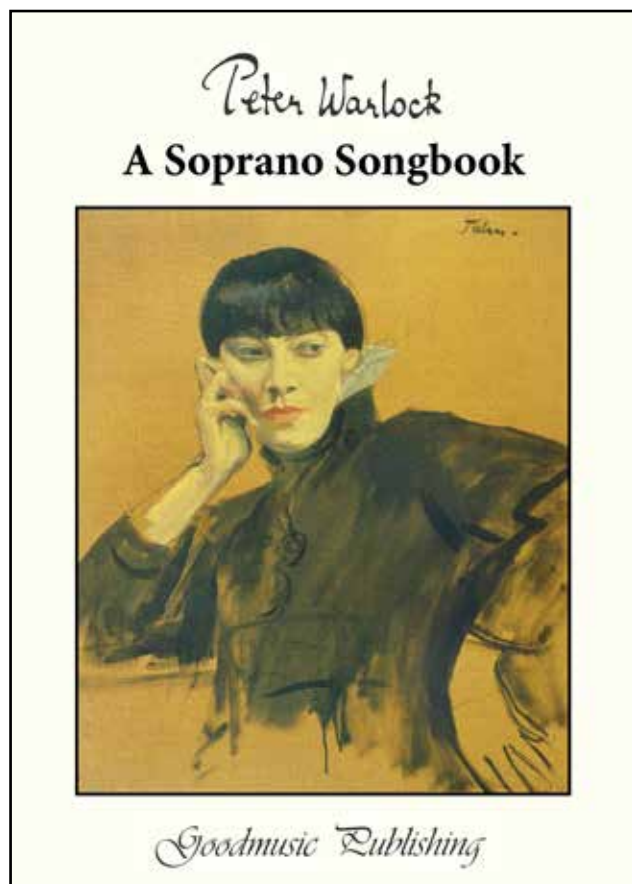
The author of the book, PWS member Major David Hammond, has produced an extraordinarily well researched and referenced book. It is well illustrated with period photographs and documents and, importantly for a detailed and scholarly history, is also very readable. The book is highly recommended to anybody who has an interest in the music of the interwar years in Britain. ■

British Army Music in the Interwar Years: Culture, Performance, and Influence by Major David Hammond
The Cloister House Press – ISBN-13: 978-1-913460-05-1
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Peter Warlock: A Soprano Songbook

Goodmusic Publishing

Jane Hunt



As a keen amateur soprano with a long standing interest in English song, I was delighted to hear about this new publication.

Many sopranos will be familiar with the need to search multiple volumes of Peter Warlock songs for the widest choice of material. Even then, many items are in mid-range keys which may or may not be suitable. The *Soprano Songbook* is very welcome since it presents a varied selection of 23 wonderful Warlock songs in keys which are appropriate for soprano voices.

Thanks are due to several Peter Warlock Society members who collaborated in its production, following an idea that originated from Malcolm Rudland. The songs have been carefully chosen, and in some cases transposed, by Naomi Johnston and Jonathan Carne. Michael Pilkington edited the songs and prepared the artwork for the notation pages. Michael Graves designed the cover and text pages.

John Mitchell wrote notes and determined the order of contents both for variety and ease of page turning for the accompanist.

The Songbook takes as its starting point songs whose original keys are already suitable for the soprano voice, such as *Consider*, *Sweet Content*, *A Sad Song*, *Cradle Song*, *My little sweet darling*, *Robin Good-fellow*, *Rest sweet nymphs* and *The Singer*.

However, the publication takes an exciting direction by including several of Warlock's medium range songs in higher-key transpositions, either made especially for this volume or published previously (a few in the composer's lifetime). Although some of the songs are already 'soprano territory' in their original keys, the alternatives will bring them into better vocal focus for many. For example, *Take, O take those lips away* and *Late Summer* are raised up a tone and *Sleep* by a minor third. Small but significant semi-

Peter Warlock: A Soprano Songbook (continued)

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Opposite page: The cover and inside cover of the *Songbook*;
Above: The contents page and the photo-montage that accompanies a short biography of the composer as well as an introduction to the work and resources of the Peter Warlock Society.

tonal shifts upward have been provided for *Balulalow* and *Pretty Ring Time*.

I was very pleased to see the excellent *Three Belloc Songs* presented a minor third higher, preserving the individual key relationships so they can still be performed as a set. *Autumn Twilight* and *The Bayly beareth the bell away* are both up a major third: particularly welcome since the original *tessitura* of these two highly atmospheric songs put them 'beyond the point of compromise' for many sopranos, despite being excellent candidates otherwise.

Even Warlock's famous drinking songs are represented! *Jillian of Berry* may not spring to mind as soprano fare, but it is both suitable and singable (especially transposed up a tone as it is here). A good example of the composer's 'fun' side – usually more accessible to tenors and basses – it would provide a spirited finisher to a group of songs or recital programme.

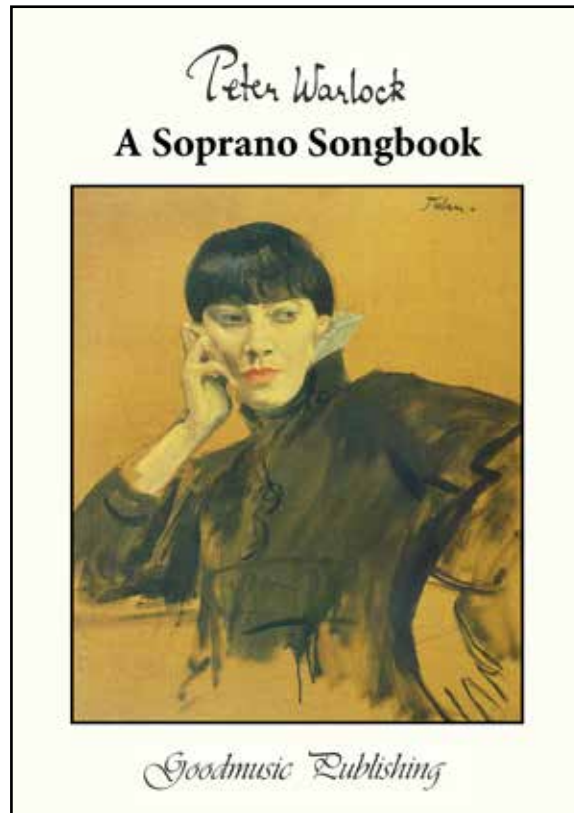
The volume itself is attractively produced and thoughtfully laid out, with that all important care to minimise page-turning for accompanists.

John Mitchell's illuminating notes on each of the songs are supplemented with a helpful list of suggested further songs for sopranos to explore. These are available in the *Peter Warlock Critical Edition* (as are the original-key editions of all Warlock's songs).

Finally, a short biography and photo-montage of the composer are included, as is an introduction to the work and resources of the Peter Warlock Society.

This new *Soprano Songbook* will be invaluable to soprano singers and voice teachers. It will also be of interest to anyone wishing to try the transposed versions (eg. high tenors), to expand their repertoire, or explore Warlock's beautifully crafted song output in one convenient well produced volume. ■

Special Offer for Members



Peter Warlock: A Soprano Songbook is now available from Goodmusic Publishing
Catalogue No. GM337 – Price £15 plus p&p
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22 Ethelburga Drive, Lyminge, Folkestone, Kent CT18 8JJ

Tel: 01303 864341 Email: johnrgmitchell@gmail.com

A review of the volume is on page 31 and an account of its evolution is on page 34.

Reviews

'Sops in Wine' – the evolution of a new songbook

Peter Warlock: A Soprano Songbook, Goodmusic Publishing

Jonathan Carne describes the process of selection and attendant rationale behind it of this welcome publication.



Jonathan Carne and Naomi Johnston at their home in Cornwall

At the end of 2019, I received news from our Chairman, Michael Graves, that Michael Pilkington had revised the eight volumes of the *PWS Critical Edition* song books. In addition to this, the Society was interested in producing a separate volume of songs for soprano using Michael Pilkington's latest revisions. Michael, therefore, needed a list of songs that a soprano would consider suitable so that he could gather them together and paginate accordingly. Michael Graves felt that this might be of particular interest to my wife, soprano Naomi Johnston, and asked if she might be willing to draw up a list, adding that any other comments or advice would be appreciated. We were sent details of songs already recorded by sopranos, for guidance, together with their page lengths, and were

advised that most volumes of the Critical Edition comprised around fifty six pages as a guide to how many songs might be included. What seemed to be a relatively straightforward task, perhaps a couple of afternoons' work for the two of us, proved to be a much more difficult task than first envisaged. It was fortunate, therefore, that Michael Pilkington, Michael Graves and John Mitchell were on hand for suggestion, advice and confirmation, at each stage of the process. After eleven months, and enough correspondence between our 'gang of five' to fill a short novel, the songbook eventually took shape.

A problem for sopranos, is that the golden age of English art-song presents less repertoire that is accessible, than is found in either German Lied or French *mélodie*. Nevertheless, even a cursory review of the collected songs of Peter Warlock reveals that there is abundant material for female singers, albeit spread across several volumes and not always in appropriate keys. The plan, therefore, was to provide access to much of this material by placing it under one roof in keys flattering to the soprano voice. As it became apparent that there were more suitable songs than could be accommodated in an average sized volume, the content had to be chosen with quality,

variety and performability in mind. It was decided that in order to obtain the best selection possible, a songbook for sopranos would eventually comprise songs drawn from three categories:

1. songs printed in their original keys;
2. songs published in high keys previously, often in the composer's lifetime and therefore with his approval;
3. a group of 'iconic' masterpieces which we were to transpose into higher keys for soprano voice.

Warlock was known to dislike transpositions and Fred Tomlinson reflected on this point in his *Thames Edition* preface, but added that he 'bowed to them in performing editions'. Consequently, in the composer's lifetime certain

'Sops in Wine' – the evolution of a new songbook (continued)

songs were published in other keys with his endorsement. Most, if not all, composers would wish their music to be performed, ideally, at its original pitch. However, a purist attitude to key would deny us many great performances. Take the *Warlock Centenary Album* (1994) for example: Janet Baker performs *Balulalow* in the darker key of D \flat major accompanied by Philip Ledger (on the organ). There is no doubt that she could have sung it effectively in E \flat major. However, for her voice the lower key is more expressive – and how effective it is! Similarly, Robert Lloyd gives the manliest performance of *Captain Stratton's Fancy* one can imagine by singing it in the lower key of D major, in true-bass style. Singers normally expect to sing repertoire in keys that are most comfortable to their vocal range. However, in a more recent soprano recording of Warlock songs (which won no accolades) the vocalist sings everything in original keys, many of which are too low for her voice. Indeed, to compensate for the low *tessitura* of *The Frostbound Wood*, she changes the pitch of one note in each repetition of the phrase. As a result, her *Gramophone Magazine* reviewer, who failed to notice that her key choice was the main problem, speculated that Warlock's songs were intrinsically unfriendly to all but the baritone fraternity and off-putting to female voices! Singers will always want to sing great songs but, clearly, damage is done to the composer's and the singer's reputation if the choice of key is poor. In addition, many of Warlock's accompaniments lie beyond the skill of amateur pianists and, indeed, most professional accompanists would prefer not to transpose fast or highly chromatic songs from the score. This can lead to an unsatisfactory situation where singers may choose inappropriate keys, through lack of choice, in order to accommodate their accompanists!

After a month of deliberation, I emailed Michael Graves:- 'We have about three-quarters – the 'must-haves', and are mulling over the rest. We are considering songs that have been placed mainly in high voice editions (though not always in the best keys) and other songs which are so iconic that Naomi and I feel they ought to be included, if necessary, in higher keys – a good example being the three Belloc settings.'

Happily, the other members of 'the gang' agreed with this policy, observing that German lieder and French *mélodie* are routinely published in high, medium and low editions, making this repertoire accessible to all vocal ranges. It is true that certain songs are far more effective when performed in original keys, particularly when the pitch of the original has been chosen for its darkness: one thinks of Brahms' *Von Ewiger Liebe* in B minor, which was sung so memorably by Kathleen Ferrier. However, the argument that the pitch of a song should always be the original, would deny both singers and audiences many fine performances. Schubert's masterpiece *Die Winterreise* has been interpreted by all voice ranges (including female) and has left us with many memorable recordings from voices as varied in pitch and tone quality as Hans Hotter and Peter Pears. Essentially, Warlock is a melodist and, above all, a harmonic composer par excellence, albeit one who enjoys stepping beyond traditional ideas of correctness. Nevertheless, the sureness of their harmonic structure allows Warlock's songs some flexibility with regard to change of key in a similar way to, say, Brahms or Fauré: the calculation being that the gains (in terms of wider vocal accessibility) most often outweigh the losses.

For the first time, *Sleep* is published in the high key of B \flat minor instead of its original key of G minor, making an interesting comparison with Gurney's *Sleep* which was composed in B \flat minor and later transposed down into G minor. We were heartened to see the words 'good idea' from Michael Pilkington written in the margin of our song list for this key change, and for a consensus of opinion that new transpositions should be made in special cases. In addition, the Hilaire Belloc trilogy, *Ha'nacker Mill*, *The Night* and *My Own Country* are all transposed up a minor third to preserve the key relationships of the originals. Choosing the interval of this transposition took some consideration. For the first song it was felt that F minor was a good substitute for D minor. The chords which introduce and conclude *Ha'nacker Mill* gain an almost star-like sparkle. Regarding *The Night*, a tone higher had been suggested by one member of our team, however, in keeping with the transposition of the others, the minor

'Sops in Wine' – the evolution of a new songbook (continued)

third to G minor seemed to suit best, giving the singer a G to intone (reminiscent of evensong prayer), plus manageable arpeggios for the accompanist in the final verse: here the pianist should still be able to convey some sense of the dark grandeur of the original even in this higher key. *My Own Country* in A \flat major was an easier decision as it has been published separately in that key by OUP for many years. We felt that sopranos would very much enjoy having access to both *Late Summer* and *Autumn Twilight* as they are both wholly original songs which could easily be paired in recital. The key that was settled on for *Late Summer* was a tone higher (originally E major): G \flat major was preferred in preference to its enharmonic equivalent F \sharp major, particularly as John Mitchell had the clever idea of introducing a B \flat major key signature for the central section thus making the accompaniment easier to read. Two songs which received a semitonal facelift after many sing-throughs were *Balulalow* and *Pretty Ring Time*. Naomi felt that, unlike mezzo soprano Dame Janet, who favoured a lower key, most sopranos would prefer the song in E major in preference to E \flat major. Similarly, *Pretty Ring Time* is adequate for soprano voice in the medium-high key of E \flat major but, again, after many run-throughs we found E major preferable: the high G \sharp at the end has a real show-stopping effect in this key, making this piece potentially a good finisher in recital. John raised the legitimate concern that E major might prove to be more difficult to play as it is both fast and, in typical Warlock fashion, stretchy. Happily, I found that the ratio of easy to awkward tenths was roughly the same in either key so as to make little difference. For many years, OUP published *Yarmouth Fair* and *Captain Stratton's Fancy* in several keys, some more awkward to stretch than others.

A great deal of thought was given to the new transpositions mentioned above, partly in regard to their vocal range but equally to the impact on the mood, weight and difficulty of the accompaniments. Of the final Bruce Blunt settings, sopranos are rewarded with but one treasure: *The First Mercy* in its original key. Sadly, the other two Blunt masterpieces, *The Fox* and *The*

Frostbound Wood, are omitted from this soprano volume: their darkest realms proving as resistant to key change as to the tread of angels. In regard to *The Frostbound Wood*, the vocal line in this song, like its prototype, *The Night*, lies comfortably in the voice a minor third higher – intoning on G instead of E, but John was the first to notice, with unease, that the accompaniment lacked body at the higher pitch. Reluctantly, we felt that the compromise made with sonority that seemed acceptable with *The Night* wasn't justifiable with this great song. Raising the pitch by the smallest amount of one semitone allowed some weight to remain in the accompaniment but, as a result, the vocal placing was much worse. The omission of *The Frostbound Wood* proved to be the toughest decision. However, we are convinced that it was the correct one. Conversely, *The Fox* was much easier to discount as the entire character of this song is woven into its dark baritone timbre.

Apart from transposing the few 'iconic' songs mentioned above, it was also a pleasure to re-introduce songs which had been published in higher keys in the distant past, such as *Mourn no moe*, *Take, O take those lips away* and *The Bailey berith the bell away*. The latter, which now appears a major 3rd higher in G major, feels particularly comfortable in that key: John wonders if this might actually have been the original key.

Due to the advised number of pages of the volume of songs, our selection was under very tight constraint in the region of seventeen or eighteen. However, seeking confirmation on maximum page length, Goodmusic Publishing confirmed that a much larger volume could be produced, which could accommodate twenty three songs.

An obvious choice for a professional soprano might be the five songs which comprise the soprano cycle *Lilygay*. As they are published together in Volume 3 of the *Peter Warlock Critical Edition* for high voice and have also been published on their own separately, we suggested taking a controversial step by omitting them altogether. Happily, the other members of the team agreed with the logic of this decision: by leaving these out there would be room for

'Sops in Wine' – the evolution of a new songbook (continued)

more, perhaps less obvious, songs. In addition, *Lilygay* is a 'hard nut to crack' for both singer and pianist as, indeed, are *Mockery* and *Dedication* which were omitted on the grounds of being less likely to be chosen for performance than other equally good songs. These and other recommended songs for soprano are included at the back of *A Soprano Songbook* with reference to their occurrence in the *PWS Critical Edition*. All of Warlock's art-songs present technical and artistic challenges to both singer and pianist alike. There was no question of omitting *Consider*: it is certainly a difficult song, especially for accompanists, but its fluid virtuosity (unique amongst Warlock's faster songs) presents a pianistic challenge rather than a deterrent.

In addition to performability is, of course, variety. It was important to provide as wide a range of styles as possible in order to enable sopranos to compile attractive song groups in recital programming. The order of songs and their pagination was left for John to decide, but it was necessary that *A Soprano Songbook* comprised a number of fast songs to counterbalance the medium and slower-paced items. *Robin Goodfellow* was included for this purpose and for its unusual take on familiar compound time metre. Singers will also find a good mix of Warlock's 'neo antico' and modern style, and all the contrasts of mood one associates with this composer. A recurring theme in Warlock's slower songs is the inducement of sleep. These vary from peaceful lullabies to dark cravings for oblivion. The four cradle songs included in this volume are *My little Sweet darling*, *Lullaby*, *Balulalow*, and *Cradle Song*. The singer will find the widest range of expression within this category. The latter, *Cradle Song*, reveals Warlock's bitter/sweet dualism at its most intense: an innocent melody combined with an increasingly disturbing accompaniment.

Beyond the issues above, questions arose concerning the suitability of songs for men or for women and, indeed, whether such clear divisions can still be said to exist. The passions and beauty of art-song, being universal in nature, may often transcend matters of gender but, nevertheless, considerable discussion took place on this subject within the group. We concluded that audiences used to hearing

soprano renditions of, say, Faure's *Nell* or Schumann's *Frühlingsnacht* (overtly male-perspective settings), would easily accept Warlock's settings of *Rest sweet nymphs* and *Take, O take those lips away* sung by female voice. In addition, Michael Graves thought that it would be a novel idea to include one of Warlock's more 'ebullient' songs – ie pieces which have been considered 'off-limits' to female singers. Warlock's output in this genre comprises both the artful and the artless. A dazzlingly quick and nimble example of the former category sprang to mind: *Jillian of Berry*. Having first toyed with giving it an alternative title of *Julian of Berry* (with suitably altered pronouns etc.), good sense prevailed and the words are left unaltered, giving it a new twist as a soprano solo – its merriment enhanced with a frisson of ambiguity. Naomi took note of tenor Ian Bostridge's recording and, consequently, it has been placed a tone higher in C major.

Later in the summer, the choice of what to include and what to leave out was, as mentioned before, made easier when Goodmusic Publishing agreed that the songbook could be expanded to about eighty pages, allowing room for more items and general information, though, inevitably, some lovely songs such as *To the memory of a great singer*, *The sick heart* and *Spring* did not make the final cut. With a Warlock song prize in the pipeline, it was especially important that this volume would encourage sopranos to take part by giving them a good range of options and, in particular, access to masterpieces denied to them before.

As the decades roll by, voices, instruments, musical tastes and society itself are subject to change. That which holds quality in art endures, in part, by being adaptive: hence we may find *Coriolanus* set in a modern shipyard or *Der Ring des Nibelungen* in Wall Street. In a small way, *A Soprano Songbook* sets a challenge for sopranos to look at Peter Warlock and that Cinderella art-form, known as English Song, afresh: hopefully, in a new light. We trust that Warlockians will be contented with the thought that *Sleep* is now available in a high key, and, having waited a hundred years for this to happen... some little joy. ■

Reviews

Moeran's Whythorne's Shadow: for Piano solo arr. by John Mitchell

Published by Fand Music Press

Derek Foster



Thomas Whythorne

The impetus for this short article is the publication by Fand Music Press of a new piano arrangement by John Mitchell of *Whythorne's Shadow* by E.J. Moeran. I did not previously know this piece, or anything about Whythorne, so it has been interesting to explore this repertoire.

Peter Warlock studied and edited Elizabethan and Jacobean music from his early 20s and, while living a bohemian existence at Eynsford in 1925, wrote an influential pamphlet on Thomas Whythorne (various sources give an alternative spelling of Whitehorne and other variants, casting doubt on the pronunciation). Moeran was his co-tenant at Eynsford. Whythorne's known work was saddled with the epithet 'barbarous' by Burney in 1789 and he was hardly recognised until Warlock reawakened interest in him. In his book *The English Ayre* (pub. 1926) Warlock praises Whythorne's part-songs as ranking with the best of later ayres by Dowland and others, and he transcribed and edited Whythorne's *As thy shadow itself apply'th* of 1571 (pub. 1927) with many others for the *Oxford Choral Songs* series.

In modern part-writing terms, the start of the bass line of *As thy shadow* is rather unadventurous, with leaps rather than steps (if not atypical of some less contrapuntal

works of the time), although it does later include elements of the melody. There may have been some intended cross-rhythms caused by syllabic stresses [See *Example 1* bars 6-7 on 'Turn-ing'], but in Moeran's orchestral version, without words, the effect is just a lilting 6/4 melody. Its use of false relations (C sharp-natural, F natural-sharp), with flattened sevenths implying a more modal harmony, was similar to the things that attracted me to the first Warlock work I heard in my teens, *Capriol* for strings (1926), based on the work of a near-contemporary of Whythorne (Arbeau, 1589). I was also taken by the fact that these false relations lead to simultaneous major/minor 3rds and more modern chords.

Although Moeran would, I had thought, have known *As thy shadow* from Eynsford days, his compositional output had dwindled due to the libertine social life of the milieu there (and incipient alcoholism), unlike Warlock, who seems to have thrived on this. Not until after his return to his family home in 1930 did Moeran recommence composing seriously and wrote *Whythorne's Shadow*, based on the part-song, in 1931. By 1928, Warlock had moved back to London and died at his flat there in 1930. As John Mitchell says in his foreword to the score, this affected Moeran profoundly and, although the piece was not dedicated to Warlock, it could have been a tribute to him (and a way of exorcising his influence?). John Mitchell has referred me to a book¹, which says that in 1929 Warlock had written to Colin Taylor that the manuscript of Moeran's latest work, *a fantasy for small orchestra on a theme by Whythorne*, had been lost 'some years ago'. The 1931 score may or may not be an entirely new work.

Moeran's work is for the unusual combination of string orchestra with a wind quartet. After a straightforward orchestration for strings of the Whythorne original (cf. *Capriol*), there is a repetition with solo wind instruments added, some chromatic harmony with a flute embellishment, closer false relations of F sharps/naturals, staggered and canonic entries. A more modal and harmonically static episode (with E flats and B flats) follows and this increasingly punctuates statements of the theme with 'washes' of sound on just one modality. Is it fanciful to suggest that the short Dmaj – Amin – Dmaj progression of *Example 1* (bar 4 on 'so thou go') is the basis of the 7-8 bars of Emaj / Bmin7 / Emaj later? [See *Example 2*]

Moeran's Whythorne's Shadow (continued)

Example 1

3 (end of) 4 5 6 7

Soprano
where - so thou go, And when thou bends, it - self it wry'th, Turn - ing

Alto
where - so thou go, And when thou bends, it - self it wry'th, Turn - ing

Tenor 1
where - so thou go, And when thou bends, it - self it wry'th, Turn - ing

Tenor 2
where - so thou go, And when thou bends, it - self it wry'th, Turn - ing

Bass
where - so thou go, And when thou bends, it - self it wry'th, Turn - ing

Thomas Whythorne (transcribed & edited by Peter Warlock): *As thy shadow itself apply'th* - end of bar 3 to start of bar 7

Example 2

67 *p*

69 *mp*

E.J. Moeran (arranged John Mitchell): *Whythorne's Shadow* bars 67 to 70.

Moeran's Whythorne's Shadow (continued)

Warlock's original transcription of Thomas Whythorne's song *As thy shadow itself apply'th*.

With a gentle lute

As thy shadow itself apply'th
for 5 voices.

THOMAS WHYTHORNE (1571)

S.
A.
T.
T.
B.

As thy sha-dow it self ap-ply'th to follow thee when so thou go, and when thou kents, it self it wy'th, turn- ing as thou both to and fro: the flat-ten-on e-ven so, and shdes himself the same to glose with many a fawning and gay show whom he would frame for his tapers. With his tapers.

Alto sings from this copy

Moeran's Whythorne's Shadow (continued)

Whythorne's Shadow

E.J. MOERAN

arranged by John Mitchell

Andantino commodo $\text{♩} = \text{c.48}$

Piano

mp

mp

mf

mp

This arrangement © 2021 John Mitchell
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Moeran's Whythorne's Shadow (continued)

The theme's later statements have extensions of the melody and Delius-influenced chromaticism. This leads to flatter and sharper keys, and eventually the remote key of F sharp major is reached before heading back to the conclusive and resounding opening G major.

John Mitchell's arrangement skilfully keeps most of the lines and indeed doubles them if needed. It is instructive to see what he has done to put melodic lines in different octave positions to bring them out and give a good piano sonority.

The 'washes' of sound mentioned above work well on the piano with appropriate use of the pedal, the register of the high melody line and low chords being effective. The 'bite' of the false relation of major third in melody against a minor chord is effective on the piano too.

Ideally, the pianist should have a good stretch – the left hand should be able to play white-notes 10ths with ease. I have to play these on the edges of the notes, but nevertheless

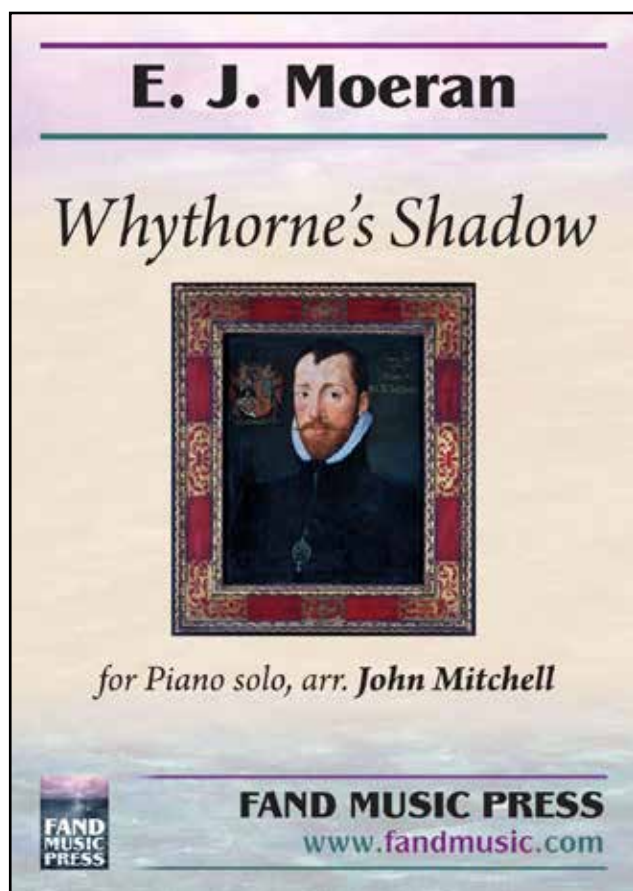
it is manageable with touches of pedal (and more than touches are appropriate to the style quite often!).

I enjoy playing Moeran's piano music (*Bank Holiday*, for instance, has similar stretches in the left hand) and welcome this arrangement that makes it possible to play another of his more important, if quite short works, at home. It should make a good recital piece.

Lonely Waters, Moeran's companion piece to *Whythorne's Shadow*, although different in style and forces, has a connection in that it goes in an opposite key direction, from F sharp major to G major/E minor in the middle and back. It has also been arranged for piano (with optional voice) by John Mitchell and is available from Fand Music Press. ■

Note

- 1 Geoffrey Self: *The Music of E.J. Moeran* (Toccata Press, 1986), page 88.



E. J. Moeran: Whythorne's Shadow – for Piano solo, arr. John Mitchell, Fand Music Press catalogue No. FM230.

The volume can be purchased from Fand Music Press (via their website: www.fandmusic.com) at £11.95 per volume + p&p

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

Contact: John Mitchell
22 Ethelburga Drive,
Lyminge,
Folkestone,
Kent CT18 8JJ

Tel: 01303 864341

Email: johnrgmitchell@gmail.com

Lonely Waters, Moeran's companion piece to *Whythorne's Shadow*, has also been arranged for piano (with optional voice part) by John Mitchell, and is available from Fand Music Press only, at £9.95 + p&p – catalogue No. FM176.

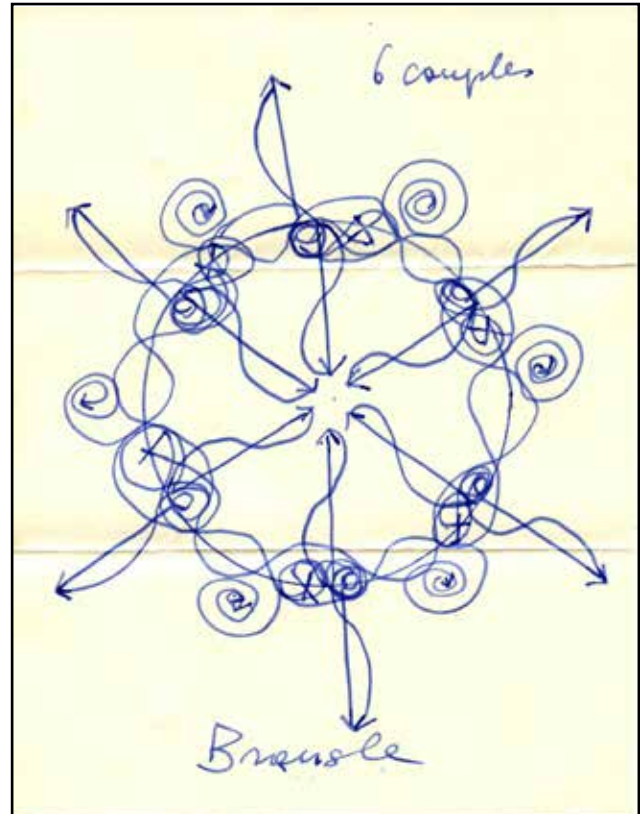
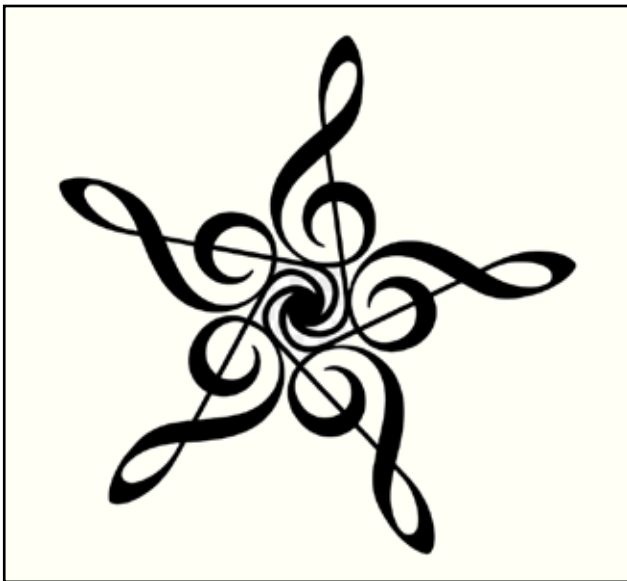
Letters to the Editor

Dear Michael,

Many thanks for another fascinating issue of the PWS Newsletter (Autumn 2020, No. 107).

Litz Pisk's dance pattern for the *Bransle* on p.32 [and again right] reminded me of this 'treble clef star'.

Garry Humphreys



Capriol and Handel's Water Music

Dear Michael,

It was interesting to read Jonathan Carne's review of Warlock's *Six English Tunes* in the previous *Newsletter*, and how he mentioned that there may have been a connection (albeit a tenuous one, perhaps) between this work and *Capriol*. Both have six movements and were produced in the same year, 1926. We know that *Capriol* was composed in October of that year, and as far as I am aware the exact date when Warlock arranged the *Six English Tunes* has not been firmly established. The year of publication may be revealing here: *Six English Tunes* dates from 1926, and *Capriol* from 1927, and it seems likely they were produced by Warlock in that order. It raises the intriguing question of whether Warlock may have been influenced, when pondering the scope and size of *Capriol*, by the successful six movement structure of the *English Tunes*.

In a review of a local performance of *Capriol* a few years ago, I was a bit stumped about what to say about it

that hadn't been said before, suspecting that everything noteworthy about the work had already been uttered many times over. Instead I found myself musing over whether its number of movements was a carefully considered choice that Warlock had made, and whether this aspect was a contributory factor in its popular appeal. To put it another way, I posed the question of whether *Capriol* would have been equally successful had it been comprised of, say, as few as four movements, or as many as eight.

More recently I happened to be listening to a recording of Sir Hamilton Harty's arrangement of a suite from Handel's *Water Music*, and it struck me it may possibly hold some relevance with the above. Harty had made his arrangement in 1920, and from 1922 onwards it was being fairly widely performed. I think it highly likely Warlock may have heard it by the time he came to compose *Capriol* in 1926. We know that he had attended some of Harty's concerts with the Hallé Orchestra, and that he had some personal dealings with him (for example, he mentioned in a June 1925 letter

Letters to the Editor (continued)

to Paul Ladmirault that he was to see Harty in two or three weeks' time). The possible relevance about Harty's *Water Music Suite* is that not only is it in six movements, but the tempi order of the latter loosely matches that of *Capriol*:

Water Music Suite

1. Allegro – quick
2. Air – slow
3. Bourrée – quick
4. Hornpipe – quick
5. Andante espressivo – slow
6. Allegro deciso – quick

Capriol

1. Basse-Dance – quick
2. Pavane – slow
3. Tordion – quick
4. Bransles – quick
5. Pieds-en-l'air – slow
6. Mattachins – quick

I would not wish for one moment to suggest Warlock had directly based the format of *Capriol* on Harty's arrangement, but might he have noted that the latter proved to be a well-balanced and satisfactory structure for a composite work of six movements?

John Mitchell

Newsletter Index

Dear Michael,

It was an excellent idea putting all the PWS Newsletters on to one CD. Maybe what I am suggesting has already been thought of, and the Committee has already considered how I think the value of the CD could be enhanced.

What I am suggesting is putting an index to all the Newsletters on the PWS website. The work of compiling it could be put out to a professional indexer – there is a Society of Indexers which can give you a list of names to pick from – who would supply it in a format making it easy for a nominated person with a password (probably the Editor, sorry) to interpolate new entries as new numbers are published.

Rodney Burton

Ed replies: Many thanks, Rodney, for this suggestion. As you know, we have been working on a new specification for our website, which includes a number of new areas where we can add more material, including an index for the Newsletters.

However, I must thank you for suggesting that we engage the services of a professional indexer. We are so used to doing everything ourselves that we often overlook the obvious! As mentioned in my editorial, a revised specification for the website has now been prepared and put into the hands of a specialist designer. There will be more information on the progress of the revised website in my Chairman's Report later this year.


Michael

Yet more on *Capriol*!!!

The letter reproduced [below] from The English Folk Dance and Song Society to Ian Copley, dated 1 September 1959, offers some interesting comments on Warlock's use of tunes from Arbeau's *Orchesographie* for his *Capriol*.

The English Folk Dance and Song Society
Amalgamating the Folk Song Society, founded in 1890, and the English Folk Dance Society, founded by Cecil Sharp in 1911

PATRON: HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS MARGARET

<small>President: The Rt. Hon. THE EARL OF VERULAM, M.A., J.P.</small>		<small>Director: DOUGLAS KENNEDY, O.B.E.</small>
<small>Hon. Treasurer: K. B. CONSTABLE</small>		<small>Secretary: Commander J. A. ELWIN, D.S.C., R.N.</small>

CECIL SHARP HOUSE, 2 REGENT'S PARK ROAD, N.W.1
Nearest Station, Camden Town Telephone: GULiver 2206

1st September, 1959.

Dear Mr. Copley,

Thank you for your letter of the 30th August. I have made some enquiries about the tune of the Branle de Poitou and have been told by Miss Melusine Wood who has undertaken very wide research into the dances of that period that the tune in Arbeau is complete.

The Branle consisted of very short phrases which were repeated. The basic rhythm was always the same and the short phrase of tune was repeated until the dance came to an end, though the pattern of the steps might vary.

The other person whom I have consulted, Miss Belinda Quirey, 22, Primrose Hill Road, N.W.3., pointed out that Peter Warlock made considerable variations in the tempi of the tunes he took from Arbeau, and that in his arrangements they are almost impossible to dance to. If you would like to take this point up further with her she would be very interested to hear from you, as she has made extensive studies of historical dances.

Yours sincerely,
Lara Jackson
Librarian.

I.A. Copley, Esq.,
83, Tredegar Road,
Wilmington,
Nr. Dartford,
Kent.

And finally ... two snippets

Warlock's *The Curlew* featured on BBC Music Magazine CD



The cover CD that came with the BBC Music Magazine's December issue included Warlock's *The Curlew*, along with VW's *The Lark Ascending*, Delius's *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* and *In a Summer Garden*.

The performance of *The Curlew* was a BBC Proms lunchtime concert at the Cadogan Hall in 2013. The soloist

was Robin Trischler (tenor) accompanied by the London Conchord Ensemble. I attended that concert along with several other Warlockians and am now delighted to have a recording of that fine performance. A review by Dr. Brian Collins can be found on p 36 of Newsletter No. 93, Autumn 2013. ■

***Bethlehem Down* for recorders recorded in Hullavington!**



Last December, the Hullavington Recorder Consort was asked to record a carol that could be played during Christmas Services across the Diocese. Their choice of music was Alex Ayre's arrangement for recorders of Warlock's *Bethlehem Down*. The soloist was Henny Metters and the recording was made by Simon Durrant. It was of necessity a chilly, socially

distanced event, with all doors and windows open, but the dedication of everyone to ensure that Warlock's lovely carol should sing out across the Diocese at Christmas was admirable. Thank you Hullavington Recorder Consort, and all local choirs, ensembles and musicians everywhere, who bring beautiful music (especially Warlock's) to our ears! ■

Notice of the 2021 Annual General Meeting

**The twice postponed 2020 AGM will now take place on Saturday 9 October at
St Nicholas Church, Stevenage Old Town, Stevenage SG1 4DA**

Letters recently discovered confirm that Warlock and Elizabeth Poston did indeed have a romantic association. In 1914 Elizabeth Poston's widowed mother, a friend of the Forsters, moved into the Forster's old family home *Rooks Nest House*, Stevenage (*bottom left*). Elizabeth was then aged nine. She later became a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music and worked closely with Vaughan Williams and,

of course, Warlock. She was recognised as an authority on folk song and her Penguin volumes of Christmas carols are well known. Poston also played a leading role in the BBC, first working in the European Service under Churchill and the War Office for the liberation of the allied countries and then played a leading role in the founding and development of the Third Programme.



*Top: Elizabeth Poston and Peter warlock
Above: Rooks Nest House and a view of 'Forster Country'.*

E M Forster had been blissfully happy as a young boy in the area around St Nicholas Church in Stevenage. He had lived there in *Rooks Nest House* for ten years from the age of four. When Stevenage was designated a New Town in 1946 he worried that his beloved countryside would be destroyed, although he recognised that new housing was essential to

alleviate the distress of bomb damaged London. Stevenage had been the model for Hilton in his novel *Howards End*, the book focussing on the old home he loved, *Rooks Nest House*. In those troubled days *The Times*, voicing the pleas of people throughout the world, coined the phrase 'Forster Country'.

Notice of the 2021 Annual General Meeting

The twice postponed 2020 AGM will now take place on Saturday 9 October at
St Nicholas Church, Stevenage Old Town, Stevenage SG1 4DA



*Left: The Avenue through Bury Mead leading to St Nicholas Church; right: The Cromwell Hotel Bar and Restaurant.
(Photos: Michael Graves)*

Provisional Plan for Saturday 9 October

- 12.00am Lunch in the Bar/Restaurant of the Cromwell Hotel
- 2.00pm Walk from the Cromwell Hotel through Bury Mead to St Nicholas Church.
[Transport will be available for anybody who would prefer not to walk.]
- 2.30pm Annual General Meeting, St Nicholas Church
- 3.30pm Talk on Elizabeth Poston, Warlock and other local figures
- 4.30pm Complimentary Afternoon Tea
- Break
- 7.30pm Concert of Warlock and Poston's music, St Nicholas Church

Provisional Plan for Sunday 10 October

- 10.30am Walking tours of Forster Country to include a visit to Poston's home, *Rook's Nest House* (tbc).

Trains from London Kings Cross are frequent. Journey time around 20 minutes.

**Accommodation is available at reasonable cost in the Cromwell Hotel
and other small hotels in the town.**

Specific information on times, locations, trains, buses etc. to follow.

Peter Warlock Society

Notice of the 2021 Annual General Meeting

The twice postponed 2020 AGM will take place on Saturday 9 October at St Nicholas Church, Stevenage Old Town – **FINGERS CROSSED**

There will be a talk after Saturday's AGM, a concert on Saturday evening, and tours of Forster Country on Sunday 10 October.



*Clockwise from top left: St Nicholas Church; Stevenage Old Town; The Reception entrance of The Cromwell Hotel.
(Photos: Michael Graves)*

See pp 46-47 for background information and provisional plan for the weekend