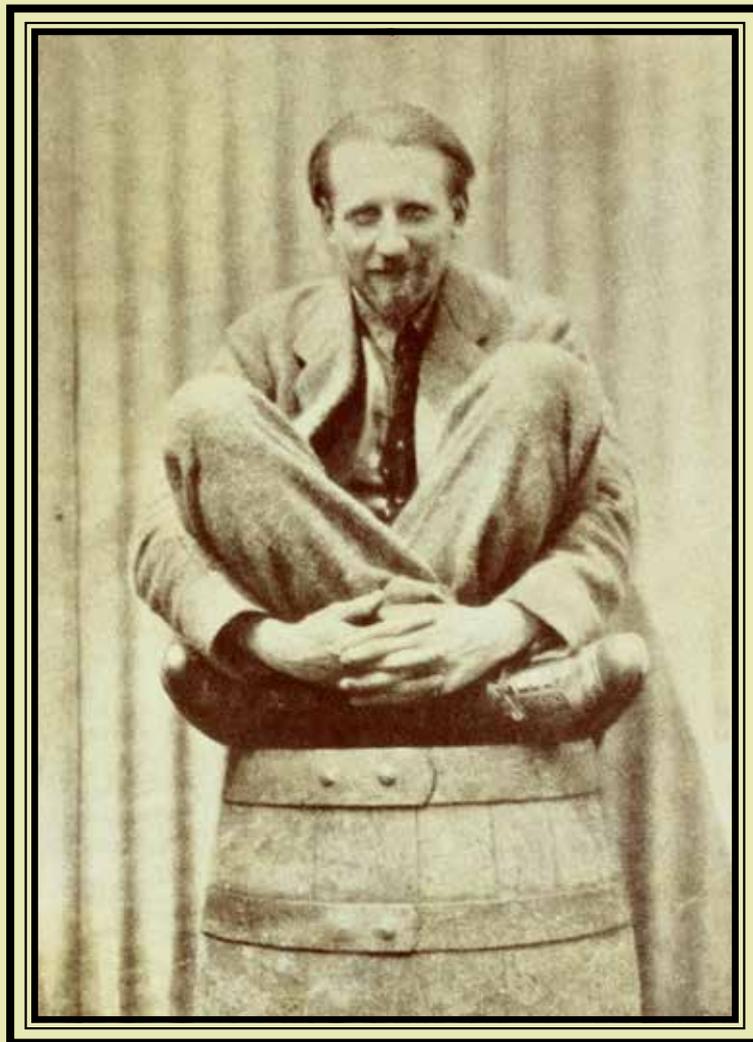


*Peter Warlock Society*

# Newsletter 113

**The Peter Warlock Society 60th Anniversary  
& Hubert Foss Edition**

**Autumn 2023**



**Chairman and Editor: Michael Graves**

# Peter Warlock Society

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# Editorial

## Welcome to Newsletter 113



In this edition of the Newsletter we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of our Society in 1963 by the late Patrick Mills.

2023 is also the centenary year of the introduction of the Oxford University Press Music Department by Hubert Foss, which

eventually published a number of Warlock's songs. Foss was a good friend of Warlock's, although they eventually fell out. The Eynsford Cottage, occupied by Warlock, Moeran and Hal Collins from 1925 till 1928, was formerly occupied by Foss, but he found the cottage too small for his needs and moved to the neighbouring village of Otford. It was Foss who suggested to Warlock that the Eynsford Cottage might suit him. We know that Warlock visited Foss in Otford whilst living in Eynsford and they used to play rounders on the village green on a Sunday afternoon.

With this connection between Warlock and Foss, we held this year's AGM in Otford and reports of the various parts of the AGM weekend start with the Officers' Reports below.

The Foss theme continues with an article by John Mitchell that is based on the talk he gave at the AGM (page 16). This is followed by two pieces from the archives written by Foss himself. The first is a lecture on Warlock given in Melbourne in 1924 (page 22) and the second an article in the *Monthly Musical Record* of January 1931 (page 33).

Continuing with Foss and the OUP, Dr. Andrew Plant explores the story behind the extraordinary, lavish, limited edition *The Joyce Book*, which was designed by Hubert Foss. It was eventually published in 1933 (page 36).

Most members will probably have come across the story of the lightning strike on a church in Norfolk when Warlock, Moeran, Goss and Augustus John were visiting it. The story inspired PhD student Adam Soper to create an improvised concert using three tunes, including Warlock's *Lullaby*. See *Lightning Lullaby*, page 42.

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

May I wish all of you the very best for the Festive Season and also for 2024.

Michael

### ***The Peter Warlock Society Annual General Meeting weekend 13/14 May 2023***

#### **Chairman and Trustees Report for 2022/23**

##### **Introduction: where we are now**

This year is the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Society. The passing of Patrick Mills, and more recently, Brian Collins and Malcolm Rudland, in a sense, coincide with a watershed in the life and work of the Society. In 1963 our initial remit was to ensure that all Warlock's music should be available in print. Warlock's writings would also be gathered together for publication, and audio recordings made of his previously unrecorded music. This ambition has largely been achieved, so we might ask, what is the purpose of the Society now?

In many ways we have come full circle, almost back to where we started all those 60 years ago. Several publications are now out of print, whilst others are unfit for purpose and need replacing – the choral volumes being a perfect example. The four volumes of the *Occasional Writings* are no longer available. They were too expensive in the first place, were not particularly attractive visually, and they contained very few reproductions. A fifth volume of writings was prepared some years ago, but is still waiting publication. All five volumes need to be revised and re-

## **The Peter Warlock Society AGM: Officer Reports** (continued)

set in a more attractive format, with more, better quality, reproductions.

Our President, Barry Smith, has compiled a fifth volume of *The Collected Letters of Peter Warlock* containing letters that have come to light since the original four volumes were published. He has also compiled a volume of significant letters sent to Warlock. Both volumes will need to be prepared for publication.

New technology offers us the opportunity to make some of this written material available electronically, particularly on the Society's new website. This will take time to prepare, but it is a task that will become increasingly important.

It is also important for us to ensure that new audio recordings of Warlock's music are made to keep performances up to date. We can't rely solely on dated and archive recordings, however fine they may be. The Orchestral CD Project, *Maltworms and Milkmaids – Warlock and the Orchestra*, to be released in two weeks' time, is one significant development in this direction.

Reviewing, revising and updating all Warlock's music and writings for publication is, and will be, a mammoth undertaking, but one the Society will continue to pursue.

### **Recent achievements and future projects:**

#### **1. Recording projects**

David Lane has confirmed that the BBC Concert Orchestra recorded all the music for the CD at the Watford Colosseum in January 2022. After 16 months of waiting, the BBC sent a set of audio files (described as the final edit) to the Society in April. The CD booklet and tray inlay have been completed and should now be with the printers. There is a last-minute push to have the CD fully manufactured ready for the English Music Festival at the end of May in just two weeks' time.

The next recording project planned is a 3 CD set of the complete Peter Warlock Songs for Voice and Piano. This could be issued by EM Records as previously mooted, but Convivium Records are also very interested in this project. As a charity we would need to be seeking proposals with quotes from three recording companies. However, the decision on who to go with will not necessarily be the cheapest, but the one that offers, in our opinion, the best opportunity for producing definitive performances, best recording quality and widest distribution potential.

Convivium Records has also expressed an interest in looking at the re-release of the *Merry-Go-Down* record, first issued on vinyl in 1972

#### **2. Publications**

The eight volumes of the revised *Peter Warlock Society Critical Edition* have been completed and, following approval from Michael Pilkington, were sent to David Good of Goodmusic Publishing. The proofs were approved by Michael and myself and were published the very next day. Hal Leonard, publishers of the original *Critical Edition*, have undertaken to withdraw the original CEs from their retail sites.

Now that the revised *Critical Edition* is published our attention is directed at the nine volumes of choral music. It may be advantageous to consider fewer, larger volumes. We will report on the progress of this project in due course.

#### **3. Website**

The redesigned website for the Society is now up and running. There are several new features on it including a members only area and a facility for joining the Society, or for renewing membership, online. Claire Beach will provide more detail in her Secretary's Report.

### **The social life of the Society:**

Part of the purpose of our Society is, of course, to offer social gatherings for members. In addition to providing opportunities for meeting up at concerts, we offer social lunches and organised jaunts to places that have Warlock connections. The jaunt to the Chanctonbury Ring, at our AGM in May 2022, was a lovely outing that was thoroughly enjoyed by all who came along. We shall, of course, continue to organise social events.

### **The future:**

We have an excellent opportunity, especially through our new website, to promote Peter Warlock more widely in a positive way as a serious and industrious composer and scholar. It is important that we attempt to minimise the often-sensational portrayal of Warlock, but without subduing the fun element of the Warlock legend. One way of doing this is simply to make Warlock's music and work more visible, as well as the Society's activities.

## The Peter Warlock Society AGM: Officer Reports (continued)

I hope I have made a strong case for the continuing existence of a Peter Warlock Society. Warlock was a composer of considerable standing. His music and his scholarly work have contributed significantly to the musical life of Britain over the last 100 years. Our Society continues to work hard in order for Warlock's work and

music to reach, and be enjoyed by, as many people as. We have been doing so for 60 years. Long may it continue!

**Michael Graves** Chairman ,  
on behalf of the Trustees, 13 May 2023



### Secretary's Report

We currently have 137 members: 81 ordinary; 6 honorary; 7 joint; 3 joint life; 21 life; 13 overseas; 4 overseas life; 1 overseas President; 1 overseas Vice-President.

Unfortunately we don't have any student members at the moment, as we haven't had a Birthday Concert for several years. However, we hope this will be remedied once the Peter Warlock Prize is established in music colleges.

After much work from Mike Cooter and Adrian Green, we now have a working, responsive website, which looks impressive and works, mostly, the way we want it to. It has taken some time, as we explain to the designer, Mike Cooter, exactly what we want the site to include, and how. Mike has sometimes worked through the night to find a way of stopping the software from behaving in the way it wants to, rather than the way we want it to. For instance it doesn't ask for street addresses for new members.

We still have plenty of material to add to the site, and there are still a few glitches to be ironed out regarding renewal of membership and paying subscriptions. I hope to soon have a little more time to spare on adding content and keeping the site up to date. It's been set up so that it comes up in the first few results when you put 'Peter Warlock' into a search engine after Wikipedia and British Library. Unfortunately the Classic FM podcast is nearer the top than us.

Already we are receiving comments and queries through our 'Contact Us' form and have had a couple of

new members join up that way. We also had a query from the cameraman on *Some Little Joy*, the film about Warlock which was recently broadcast on Sky TV, asking what our members thought of the film, which is available on YouTube for anyone who hasn't seen it.

We have also received queries from people researching various obscure subjects peripheral to Warlock, as well as enquiries about obtaining specific pieces of music. We've been contacted by people interested in performing or recording works by Warlock, so there may well be a lot more to tell you about in future.

Please have a look at the website and let us know what you think. Is it what you'd expect? Should something else be there? Is something wrong? Use the comment form or email us direct. And if more people click on the [peterwarlock.org](http://peterwarlock.org) link and not the Classic FM one maybe we'll rise up the rankings!

I've also been exploring the photographs of Warlock that are held in the British Library, after we discovered that their article about him was illustrated with a picture of someone completely different (possibly Augustus John). After some email exchange, a verified portrait of Warlock himself was substituted for the incorrect one. I'm also exploring some other pictures of Warlock in the BL to find out if they are unique or duplicated elsewhere. Of course, we're also hoping that the long awaited project, *Peter Warlock: A Life in Pictures*, will now be possible.

Finally, Barry Smith, our Chairman, has his birthday today. I sent him a WhatsApp message this morning on behalf of the Society and he has replied, sending his best wishes to us all.

**Claire Beach**, Hon. Secretary, 13 May 2023

**The Peter Warlock Society AGM: Officer Reports** (continued)



**Treasurer’s Report**

**Financial Results for 2022**

There was a deficit of £28,616 for the year, and the reason for this is that we had two major capital expenses which had been planned for. The greater of these was the funding of the about to be released vocal/choral /orchestral CD, a total of £22,665. The other was the cost involved in setting up the new Society website £9,448. To put this into context, had we not had these, a surplus of £3,497 would have shown on the accounts. One key change to note is how annual subscriptions, formerly our major source of income now comprise a much smaller section of our receipts. They have been overtaken by the yields from investments, and along with deposit accounts interest, these represented almost three quarters of the Society’s income.

**Investment Performance**

At the end of 2022 we had invested a total of £225,000 in two funds that specialise in investing for charities – the COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund (£125,000), and the Sarasin Climate Active Endowments Fund (£100,000). The former has been yielding a return of 2.9%, compared to 2.4% from the latter. The combined yield for 2022 was £6 088.

**Conclusion**

The Society remains in a very healthy financial state at the end of 2022 when our total funds were £343,133. Prospects for the income stream look promising for 2023, as apart from investment returns hopefully being steady, with the notable rise in interest rates we are again receiving a decent amount from our main deposit account

**John Mitchell**, Hon. Treasurer, 13 May 2023

<b>Balance Sheet at 31 December 2022</b>		<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Assets:</b>			
Cash at Bank	Deposit Account	318,511	163,098
	Current Account	21,739	305,821
	Pictorial Biography Account	2,883	2,855
		<b>343,133</b>	<b>471,774</b>
<b>Investment in COIF Ethical Investment Fund</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>125,000</b>
[Valued at £117,551 on 31 December 2022]			
<b>Investment in Sarasin Climate Active Fund</b>		<b>100,000</b>	
[Valued at £87,423 on 31 December 2022]			
<b>Represented by:</b>			
General Fund Balance at 1 January		471,774	308,024
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year		(28,616)	288,750
Invested during the year		-100,000	-125,000
Cheque lost in the post		-25	-
<b>General Fund Balance at 31 December</b>		<b>343,133</b>	<b>471,774</b>

**The Peter Warlock Society AGM: Officer Reports** (continued)

**Receipts and Payments Account – General Fund  
for the year ending 31 December 2022**

<b>Receipts:</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	£	£
<b>From voluntary sources:</b>		
Subscriptions	1927	1775
Donations	360	277
Gift Aid	308	314
Royalties	135	127
Patrick Mills Bequest (part)	-	303,720
Soprano Songbook Sales	-	75
<b>From assets:</b>		
Charities Deposit Interest – General Society Account	1756	29
– Pictorial Biography Account	28	-
COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund yield	3657	1295
Sarasin Climate Active Endowments Fund yield	<u>2431</u>	-
	<b><u>10602</u></b>	<b><u>307,612</u></b>
<b>Payments:</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	£	£
<b>Charitable Activity Direct Expenditure:</b>		
Officer's expenses	1470	1954
Newsletter production & distribution + Sackbut	2995	2164
Royalties	18	233
AGM expenditure	560	1370
Subventions to concerts etc.	1150	3450
Warlock 'Orchestral Project'	22,665	-
New PWS website	9448	-
Archive & Music Repository (AMR)	-	258
Warlock: Revised Critical Edition	240	-
Soprano CD sponsorship	-	6500
New computer for PWS	-	2087
Miscellaneous	<u>672</u>	<u>846</u>
	<b><u>39,218</u></b>	<b><u>18,862</u></b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit) for the Year:</b>	<b>(28,616)</b>	<b>288,750</b>

**John Mitchell**, Hon. Treasurer, 13 May 2023

## ***The PWS Annual General Meeting, 13 May 2023***

Otford Village Hall, Otford, Kent

This year's AGM celebrated the centenary of the setting up of the Oxford University Press Music Department by Warlock's friend, Hubert Foss. OUP was to publish many of Warlock's songs.

Despite the rail strike, most members who had planned to attend by rail had been able to do so, as a reduced rail service was operating from London. The day started with members meeting up for lunch in the Turkish restaurant, *Hilal* in Otford, part of which was formerly *Forge House*, the home of Hubert Foss in the 1920s.

The meeting went smoothly and a brief account of proceedings is set out below. Officers' Reports are reproduced on pages 3-7.

A concert of Warlock's music, and that of several of his friends, including Hubert Foss, followed. It was devised by John Mitchell and performed by several members of the Society, and also guest baritone, Mark Holmes. Unfortunately Stephen Lloyd, who had offered to talk about Foss, was unable to attend due to the rail strike, but John Mitchell stepped in to provide a talk. Details of the concert start opposite and an augmented version of John's talk can be found on page 16.

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### **Abridged minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2023**

Herewith an account of the meeting in brief. The official draft of the minutes can be obtained from Hon. Secretary Claire Beach, whose contact details can be found on the inside front cover.

### **Formalities:**

The meeting was declared quorate and opened with the sad news of the passing of Brian Collins and Malcolm Rudland.

### **Officer Reports:**

The Reports from the Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer are reproduced on pp3-7 of this edition of the Newsletter. There were no matters arising from the reports.

### **Elections:**

#### **The Committee from May 2023 to May 2024**

Those legitimately remaining in post till May 2024, due to biennial rotation:

**Chairman:** Michael Graves  
**Hon Secretary:** Claire Beach  
**Member:** Jennifer Bastable  
**Member:** Giles Davies

Those seeking re-election and, if elected, will remain in post till May 2025:

**Vice Chairman:** David Lane – Proposed by John Mitchell, Seconded by Claire Beach  
**Hon Treasurer:** John Mitchell – Proposed by Susan Mitchell-Cook, Seconded by Derek Foster

**Member:** Bryn Philpott – Proposed by Claire Beach, Seconded by John Mitchell

Those seeking election and, if elected, will remain in post for one year till May 2024 (to preserve a 50/50 balance of Committee Members for biennial rotation):

**Member:** Nigel Foster – Proposed by Claire Beach, Seconded by Michael Graves

Those seeking election and, if elected, will remain in post till May 2025:

**Member:** Anthony Ingle – Proposed by John Mitchell, Seconded by Frank Bayford

**Member:** Eleanor Meynell – Proposed by Michael Graves, Seconded by John Mitchell

Majority votes required. All elected *nem con*

### **Locations for Annual General Meetings 2024 and 2025**

2024 will be the 130th anniversary of Warlock's birth. The AGM weekend will be held in Llandyssil on 18/19 May 2024. [See back cover of this issue]

As 2025 marks the centenary of Warlock moving to Eynsford, the AGM will be held there. Sally Coston, present occupant of the 'Warlock' cottage, has kindly offered to arrange tours.

### **Post script**

A birthday card for Barry Smith was signed by members and later sent to Barry in Cape Town.

As part of the concert which followed the meeting, members sang 'Happy Birthday' to Barry Smith and a recording of this was also sent to Barry via WhatsApp.

**The PWS AGM, a concert of music**

**Peter Warlock & Friends**

An informal concert, devised by John Mitchell, of music, mostly published by O.U.P., and composed by Peter Warlock and seven of his friends.

**Programme (Part 1)**

**Paul Martyn-West, with John Mitchell:**

E.J. Moeran: *In youth is pleasure*  
 E.J. Moeran: *The shooting of his Dear* (from  
*Six Norfolk Folk Songs*)  
 Peter Warlock: *After two years*  
 Peter Warlock: *Fair and True*

**Derek Foster:**

Colin Taylor: *Whimsies Nos. 1 & 4* (from  
*Four Miniatures*)  
 Constant Lambert: *Elegiac Blues*

**Mark Holmes, with Kevin Grafton:**

Peter Warlock: *Autumn Twilight*  
 Peter Warlock: *My own country*

**Anthony Ingle:**

Frederick Delius: *Dance for Harpsichord*  
 Peter Warlock (arr. Ingle): *Serenade for Delius*

**Programme (Part 2)**

**Anthony Ingle:**

Peter Warlock: *Row well, ye mariners*  
 (première performance?)

**Paul Martyn-West, with John Mitchell:**

Hubert Foss: *Rioupéroux*  
 Hubert Foss: *As I walked forth*  
 Arnold Dowbiggin: *All in a garden green*

**Derek Foster:**

E.J. Moeran: *Summer Valley*  
 John Ireland: *April*

**Mark Holmes, with Kevin Grafton:**

Peter Warlock: *Away to Twiver*  
 Peter Warlock: *Bethlehem Down*

**Paul Martyn-West, with Anthony Ingle:**

Peter Warlock: *Cradle Song*  
 E.J. Moeran & Warlock: *Maltworms*

**Programme Notes** by John Mitchell

Peter Warlock first met E.J. ('Jack') Moeran in early 1923, and during that year the latter had arranged six of the folk songs he had collected in Norfolk for voice and piano. Perhaps the most significant of them for Moeran was *The shooting of his Dear*, and Paul Martyn-West has recorded (about the lyric) how ... *Jimmy, a young fowler, mistakes his sweetheart, Polly, for a swan and accidentally shoots her. In the last verse Polly reappears (as a ghost?) pleading with Jimmy's uncle to let him go ...* Moeran later ... *used fragments of the tune in his Symphony in G minor.*

Moeran's *In youth is pleasure* dates from 1925. Warlock also set this lyric, not just once, but on three occasions; all are fairly brisk moving. By contrast, Moeran went for a more contemplative setting, taking his cue from the sunny afternoon backdrop, and the narrator's bitter-sweet dreaming of his beloved.

Some of Warlock's greatest achievements reside in his many love songs, of which *After two years* (1930) and *Fair and True* (1926) are fine examples, albeit with the latter having attracted some indifferent commentary for being too over-harmonised in the accompaniment. Both songs

were published by O.U.P. with *After two years* seemingly the last one to be issued after Warlock's death.

Derek Foster has kindly provided the following about the Colin Taylor and Constant Lambert piano pieces:

Colin Taylor (1881-1973) was Warlock's music master at Eton, and a warm friendship developed between them lasting right up to Warlock's death. Taylor wrote many educational pieces, to my mind of a high quality and interest for such a purpose. I had come across his name before my teens when his *Touch Last* was in an exam syllabus.

The four *Whimsies* were published in 1961 and dedicated to Adolph Hallis, a fellow composer, pianist and teacher from South Africa, where Taylor spent his life from the 1920s.

Constant Lambert (1905-1951) had made friends with Warlock early in his career. *Elegiac Blues'* full title is *Elegiac Blues (in memory of Florence Mills)*, and while still a student at the Royal College of Music in 1923, Lambert went to see singer/dancer Florence Mills and her troupe 'the Blackbirds' with Will Vodery's band. The Dixie jazz element appealed to him, and when Mills died in 1927,

## The PWS AGM, a concert of music (continued)

Lambert wrote this piece, orchestrating it the following year. There may be heard echoes of *The Rio Grande*, his most well-known work, also from 1927.

Whilst Warlock's piano accompaniments are invariably effective, it could be argued that many of them are not particularly well conceived for the instrument. An exception here is his wonderfully evocative setting of Arthur Symons' poem *Autumn Twilight* (1922) which nicely demonstrates that the composer could pen something remarkably pianistic when the need arose. *My own country* (1927) is easily (and justifiably) in the first rank as one of Warlock's most popular and well-loved songs, and probably needs no introduction accordingly.

Frederick Delius composed his *Dance for Harpsichord* in 1919 and it is dedicated to the British harpsichordist Violet Gordon Woodhouse (1872-1948). It is hardly idiomatically written for the instrument, but it is otherwise notable for some splendid harmonic touches. We know from his letters that Warlock was most impressed with VGW's playing, and it is tempting to wonder whether he may have instigated the notion of his friend and mentor writing this piece for her.

As a tribute to his friend, Warlock wrote his string orchestra *Serenade for Delius* (for his 60th birthday) in 1921/22, and Anthony Ingle writes about his arrangement of it for piano solo:

Once you accept that the genuine legato and micro-subtleties of phrasing that a body of strings can achieve are not really possible, the *Serenade* becomes surprisingly amenable to presentation from a solo keyboard. In my view, it's Warlock's most straightforwardly Romantic utterance, there being no text to cast emotional and psychological light and shadows; it follows from that, that a pianistic approach to it is quite appropriate, and indeed (again in my view) can elucidate some aspects of the piece which generally elude a string orchestra. An excellent example of that is the Billy Mayerl-like melismas at bars 45/46 ...

Of course, there are some very widely-spaced chords which have to be spread, and the odd moment when the double bass part, doubling the cellos at the octave below, simply can't be accommodated; but, by and large, it's possible to play all the notes that Warlock wrote without resorting to octave displacements. The same is not true of *Capriol*, which was conceived as a piano duet, and I

apologise for my attempt to do that in Stevenage eighteen months ago. At the same time, there are a few instances in which I've discovered a spare finger in the middle of a chord which will conveniently rest on a note which Warlock didn't write, but which seems to comply with the spirit of the occasion, and the eagle-eared(?) among you may enjoy spotting those.

I hope you don't miss the strings too much.

The British Library holds the manuscript of one of the very few pieces by Peter Warlock that has remained unpublished. This is his arrangement for piano of an old dance tune, *Row well, ye mariners*, and it appears to be a variant of that appearing in Playford's *The English Dancing Master* that was published in 1651. We are grateful to Claire Beach for very recently obtaining a photo of Warlock's manuscript so that a performance of it – and it may well be a premiere! – could be included in this afternoon's concert.

Hubert Foss (1899-1953), as with Jack Moeran, also met Warlock for the first time early in 1923, at one of Poldowski's London concerts on 31st January. Foss penned a fair amount of vocal music, especially in the 1920s, and unsurprisingly perhaps much of it was published by OUP. James Elroy Flecker's poem *Rioupéroux* refers to a ... *small untidy village* ... in Southern France, not too far from the Italian border, which the narrator is determined to visit again to seek out a girl he had rather taken a fancy to.

In *As I went forth* Foss sets a short verse by William Blake. The text gives the false impression of the start of a potential boy-meets-girl narrative – but 'nothing happens'! Because the poem is so short, the approach Foss adopts – not unsuccessfully one admits – is to repeat the lyric in entirety to make for a more satisfactory, well-balanced song.

Arnold Dowbiggin (1898-1970), a research chemist by profession, was a keen amateur singer in his spare time. He took a particular interest in Warlock's songs, immediately purchasing them as soon as they were published. A firm friendship developed between them during the last years of Warlock's life, and indeed four of his later songs are dedicated to Dowbiggin. Dowbiggin also dabbled in composition and arranging in a small way, and *All in a garden green* is his arrangement of words and tune that were popular in the mid-sixteenth century.

**The PWS AGM, a concert of music (continued)**



*Left to Right: Mark Holmes (baritone); Kevin Grafton (piano); Anthony Ingle (piano); John Mitchell (piano); Derek Foster (piano); Paul Martyn-West (tenor).*

*(Photo: Michael Graves)*

The remaining piano music in the programme is introduced by Derek Foster:

Moeran's friendship with Warlock is well-known; he shared the cottage in Eynsford with him and Hal Collins from 1925-1928. *Summer Valley* was written in 1925 and dedicated to Delius, an influence on his early work. Perhaps some of chromatic harmonies and rhapsodic writing of this piece is reminiscent of the older composer.

Warlock had written to John Ireland (1879-1962) in 1928 to congratulate him when he heard a broadcast of his *Sonatina*. After that, there developed correspondence and meetings between the two men. *April* is the first of *Two Pieces*, with the thematically-related *Bergomask*, and written, like the Moeran *Summer Valley* in 1925. It is a mainly sunny, spring-like piece with some melismatic writing.

*Away to Twiver* (1926) is unusual in Warlock's song output in that he sets a lyric which has a narrative quality to it. It also contains some wryly amusing word-painting, when there are references to ... *a consort of fiddlededees*, the drunken ... *smith of the town* ... and the simpering women.

The solo song version of the choral *Bethlehem Down* was completed on 1 December 1930, just over a fortnight before Warlock's untimely, tragic death. It was written for, and dedicated to Arnold Dowbiggin, and has a much darker, melancholic character than the earlier SATB version. It is almost as if it were a completely new work.

*Cradle Song* is the last, the longest, and perhaps the finest, of Warlock's four lullabies, and another that dates from his Eynsford years (in 1927). It is dedicated to his pal Alec Rowley, who had just written a major article about him for the national press.

It was Jack Moeran who penned the major part of *Maltworms* – the chorus and the second part of the verse – with Warlock merely chipping in the first eight bars of the verse tune. It was composed in 1926 for an amateur production, *Hops*, just along the road from Otford at Shoreham. The accompaniment was originally for brass band, but with this being abandoned, the song was eventually published as a solo song with optional unison chorus – a wonderful opportunity for us all to Raise Our Voices! ■

*The PWS AGM, a concert of music (continued)*



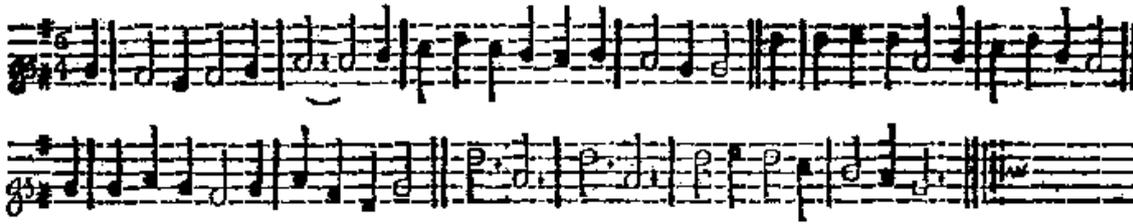
*Clockwise from top left: Paul Martyn-West (tenor) and John Mitchell; Mark Holmes (baritone) and Kevin Grafton; John Mitchell delivers his talk on Hubert Foss & Warlock; and again; John and company applauding Derek Foster.*

*(Photos: Michael Graves)*

## The PWS AGM, concert of music (continued)

John Mitchell expands on Warlock's *Row well, ye mariners*

**Row well ye Mariners.** *Longways for as many as will.* ☉☉☉☉  
☽☽☽☽



Lead up a D. First Man two slips Fall back both. Clap both your own Hands, then clap each  
forwards and cross the Room one Meer again. other's Right-hands against one another's;  
back. That way, the Woman the clap both your own Hands again, then clap  
again. other. Back again to your places. Left-hands, then clap both Hands again, then  
clap your Breasts, then meet both your  
Hands against one-another. The same  
again, only clap Left-hands first.

---

First Man sides with the next Wo. and his Wo. with the next Man. doing the like till you come to  
your own places, the rest following and doing the same.

Largely through the efforts of the Society over the last sixty years, almost all of Warlock's surviving original music is now currently in print (whether published for the first time, or as republications). One of the very few items<sup>1</sup> that hasn't been published to date is a short one-page arrangement of the tune *Row well, ye mariners*. The manuscript of it is lodged in the British Library, and it is curious on several counts.

On the manuscript Warlock simply describes what is there as a 'XVII cent. tune', and whilst that is not incorrect, it does not provide the full picture. The melody first appeared in print during 1651 as one of the items in John Playford's *The English Dancing Master*<sup>2</sup>, but it is much older as Playford selected his tunes from what was already in existence and well known at the time. Probably the earliest mention of *Row well, ye mariners* occurred in 1584 when it is alluded to in *A Handful of Pleasant Delights*, a collection of 32 ballads. Whilst only the words were included for each, there was also an indication of the tune to which it was to be sung. One of the ballads is described there as 'A proper sonet, wherein the Louer dolefully sheweth his grief for his L. & requireth pity. To the tune of Row wel ye marriners.' For those who might be interested, here follows the first of the six verses:

As one without refuge,  
For life doth pleade with panting breath  
And ruefully the ludge,  
Beholds whose doome grants life or death,  
So fare I now my onlie Loue  
Whom I tender as Turtle Doue,  
Whose tender looks (O ioly ioy)  
Shall win me sure your louing boy:  
Faire looks, sweet Dame,  
Or else[alas] I take my bane:  
Nice talke, coying,  
Wil bring me sure to my ending.

As will be seen from the illustrations here, Warlock's tune is clearly not note-for-note the one that appears in Playford's book. It raises the question of whether he had obtained the tune from another source, or if he may have created his own variant of it. That both are in the same key of G major may or may not be suggestive.

The next thing to consider is the provenance of Warlock's manuscript, and the intriguing aspect here is that *Row well, ye mariners* is written out on the reverse of the autograph score of his song *Queen Anne*. The latter is dated 12th January 1928, which poses the question of whether both may have been penned around the same time, and indeed, if so, which came first.

The PWS AGM, concert of music: *Row well, ye mariners* (continued)

# Row well, ye mariners

Seventeenth century tune  
arranged by PETER WARLOCK

**Fast**

Piano

5

9

13

17

21

**The PWS AGM, concert of music: *Row well, ye mariners* (continued)**

Perhaps the biggest question is why Warlock chose to make a short arrangement of this old tune. It could be that what is here is more in the way of a hastily written down sketch. The piece is fairly obviously intended for the piano, although this is not specified as such on the manuscript. What is more telling here is that it doesn't have any dynamics, phrasing or articulation, and as we know from Warlock's song accompaniments and his *Folk-Song Preludes* for piano, he was very meticulous in this regard.

Whilst there is absolutely no evidence for it, the present writer is tempted to put forward a hypothetical notion of what may possibly have been Warlock's idea for a new work. Assuming that his *Row well, ye mariners* does indeed date from around 1928, a year or two earlier he had composed *Capriol*, which by then was enjoying some measure of success. Could it have been that he had contemplated a kind of 'Capriol Mark 2', and this time instead of utilising material from Arbeau's dance treatise *Orchésographie*, he thought that *The English Dance Master's* selection of tunes might be a good source to dip into<sup>3</sup>?

Having obtained a copy of Warlock's manuscript from the British Library, a performance<sup>4</sup> of it by Anthony Ingle was given at the Society's post-AGM Concert on 13 May. Subsequently, David Lane has made an arrangement of the work for strings. Opinions so far seem to suggest that the work is a little miniature with an element of charm to it, and whilst the ending is somewhat pedestrian, there are also some characteristic Warlockian touches earlier on. ■

**Acknowledgements:**

I would like to thank:

Claire Beach for obtaining a photograph of Warlock's *Row well, ye mariners* manuscript from the British Library and Jennifer Bastable for her input with some historical information.

**I would like to thank the musicians, Derek Foster, Kevin Grafton, Mark Holmes, Anthony Ingle, Paul Martyn-West and John Mitchell for giving us such high quality performances. I would also like to thank John Mitchell particularly, not only for devising the concert, but also for stepping in at the last minute to provide a talk on Hubert Foss, Peter Warlock, and the Oxford University Press Music Department. An augmented version of John's talk starts on the following page.**



Anthony Ingle playing Warlock's *Row well, ye mariners* at the Otford AGM concert. This was possibly (probably?) a première performance.

(Photo: Michael Graves)

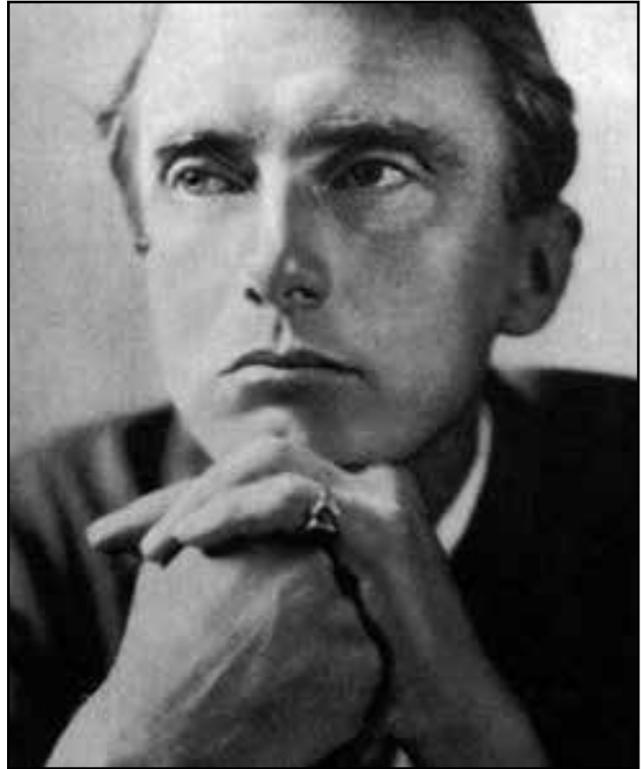
**Notes**

- 1 At the time of writing the other works still not published are: Warlock's orchestration of the song *Maltworms*; his original version of *Cod-Pieces* (as it appears nominally for piano solo); an unfinished *Suite for brass*; and some hymn tunes.
- 2 It bears the subtitle: 'Plaine and easie Rules for the Dancing of Country Dances, with the Tune to each Dance. LONDON. Printed by Thomas Harper, and are to be sold by John Playford, at his Shop in the Inner Temple neere the Church doore. 1651.'
- 3 He had already arranged something similar in 1926: his *Six English Tunes* for strings.
- 4 As the work is so short, it was actually played twice!

## Articles

### *Hubert Foss and the Oxford University Press Music Department*

This article is a transcript based largely on the talk delivered by **John Mitchell** at the Society's AGM on 13 May 2023.



Left: Hubert Foss in the 1930s; Edward Thomas

#### **Introduction:**

The Society's 2023 Annual General Meeting was held in the West Kent village of Otford for two very appropriate reasons. Firstly, during the mid-1920s, Warlock's friend Hubert Foss lived there for a while and Warlock was known to have been a regular visitor. Secondly, it was Foss who set up the Oxford University Press (OUP) Music Department in 1923, and with nearly a third of Warlock's song output being published by the Department, it seemed a fine opportunity to celebrate its centenary with a *Warlock and Friends* concert, largely featuring music published by OUP.

#### **Edward Thomas and the Foss/Warlock Connection:**

A good point to start might be to establish how Peter Warlock and Hubert Foss came to have connections with Otford and Eynsford, and this is partly indirectly linked to Edward Thomas<sup>1</sup>. Thomas was a late starter as a poet and, if anywhere, his name is usually linked to the village of Steep, near Petersfield in Hampshire, where he wrote much of the verse for which he is renowned. However,

before he and his family moved there, they had spent a year living at Elses Farm in Sevenoaks Wield, about eight miles south from Otford. Following Thomas' death in action at the Battle of Arras in 1917, his widow, Helen, looked for a place in West Kent to relocate, as the time she had spent with her husband at Elses Farm had been the happiest of their marriage. She had heard of *Forge Cottages* in Otford, which at the time were owned by Canon and Mrs Gilchrist Thompson from Sevenoaks. An application to rent one of the cottages (known then as *Forge House*) was successful, and she moved there with her three children. The second of these was a daughter, Bronwen, who had had a close friend called Kate Page<sup>2</sup> since their school days at Bedales together. Kate had married Hubert Foss in 1920, and there were soon two daughters, Susanna and Elizabeth, from the marriage. They were by then living in the Eynsford cottage<sup>3</sup>, and Bronwen was soon installed there as live-in nanny to the two girls. By the mid-1920s Helen Thomas decided to move to the London area, where she had family

**Hubert Foss and the Oxford University Press Music Department** (continued)



*Left:* Bronwen Thomas (1902-1975), aged 16; a few years later she went on to marry the brother of Hubert Foss' first wife.  
*Right:* Myfanwy Thomas (1910-2005), aged 12, shortly before she would have first encountered Warlock at the Eynsford cottage.

connections. The Foss family then took the opportunity of taking over the tenancy of *Forge House*, subletting the Eynsford cottage to Warlock in January 1925.

The youngest of Thomas' three children was another girl, Myfanwy, born in 1910. In 1979, our former member and English Song authority, the late Trevor Hold paid her a visit at her home in Berkshire. She told him that, as a teenager, she had some memories of Warlock, including previously unknown information about two Warlock songs which unfortunately have not survived. One of these was a setting of William Blake's *Infant Joy*. The other was of a poem by her father, who had written verse for each of his family members. The most well-known of these is that he penned for Bronwen, and this is the one that Warlock set to music. It begins:

If I should ever by chance grow rich  
 I'll buy Codham, Cockriden and Childerditch,  
 Roses, Pyrgo, and Lapwater<sup>4</sup>,  
 And let them all to my elder daughter.

**Oxford University Press and its Music Department:**

Legend has it Oxford University was founded in 872 as a result of a meeting in Oxford between King Alfred and some monks. It didn't properly take off as a university till the 12th century when colleges taking students were established, the first of these being Merton and Balliol Colleges. Oxford University Press began its existence in 1478 in the reign of Edward IV, when its first book was published (two years after William Caxton had set up the first printing press in Britain at Westminster). Today it is the largest university press in the world and is the only major UK one that has a music publishing department.

By the early 1920s OUP had two divisions. One was the Clarendon Press based in Oxford which published scholarly academic titles. But in London there were secondary premises at Amen House<sup>5</sup> which dealt with more popular educational volumes and books for children. The latter had as its head Humphrey Milford (who Warlock referred to as 'Sir<sup>6</sup> Humphrey Bumphrey'!). It was Percy

**Hubert Foss and the Oxford University Press Music Department** (continued)



*Forge Cottages* as they appear now. Back in the 1920s the building was divided into two: the larger part on the right was known as *Forge House*, occupied by the Thomas, and subsequently the Foss families. The smaller one on the left was called *Forge Cottage*.

(Photo: John Mitchell)

Scholes<sup>7</sup> who suggested to him the commercial possibility of ‘dipping a toe’ into the realm of sheet music publishing, and it was to Hubert Foss the job was given to set it up. He had already been working as a sales rep for the OUP, travelling round to public schools promoting and selling its wares.

The first publications, presumably because they had a good sales potential, were choral songs, and were published in June 1923. Warlock was amongst the first composers represented with his *Sleep; Rest, sweet nymphs*; and *Little Trotty Wagtail*, all published as songs for unison voices. Sales expectations were low, but with Foss’ enthusiasm, vision, and sheer hard work, it was a great success: ten years later in 1933 the OUP had published thousands of sheet music titles. As Edward Dent<sup>8</sup> noted: ‘Hubert’s creation of the musical department of the OUP was nothing short of epoch making in English Music.’ Indeed, most English composers of that period had something published by OUP at one time or another. Notable publications include such

things as Constant Lambert’s *The Rio Grande*; Britten’s *Simple Symphony*; Vaughan Williams’ *Serenade to Music*; and all of William Walton’s music.

**Hubert Foss:**

Hubert Foss was born on 2 May 1899 and was the 13th child in a middle class family. He was educated at Bradfield College in Berkshire, and having then won a scholarship to Pembroke College, Oxford, he was unable to take it up because of financial constraints. On leaving school he joined the army as a second lieutenant in 1917 – whether he ever saw active service in France or elsewhere is unclear – and was discharged at the end of 1918. Following that there was a brief period when he was involved in teaching and journalism, but it was then through his first wife’s connection with OUP’s Educational Manager that Foss got the job as a sales rep.

Foss’ eighteen years as head of OUP’s Music Department were not just spent in getting things into print. He was also

*Hubert Foss and the Oxford University Press Music Department (continued)*

active in encouraging/advising composers, and took a special interest in music typography, as well as artwork and cover design. The 1920s and 30s saw Foss at his most innovative and productive at OUP, but by the early War years he had begun to suffer some health issues – a motor accident, heavy drinking, depression, and a suicide attempt. Moreover, Humphrey Milford was increasingly uneasy about what he saw as Foss' extravagant spending in the Music Department. Foss' philosophy on the Department's mission, and taking the longer view, was that it was '...built not on immediate sales only, but for a long history of usefulness'.

He resigned from OUP in 1941, and for the rest of his life he concentrated on writing and broadcasting. He wrote for *The Listener*; *The Gramophone* and the *Penguin Music Magazine*. He also penned several books, including *Music in My time* (1933) and the first biography of Vaughan Williams in 1950. With Percy Scholes, Foss made an important contribution to broadcasting with his regular talks on radio about music and composers. He was also a fine accompanist, a poet and a composer, with totals of 34 original compositions and 21 arrangements to his credit.

During the Eynsford/Otford period Foss' marriage to Kate broke up. A professional relationship that Foss had with the singer Dora Stevens then blossomed into a romantic one, and they were married in July 1927. They moved away from Otford to Rickmansworth in Hertfordshire, where they spent the main part of their lives together. At the end of 1952 Foss was appointed as Editor of the *Musical Times*, but he never lived to take up the post. He died from a stroke at the early age of 54 on 27 May 1953.



*Above left: Humphrey Milford, Head of OUP's London operations (Image © OED Archive); Above right: Amen House in Warwick Lane, Foss' place of work during his eighteen years as Head of OUP's Music Department. (Image © London Metropolitan Archives, City of London).*

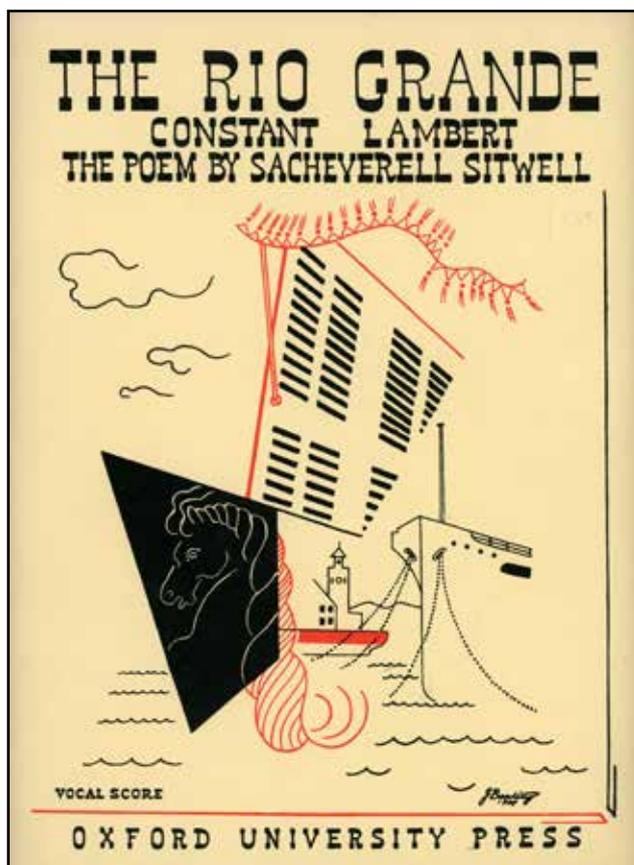
**Foss and Warlock:**

Foss and Warlock first met at one of Poldowski's London Concerts in early 1923, where John Goss sang the first satisfactory performance of *The Curlew*. A firm friendship developed between the two, and with the OUP's Music Department about to be launched in the months ahead, Warlock (as already mentioned) was able to get a foot in the door with some of his songs published initially as unison songs. During the following years OUP went on to publish over 30 of Warlock's songs.

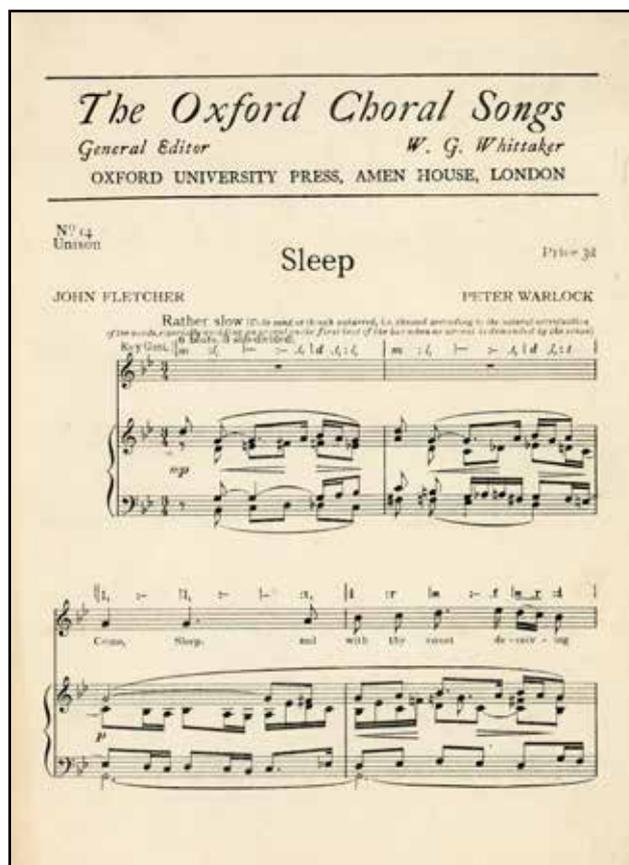
Warlock, along with Bernard van Dieren, E.J. Moeran, and John Goss, often visited Foss whilst he was still residing at Eynsford. The teenaged Myfanwy Thomas recalled<sup>9</sup> weekend afternoons there – between pub opening times – with them music-making from the recently published (1924) *Week-End Book*, singing sea-shanties & folk songs, and roaring the choruses.

I suspect that being familiar with the Eynsford cottage probably influenced Warlock in taking over the

Hubert Foss and the Oxford University Press Music Department (continued)



The cover of Constant Lambert's *The Rio Grande*. It is a good example of Foss' approach to obtaining imaginative artwork for OUP music publications.



The opening page of Warlock's *Sleep*. This is its first edition as a unison song and was one of OUP's earliest music publications. Note how there is no copyright declaration; this only appeared in later reprints.

tenancy when Foss relocated to Otford around January 1925. A fairly close friendship between the two men continued, with Warlock often popping over to see Foss when he was residing at *Forge House*. Myfanwy Thomas also remembered how '... the musicians from Eynsford, sometimes joined by Francis Meynell<sup>10</sup>, most of them accompanied by girls, came over on Sundays for a game of rounders in the recreation ground'<sup>11</sup>.

For a time Warlock was supportive of Foss' compositional endeavours, and in June 1925 he penned an abusive letter<sup>12</sup> to Percy Scholes on how he believed that Scholes had unfairly reviewed a recent performance of Foss' Thomas Hardy songs. At some point Warlock and Foss fell out, and this was over a 'personal matter'. The latter has never been revealed, but PWS member Frank Bayford has wondered

whether it was because of Warlock's scurrilous limerick about Foss and John Goss, with its blatant implication of homosexuality<sup>13</sup>. When this break in the friendship occurred is not known, but it had clearly happened by the time Warlock wrote to Bruce Blunt in September 1929: '... Many thanks for the photo of Mr Fossferine<sup>14</sup>. I had occasion to write a lengthy formal complaint about the little beast to Humphrey Bumphrey the other day, but of course I got no satisfaction. However, I have told Oxford University that I shall never again have any dealing with them.' Ironically, shortly after Warlock's death three of his last songs – *The Frostbound Wood*; *After two years*; and *The Fox* – were all published by OUP.

Despite the rupture in their friendship, after Warlock's death Foss continued to admire his former friend's

**Hubert Foss and the Oxford University Press Music Department (continued)**

prohess as a song writer, and one of the last lectures he gave before he died was on Warlock's songs. In his book *Music in My Time* Foss refers to how the English composer 'ploughed a lonely furrow' and goes on: 'Peter Warlock provides testimony. If he had been a German composer, his remarkable collection of songs would have attained a reputation that scorns frontiers ... As it is, his songs being

scattered among various publishers' catalogues, there is no collected edition of them available. There ought to be. But even if such a collected edition could be assembled here – which is unlikely, if not impossible – would such an edition gain any international sale or reputation? I doubt it, and I am sure, again, that the fault does not lie with the music.'<sup>15</sup> ■

**Notes**

- 1 Edward Thomas (1878-1917) – British writer and poet.
- 2 She subsequently married Kate Page's brother.
- 3 Possibly the reason they chose to live in Eynsford was because it was conveniently near to Otford, having an eye on Bronwen Thomas being a nanny for their young family.
- 4 These are places in the Romford area of Essex. Thomas wrote the poem in 1916 at a time when he had moved his family into the county so that he could be near them following his enlistment.
- 5 Amen House, dating from c.1700, was located just north west of St Paul's Cathedral, and was OUP's London headquarters till 1966. Sadly, it was demolished in 1970.
- 6 And although it happened after Warlock's death, with an irony he would doubtless have enjoyed, Milford was actually knighted in 1936!
- 7 Percy Scholes (1877-1958) – critic and writer on music.
- 8 Edward Dent (1876-1957) – musicologist, teacher and critic.
- 9 She sometimes stayed over there at weekends by way of visiting her sister Bronwen who was looking after Foss' two little girls.
- 10 Francis Meynell (1891-1975) – owner of the Nonesuch Press which published the Warlock-edited *Songs of the Gardens*.
- 11 Myfanwy Thomas: *One of these fine days* (Carcenet New Press, Manchester, 1982), page 148. Otford's recreation ground is located immediately behind Forge Cottages.
- 12 Where Warlock concluded by suggesting that Scholes '... would be much better employed in playing tennis than reporting concerts ... and ... would be still better employed in b—ggering yourself with a pair of exceptionally well-greased bellows.'
- 13 One can well imagine, because of the mores of the time, why Foss may have taken great exception to it.
- 14 A reference to a patent medicine tonic at the time.
- 15 Hubert J. Foss: *Music in My Time* (Rich & Cowan, London, 1933), page 166.

**If Hubert Foss were alive today, he would be both amazed and impressed by how all of Warlock's songs are now available in a revised *Critical Edition* of eight volumes from a single publisher!**

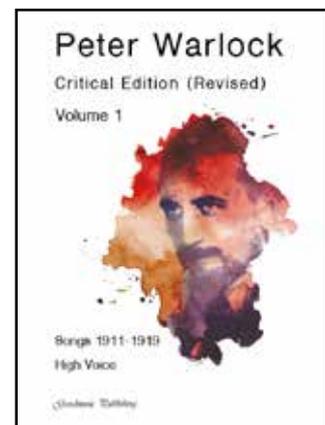
The eight volumes of the *Critical Edition (Revised)* are available directly from Goodmusic Publishing as follows:

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If bought as individual volumes, the set of eight would normally cost £99.50.

However: If bought as a complete set, the cost is £79.50 (approx. 20% off the normal price).

P&P to the UK is free, to the EU £7, rest of the world £12.



## Articles

***A Lecture on Peter Warlock***, delivered at the Melbourne Branch of the British Music Society, November 1924

**Hubert Foss**

### **Introduction:**

Written by Hubert Foss, this was probably the first significant lecture delivered on Warlock. Foss discusses him, not just as a composer, but also as a critic, scholar and writer. Originally delivered in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the lecture was subsequently presented in Australia at the Melbourne Branch of the British Music Society. It is this transcript, discovered in the Ian Copley archive, that is reproduced here completely unabridged, apart from some basic instructions that were provided for the musicians who were performing the musical illustrations. These instructions suggest that it is unlikely Foss delivered his lecture in person.

This talk is a remarkable and interesting early account of Warlock's enthusiasm, energy and extraordinary ability.

### **The Lecture as retrieved from the script:**

It was a great pleasure to me to be invited by Mrs Dyer to write for her branch of the British Music Society this lecture on Peter Warlock. Originally delivered before the Newcastle-upon-Tyne branch, of which Dr. Whittaker – so well known to you – is an active and important official, it may be said to add one more tiny thread to the universal bond of music which joins up colonies with motherland, nation with nation, even enemies with enemies.

It is a greater pleasure indeed for that the subject is one that is so congenial to me. It is good to be able to spread about some small knowledge of a man for whom one has not only much admiration but also a good deal of personal friendship. The work of this man is getting better known, and one is glad to have the opportunity of directing the student's attention towards certain characteristics in it, in order that he may the easier correlate the varied points and, making them into one whole, thus understand a fine mind better.

At the outset, of course, this close relationship of creator and critic or expositor forms an initial difficulty. It is something like Boswell lecturing on Johnson, or Mr. Festing Jones on Samuel Butler. Not that I arrogate to myself any of the sacred functions that these two great biographers have laid each upon himself, but that I have in common with them the nearness of position to the object considered which may tend to obscure the critical faculty; and further, as my task is more that of exponent than that



Louise Dyer, President of the Melbourne Branch of the British Music Society, c. 1930.

*(Photograph by Pierre Choumoff. Éditions de l'Oiseau-Lyre Archive, Rare Music Collection, University of Melbourne.*

*Reproduced courtesy University of Melbourne.)*

of critic, this spiritual blindness may be intensified. I would therefore ask you to take an extra large pinch of salt with any morsel of an opinion I may offer you, regarding my words merely as intended to place certain facts before you which may help you to understand this man and his work better than you were able to before you knew them.

There is, however, a second difficulty, which it is my duty to mention: That is, Peter Warlock himself would be, and was, intensely amused at the spectacle of people going out, not only to hear my lecture, but also to hear about him. It is conceivable to him that some people might leave a warm fireside and comfortable chair to hear some of his

*A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)*



The Werner Brodbeck Hall in the Assembly Hall on Collins (Street), Melbourne as it is today. As the British Music Society often held talks and concerts here, Foss' lecture may well have been delivered in this hall.

music, though much of it he does not think interesting enough to justify even that. But that anyone should prefer to the normal comfort of the home an excursion to hear an exposition of his work is beyond belief. This is not a matter of speculation, I have actually spoken to him about it, and his chief concern was that in the musical examples he might not be represented by certain works of which he is most sincerely and most unjustifiably ashamed. Nor do I mention it as a mere fact or personal anecdote, as something which may serve to amuse or to sketch in a shadowy figure with more precision. It is a relevant fact, because it shows how far removed is his from those natures which desire meetings in the market place and the shows and regalias of this world. It is indicative of his total lack of hypocrisy, of his direct mind, of his dislike of any pretence.

I should not be rash if I were to say that his only deception was that of his name, for which he had the good reason of being at once composer and critic, and desiring a different identity for each. The secret was well kept, for as late as November 1922 a well-known music critic asked me if I knew who this Peter Warlock was. When or why he chose his name I am not aware, but I know that it occurs in

the litany which some of you may have heard:

From all Warlocks and Brigaboos  
And things that go bump in the night  
Good Lord deliver us.

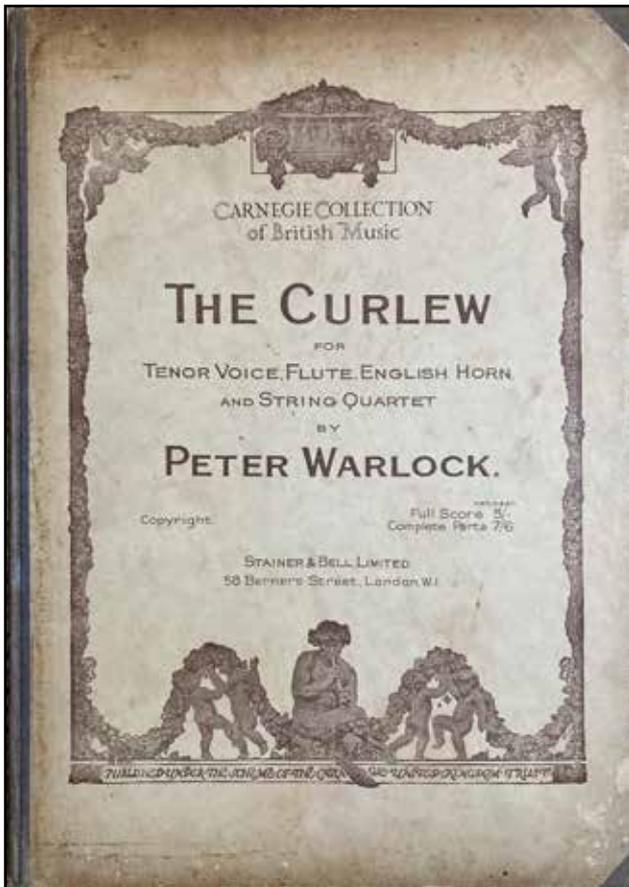
At any rate his real name is Philip Heseltine, and his preliminary external career was above reproach.

First of all, he has the distinction of being the first person, and as far as I can find out, the only person, ever to be born in the Savoy Hotel, London. He was educated at Eton College, and Christ Church, Oxford. No more need be said as to his credentials.

Early in life he got to know the music of Delius, and so great was his admiration for it that he found a way of becoming first acquainted and then close in friendship with Delius himself. He is still very much remembered at Oxford. A certain Bishop who gave up his College for his See recalls his early musical achievement. Another Don told me once of his surprise at discovering that Peter Warlock was the same person as the Philip Heseltine who used to sing him songs in an advanced idiom somewhat derivative of Delius.

Another interesting fact about this period was his

**A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)**



The cover of *The Curlew*, in the Carnegie Collection of British Music series, published by Stainer & Bell.

discovery of Gesualdo's name and quaint reputation among the pages of Dr. Walker's book, *A History of Music in England*, the result of which has been a complete investigation into this highly interesting composer, now being embodied in a large book.

The activities of Peter Warlock are numerous:

First there is the composer. This heading is however subdivided into two very marked sections. There is the composer who writes songs with tunes and airs, and there is the composer who writes songs without key or fixed rhythm. This is a rough but serviceable division.

His largest work is *The Curlew*, a setting for baritone voice, string quartet, flute, and cor anglais, of some poems by W.B. Yeats, the Irish poet. This work was accepted for publication by the trustees of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, and was also chosen for performance last year at the

international Festival of Contemporary Music at Salzburg. It can be summed up I think as the musical epitome of the Irish movement, of books like *The Lake*, by George Moore, of the poems of Stephens, and A.E., and the plays of Synge. It is a perfect setting of the words, their complete musical expression, and that is all one can say at this stage.

Then there is the *Serenade for Strings*, written in honour of Delius' sixtieth birthday, and now about to be published by the Oxford University Press. There are a number of part songs, including the *Corpus Christi Carol*, and several very difficult works published by Boosey and Co. Finally there are the songs – numbers of them, some of which must, or ought to be, well-known to you: for instance, *Captain Stratton's Fancy*, *Mr. Belloc's Fancy*, *Piggiesnie*, *My Ghostly Fader*, *Good Ale*, *As ever I saw*, among them. They are published by Augener, Winthrop Rogers, Enoch, and the Oxford University Press.

The second group of activities comes under the description of the Editor and arranger. He is best known in this connection for his edition of the 'Ayres' of the English Lutenists, which he undertook in conjunction with the late Philip Wilson, a man once well known in Australia, who recently died at such a tragically early age. This edition is, I have reason to believe, distinguished for its accuracy and precision of detail, and for the literal exactness of the transcriptions. The aim has always been to present exactly what the composers wrote unassisted by any editorial revision. He has, too, done other research – on the songs of Vauxhall and Ranelagh gardens, on the Victorian 'ballad', on Gesualdo's part songs, of which he is producing a modern edition.

A third sphere of activity which Mr. Heseltine has distinguished himself in, is that of the critic. I am told on good authority that Mr. Heseltine was once the official critic of the *Daily Mail*. Those must have been stirring days, however few in number, for when water and fire come together there is steam. Imagine among a press which is muzzled except to serve one end, a man of vitriolic temperament, great vitality, and outspoken nature; imagine the 'Chief's' horror at some of the things he must have said. Such an inability as his to swallow the little inaccuracies and dishonesties of journalism must have wrought havoc in Fleet Street, particularly in the office of that most subservient of all papers, the *Daily Mail*.

*A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)*

Further his personal method of expression, with its own peculiar brand of vehemence, needs some experience not to be misunderstood. I regard this fact as one of the most amusing events in the annals of modern Fleet Street.

A further remarkable event took place when Mr. Cecil Gray and Mr. Heseltine jointly took over *The Sackbut*. Before their advent it was an innocent paper especially suited to the harmless provincial organist. Without a word of warning the new editorial direction turned it at one fell swoop into an organ of musical revolution. If one may make a parallel, it was not unlike someone's silently buying the *Church Times* and turning it into the organ of Soviet propaganda. Mr. Gray's recently published book, *A Survey of Contemporary Music*, has already set London by the ears. Mr. Sorabji, Mr. Bernard van Dieren, Mr. Gray, and others of original points of view were all ardently concerned with the production of this unique paper. Unfortunately the monetary losses were heavy, and the tone was too controversial, sometimes even quarrelsome, to inspire confidence in company promoters. Its life therefore was short, but most important. And I am full of envy for anyone who possesses a complete set of this most original and productive journal. It is interesting to compare it mentally with the present paper of the same name.

Let us for the moment consider the qualities of the old *Sackbut*. It was characterised certainly by progressiveness, honesty, lack of nonsense. It was full of the spirit that distrusts professionalism as opposed to natural skill and artistry. It was a paper of high culture. Its point of view was not exclusively musical, but took into consideration life in all its fullness. It was uncompromising and opinionated, with all the advantages and disadvantages of these qualities. It had a complete disregard for the proprieties and politenesses of criticism, which went hand in hand with its disregard of journalistic stunts. It was full of a love of discovery, a liking for new things, whether they are really old or not; and this too has often its disadvantages. I am of course assuming that you will be able to see how bad as well as how good this paper was, that is how different, but not so different as to be above human weaknesses. Its attitude to music was characterised by a love and admiration for Liszt, and Berlioz as well; for the madrigalists and lutenists; for Bach, Beethoven and Mozart, but not Brahms; for the experimentalists and not merely the successful people –

that is for Bartók and van Dieren more than for the obvious names of the present day.

At present Mr. Heseltine is completing his study of Gesualdo, and is about to start his little book on the English Ayre. Finally, there is the book on Frederick Delius, from which passages will later be read to you.

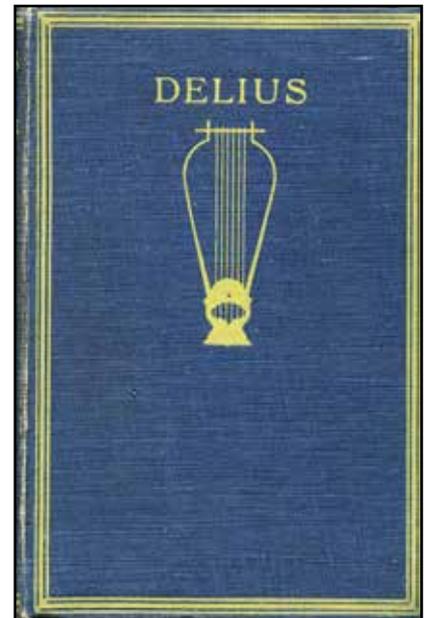
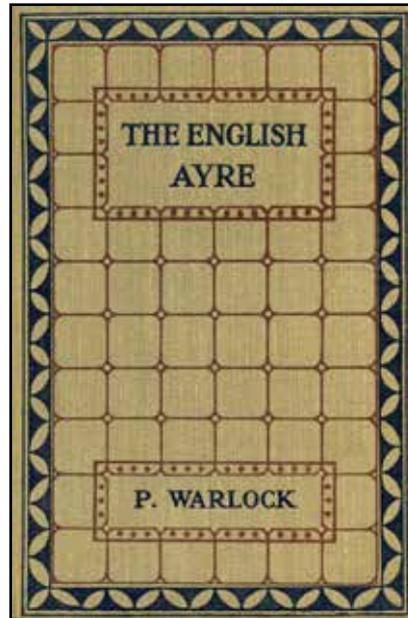
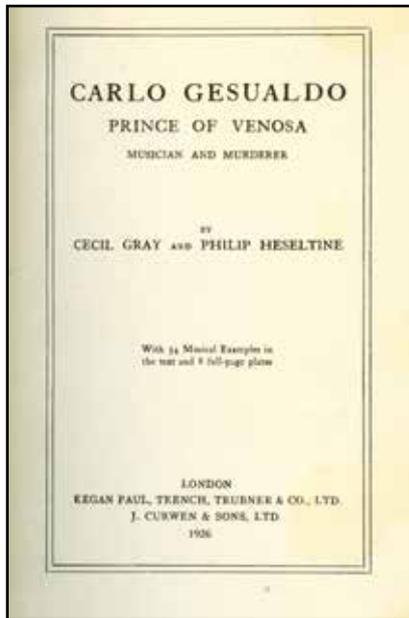
In its own way this book is undoubtedly a masterpiece; as good as it could be. The method is that of a cultured man, a real writer; and this method is combined with the most intimate personal knowledge and very careful study. It is beautifully written, and embodies in a most pleasing way the very personal point of view of the author. The book has often been called partisan by adverse critics. I cannot understand what they want it to be. How can one who has enough admiration to induce him to write a book in praise of a great composer be expected in that book not to show it? And if not, is it not enough that he should give very good reasons? In addition to this, the very demand of those who would oppose him is that he should discriminate. I would therefore refer you to his remarks regarding the *Pagan Requiem* and the *String Quartet* of Delius. Philip Heseltine's likes are strong, but he has enough of the critical faculty to understand which are his master's poor works. One had only to consult him about the recent works of Delius to discover that he knows the difference between good and bad.

Through all his varying activities there shines a scholarly mind, one which reveres knowledge for knowledge's sake, one which delights in the painstaking search for knowledge and accuracy, which has the power to research and gain this knowledge, which has – a most valuable trait of all – the imaginative quality which can inform a mind dealing with facts. All his minute scholarship does not amount to pedantry; Philip Heseltine has overcome pedantry, and therefore attained to scholarship.

To sum up this peculiar mind with which we have to deal, I would use a peculiar phrase; it is the mind of an Elizabethan, combined with a phase of thought that aptly recalls Aubrey Beardsley. There is freshness, full bloodiness, a full sense of life, allied to a remnant of the *fin de siècle* tendency. And this mixture we shall find all through his work in one form or another.

The varied achievements I have here cursorily reviewed will perhaps be better correlated if one realises one odd

*A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)*



characteristic of Philip Heseltine's mind. I have here to repeat a published article of mine, but I excuse myself on the grounds that I can find no better simile; for it enables me not only to understand the quality inherent in the textures of his work, but also the way in which so many different achievements can remain indivisible when performed by one, and that a very individual one, man.

In this article I described Philip Heseltine's mind as having an outlet towards the world in the shape of a funnel with a wide top and a narrow aperture. With this difference, however, that instead of only one narrow aperture, it has four. This four-mouthed funnel represents the two composers, the critic, and the editor – to say nothing of the man. Now into this wide-spread mouth is poured the multitudinous matter of Philip Heseltine's thoughts; they are however 'in' higgledy piggledy, and a great number of them there are indeed. When they come out, each is concentrated into a highly intense stream.

It is not surprising indeed that the stream that emerges should be more concentrated than that of others, for what goes into the funnel is of a greater consciousness than that which goes into most peoples. For here is a curious mind which combines a broad aesthetic consciousness of great sensibility with precision, minuteness, sometimes to the point of whimsicality. The best and most comprehensive word I can think of is pernicketyness.

An excellent example of this quality may be seen in Heseltine's handwriting. It is one of the most small and precise I have ever seen. I remember Philip Wilson showing me a postcard which he greatly treasured; it contained some rather precise instructions about things to look up at the M.S. room of the British Museum. Instead of a squared up, straight postcard, Heseltine began to write his at the centre, increasing the circles slightly each time till it presented a spiral of most delicate accuracy. This is typical of the man.

Another example may be observed in the transcriptions for piano of the works of Frederick Delius. Every instrument is noted down; every note is accurate, right, relevantly put down. The point is obvious - the care which he takes over the mere hackwork of transcription is not less than that expended upon his own work. It is the result of a cast of mind. The gist of the matter is this, that his quality of minute care does not one whit impair the bigness of his mind. The latter is not only coexistent with the former but is almost, I would say, dependent upon it.

Let us now just take him through as a composer.

The earliest Warlock is dead. His productions are all torn up and burnt. There is little even in the way of relics left of that not very distant period. I have had rumours of this period from Oxford, where strange meandering, atonal songs are still remembered, written very much under

***A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)***

the influence of Delius. However, traces of this period certainly do remain, some in *The Curlew*, particularly in the rejected songs from that work; for it must be known that the published edition of *The Curlew* is by no means the same as that which was originally written. For instance the setting of Yeats' *Cloths of Heaven*, still in MS, dates from several years back. There always exists – this time in published form – a part-song known as *The Full Heart*, which is, I believe, the earliest extant work of Warlock's. It is extremely difficult, but undoubtedly very beautiful.

The early interests and influences borne upon this mind are very interesting. That of Delius is particularly so, for in his music he has absorbed and later transcended it.

The influence of Gesualdo can also be traced, and not infrequently that of Liszt.

Finally, there is that of Bernard van Dieren. Here is a man whose intellect and personality literally penetrates one whole sector of musical England. I have every hope that not only his music but also his ideas on music will before long be made available to the general public. A Dutchman, he lives in England from choice. He is a highly cultured and learned musician, and is at present engaged on translating from the Dutch and Sanskrit an immense work on Buddhist philosophy. He is a prolific composer though his works are seldom performed, having written four string quartets, several symphonic works, the *Diaphony*, a comic opera, and numerous songs. He is especially knowledgeable on early printed books, and has a wide experience and a beautiful taste in binding and the marbling of papers – of both of which crafts he is master. I should perhaps add that he was originally trained for medicine. The influence of this remarkable man is very noticeable in England today.

All these remote and rather super aesthetic influences of youth prepared the substratum for the remarkable intellectual development that followed. It is in considering these early predilections that one best understands Heseltine's adoration for Peacock, for Yeats, for the Elizabethan Dramatists and particularly Webster.

In truth Heseltine showed a natural interest in things Elizabethan. He had a natural flavour, born perhaps of his quaint cast of mind, for the combination of qualities displayed by the man of that time. And so it is not wholly surprising that he should eventually turn to the works of

the Lutenists as a field for research and interest.

I have in this matter no knowledge of dates; for all I know Philip Heseltine may have studied the Lutenists songs from his cradle. But I feel strongly that a natural *Bonhomie*, frankness, and gaiety made him produce spontaneously a type of song that was analogous to that of the Lutenists, apart from the influence these composers must have had upon him. His early songs show more affinity, his later more imitation, of this particular style. So that the influence is certainly present.

Here then we come upon the real blossoming of the true musical ability of Philip Heseltine. Suddenly he comes forth with songs in his hands, songs so fresh and simple and yet as original as one could wish for, a new type of song, containing great originality but with nothing to prevent its comprehension by everyone. To have produced this type of song alone is a considerable achievement. Let us, before we discuss the type, hear one of the songs.

***Milkmaids* (Enoch & Co.)**

Observe first of all the extraordinarily happy choice of words. Then notice the spontaneity of spirit, the lightness of mind, the extreme buoyancy of the musical ideas. The music absolutely fits the words, as I think you will agree, almost a final musical expression of them. The repetition of a single if slightly varied melody is justified sufficiently by its success, and the form is thus rounded off and made complete. There is something new about its very ordinariness, and for this there is I think an interesting reason. The tune, as you will have noticed, is not coined as rhythmically suitable to the lilt of the words, but is genuinely the result of the words. It expresses their spirit, in other words, as well as matching their pulse. Then again, notice how the material is used up without waste. There is a tone consistence and logical continuation from one bar to another, and by this mean shapeliness, or as we loosely call it 'form', is attained. So we arrive at the conclusion that these songs, besides being gay, jolly, popular, amusing, are not just a superficial nonsense, but have aesthetic or artistic meaning, are products, that is, of a fine mind in the process of utterance.

Another example of a totally different mood is found in the setting of the old carol *Balulalow*, which will now be sung.

***Balulalow* (Oxford University Press)**

**A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)**

The latest song of this type is I think perhaps the supreme example of all: it is a setting of Shakespeare's *O Mistress Mine* to music of all the original brilliance, lightness, and whimsicality. I would particularly draw your attention to the swift movement of it, its unswerving pace.

***Sing Sweet and Twenty*** (Oxford University press.)

At this point we come to the meeting of the waters. As development continues, so complexity enters. But it is not really a complexity of texture. This may sound to some like a contradiction in terms. But what I mean is that the initial musical conception is the presentation of a comparatively simple thought by means of a complicated machinery of sound. In one of the processes of the development of this mind (but not all) we come to the position when buoyancy is left for subtlety, gaiety for delicacy; without an abandon of the original idea of the tune-song? The next example originally written for string quartet, shows this tendency admirably. You will notice at once that the melodic aim is not forgotten, but only that the remainder of the song becomes more difficult of immediate comprehension.

***Sleep*** (Oxford University Press)

Another example of the same mode of treatment may be seen in the *Folk Song Preludes*, in each of which a folk song is subjected to a complicated texture of harmony and counterpoint in an idiom distinctly modern. It is a book of simple tunes allied to a harmonic experimentation which is definitely complex. This is the only effort at pianoforte music which has come from Warlock's pen. In it there is that same aesthetic quality still present, that quality of making a thing, an entity of whatever he does, of going further down the road than others, of getting into the heart of his original conception.

***Folk Song Preludes***, 1-4 only (Augener)

Two interesting points arise out of the pieces just played. The first occurs in No.3, where the elbow of Grieg (who I would remind you was the master and friend of Delius) shows through the cloak of Delius which Mr. Heseltine has sometimes assumed.

The second is of more generic interest. The piano technique of these works is worth comment. For instance, the last prelude, which has not been played to you, is the most ineffective largely because it is ill suited to the piano. It is the product of a composer who knows very little of the piano. The same quality is seen in some of the songs. At

times the songs are actually spoiled by the difficulty of the accompaniments. The player is now and then faced with an almost impossible accompaniment, quietly labelled 'Fast and Light'. And this point is (of course) especially relevant to the present aspect of Philip Heseltine's development.

Two more songs will well exemplify other sides of his tendency towards complexity of texture. The first, *The Distracted Maid*, portrays the cry of an insane woman; it is immensely effective, in my view, with its quiet persistence, its sameness, its terribly easy movement. The simple originality of the whole conception is immediately striking; the texture on the other hand is complex. It is interesting to compare the Mussorgsky *Idiots Song* with this fine work.

***The Distracted Maid*** (Chesters)

The second song shows the more violently excitable side of Philip Heseltine's nature. There is in this song a most remarkable abandon. The words you may, if so you will, treat as nonsense, but I will ask you to regard them as very alive and vital nonsense. The composer has entered into the whole *bonhomie* and spiritedness of these words.

***Rutterkin*** (Chesters)

So, by this means of progress, we come to *The Curlew* which may be described, in its final state, as a product of original conception tempered by outside influences and experience.

First we may say it is the complete expression of the words of the poet, their musical summary and counterpart. There is a fresh and delightful absence of convention, but this alone would not suffice. There is, in its place, a complete original conviction, and this it is which first of all carries the work to artistic success. There is therefore pure beauty of music unchecked by alien desires, or limiting inhibitions. In addition, the work is beautifully written for its instrumental combinations.

More than one person has complained to me, thereby I fear exhibiting their lack of understanding, that the music lacks finality. The only possible reply is first that the music is very subtle, and secondly, that it is necessary only to understand the words to understand the music. Virtually the words express something like negation. Is it expected that the music will be pulsating like a march under these circumstances?

There is little doubt – and having heard the work among the brilliant productions of the Salzburg Festival, I can

*A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)*

claim a degree of freedom from prejudice that it is a work throbbing with pure musical and artistic consciousness, a work of genuine aesthetic inspiration.

*The Curlew*, with baritone, string quartet,  
cor anglais and flute (Stainer and Bell.)

Let us leave for a while the music Philip Heseltine has composed, and go for a moment into the mind behind it.

In this matter, his own words are palpably better than mine: they can not only represent his profusion of ideas with a closer texture, but they happen to be written (as you will all observe) in really beautiful prose: The following passage is the opening of the chapter in the book on Delius (John Lane) headed *His Operas*.

Among the Chippewa Indians of North America, we are told, "there is no musical notation: a picture of the idea of a song is drawn on a bark-strip, from which another person who has never heard it can sing it accurately." This, like so much in the art of so-called primitive races, puts us all to shame. We cannot draw a picture of the idea of a piece of music from which another person who has never heard the music can get an accurate impression of it. Yet if there is any purpose in musical criticism, that purpose is surely to convey, by words rather than by pictures, "the idea of a song" to others who have never heard it.

Our chief enemy is Time. We can hold the score of a symphony in our hands, complete and whole and all at once: but to hold the music signified by that score, the idea of the song, in the mind in a like completeness and wholeness is a very different and vastly more difficult proposition. When listening to music, we are subject to all the limitations which time imposes: but when we reflect upon what we have heard, when we try to sum it all up and to distil its quintessence, we have to pit ourselves against time in an effort to transcend its inhibitions and its restrictions on the mind. To see a piece of music whole, like a picture, to grasp the rhythm and design not merely of particular sections but of the entire work, and, as the result of this process, to be able to comprehend and share with its composer the complex synthesis of moods and states of mind the work expresses such is the task of the writer on music. This being admitted, it is painfully apparent that when we speak or write about music – and here

the professional critic is in much the same case as the man who tries to record the impressions of his first concert – we embark upon a well-nigh impossible task. Music, for us, only begins where words end: how then can we hope to translate the message of music into words? Only the simplest music yields to our attempts to draw a satisfactory verbal picture of the idea inspiring it. We have lost the art of the old magicians who could compass the universe in a pentacle. One may call music the outward and audible signification of inward and spiritual realities – which seems to suggest that there is something else behind and beyond the music itself that is not the music. Yet are we justified in assuming this separateness? Is it not, in a sense, the expression that makes the thought, the symbol that creates for us the reality, that is – as far as we can ever know it – the reality?

The fact is that when we come to the fundamental question of what music really is, we are all-composers, critics, and public alike – very much in the dark. Music's a rum go. Composers cannot tell you themselves how or why they write this or that kind of music, and professional critics are too often inclined to avoid the simpler, fundamental problems of the art, taking refuge either in the current cant of musical journalese, which skilfully proffers the minimum of meaning with the maximum of verbiage, or in technicalities which the ordinary music-lover-who is always more interested in music's relation to life than in its relation to other music – finds more bewildering than the most abstruse specimen of actual composition. Thus, the simplest and most natural questions of the non-musician are apt to prove the most embarrassing to the theorist and the critic who have so long taken these elementary problems for granted as already solved that they have no answer but gibberish or evasion.

Time was when musical criticism dealt only with external forms: the subject-matter or text or programme of a work, and the technical resources employed in its expression. Now, however, a reaction has set in and an increasing recognition of the absolute independence of every art is apparent. Needless as it may appear to some readers, one cannot too often reiterate and emphasize, for the sake of others, that music is not a translation

***A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)***

of something other than itself, and that music cannot be translated into any other medium. As an example illustrating the necessity for such seemingly unnecessary iteration I quote from a pamphlet recently printed for private circulation among the teachers of an English county education authority. The writer, after citing Jules Combarieu's definition of music as "the art of thinking in sound," without, however, either acknowledging its authorship or adding M. Combarieu's qualification "without concepts," proceeds to "evolve quite nice musical phrases to express ideas" (with musical examples) and suggests that "perhaps we can invent a kind of phrase-book such as you get when travelling in a foreign country, but instead of 'What is the French, German or Italian for such and such a question,' we must say 'What is the music for ...?'" etc. etc. "So we begin to think in sound." Such a conception of the function of music, as a mere alternative or substitute for speech or gesture, is puerile, and we may safely take it as an axiom that whatever can be adequately expressed in words, colour, or in sculptural or graphic form needs no musical reduplication, nor can it ever provide the *raison d'être* of a purely musical composition.

The complete libretto of an opera, the most detailed analysis of a piece of "programme music," tell us nothing whatever about the actual music. But the music itself may tell us infinitely more than the text or programme around which it has been ostensibly written so much more, indeed, that the value of music associated with words or with a programme may be estimated by this something-more alone. This something-more is again indefinable; but it is something abstract and universal of which the particular manifestation – word, phrase, poem or programme – is but one of many possible types or examples. When we hear that a certain work has been inspired by, or is the expression of, some particular emotion of its creator – his love for a particular woman, his dislike of a particular class of his fellow-men, and so on – we understand, if the work is of any real significance, that these emotional incidents may have prompted the composer to express in universal terms something of which they present a particular aspect. A great work is the expression not of one particular emotion but of thousands which have interacted upon one another

and woven themselves into a complex mood. But art that does not express something infinitely greater than this little personal complex is relatively unimportant certainly not a manifestation of genius. In the majority of cases a composer could not detail incidents and emotions of daily life and trace back to them the impulse to create a particular work. But even where a clue is given, whether in some personal anecdote, or in a programme, or in a text which actually accompanies the music or is set to the music, the clue, the text and the programme are only hints regarding the actual content of the music, even as one might affix an appropriate motto or quotation to a chapter-heading. The story of Newton and the apple is symbolically, even if not actually, true. Newton's theory of gravitation expressed, so to speak, not only the falling of apples, but also the movements of other bodies. It applied no less to apples than to other bodies ; but had the discovery been one that related to apples alone, its importance would have been trifling. Thus the particular incident, emotion, mood, poem or programme, which provides the initial impulse for the creation of a musical work is expressed, but at the same time so expanded that its individual importance is dwarfed by the ulterior significance of the finished work as a whole.

We cannot, then, reach the heart of music through the text or programme with which it is associated. We may set the imagination to spin stories and to paint word-pictures of what the music has suggested to us once we have heard it; but even that fascinating game does not bring anyone who has not heard it very much nearer to the music itself, for music is not only untranslatable but almost unparaphrasable language. But if we take the text or the programme as a mere starting-point, we may see in what direction it is capable of expansion, we may feel how the composer has extracted something universal from a personal or a particular subject; and we may derive aesthetic satisfaction from observing how minute particulars are revealed, individually expressed but contained inevitably in the synthesis of the whole work. A superficial examination of some of the madrigalists, both Italian and English, of the late sixteenth century, might lead one to suppose that they were unduly preoccupied with pictorialism and word-

*A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)*

painting and that they paid greater attention to the verbal details of their poem than to its meaning and spirit. But on closer inspection we find many poems which, although possessing considerable charm and felicity of expression, have no very profound meaning; and yet the music to which they are allied seems charged with an intensity and depth of meaning that almost overwhelms them. This is more noticeable in the Italian than in the English madrigals; but it is evident that words, such as “death,” “pain,” “care” and many others were often treated by the composers in their full connotation, regardless of their particular context. A poem of formal and stereotyped character, concerned with nothing more tragic than the impending demise of a rejected lover, would serve as a framework over which a composer would weave a musical tapestry embodying his whole conception of mortality. And it is in this light that we must regard the texts of the operas and the choral works, in their relation to the music which Delius has associated with them.

Another interesting passage occurs at the opening of the chapter headed *His music viewed as a whole*; the section is marked ‘(a) The Letter’.

In these days when the possession of a little money can, and does, procure for the merest mediocrity not only widespread publicity but performance at important concerts and musical festivals, it may seem remarkable to some that Delius who could at all times have afforded to blow his own trumpet should never have cared to do so. He was forty-three when his first big work was published, but he had been writing music for the past twenty years – music of such a character that, had he cared to use it for publicity’s sake after the manner of the young composer of to-day, it would no doubt have hastened Europe’s acknowledgment of his genius. But he preferred to give nothing to the world that he felt to be immature or below

the level of the best of which he was capable.

A composer who carries modesty and self criticism to such a pitch is something of an enigma to our musical public. Here, they say, is a man sixty years old, who holds no official position in the musical life of his country, who does not teach in any of the academies, who is not even an honorary doctor of music; who,

moreover, gives no concerts, makes no propaganda for his music, plays no instrument, nor even conducts an orchestra. Small wonder that he is neglected in favour of what one may with a certain degree of accuracy describe as the press-gang of British music. He lacks the talent, and indeed the desire, to keep himself continually in the public eye. But this is a temperamental matter, and it seldom happens that a talent for publicity is united in the same person with a creative mind of the first order.

In looking through the manuscripts of Delius’ early works one is particularly struck by the fact that they display a virtuosity of technique, in the academic sense of the word, which gradually disappears as his own personal technique develops into an unmistakable style. The ready-made forms of the schools with their artificial devices, which seem to have been designed only to eke out an exiguous inspiration, are merely trammelling to the subtle imagination for which form and content are one and indivisible. But the realization, by experience and not in theory alone, that the form of a well-made work must necessarily be latent in its initial conception, even as the form of a flower is latent in its seed, is a slow and arduous process; and in the mean while the young artist must learn to build with the aid of such scaffolding as he can dispose of. Thus through formality he attains to form. For it must not be forgotten that the great masters who employed those forms that are now termed classical created them anew with each succeeding work, the so-called forms of the text-books being in reality no more than barren formulae deduced by pedants from the masters’ multifarious achievements.

A little further on, before coming to that most accurate bibliography, one comes upon a really lovely piece of writing. The passage about to be read to you is that which ends the book, and a better or more suitable ending could hardly be imagined.

One feels that all Delius’ music is evolved out of the emotions of a past that was never fully realised when it was present, emotions which only became real after they had ceased to be experienced. “The golden moments of our life fly past us and we see nothing but sand; the angels come to visit us and we only know them after they are gone.” Here, perhaps, we have the explanation of the sadness that is intermingled with the serenity and sweetness of the

***A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)***

conception of spring revealed in the *First Cuckoo*; for it is a spring of the soul that cannot blossom until the autumn has come, that has so little time to stay. And so we are again confronted with the paradox of past and present. The very desire to recapture and embalm the past is a longing that strives to overleap time's limitations; for time is the great enemy of the soul that longs for the Infinite. The apparent victories of time over the soul, in separation and in going apart, are Delius' predominant theme: but in his music there is always a smile of assurance which seems to tell us that time itself is no more than the great illusion of the world. It brings to the mind an echo of an immanent beauty greater than the ear can hear, that whispers to us of an unchanging garden from which we have been banished for a season: and we feel that all the sorrow of the world springs from this sense of exile, and that all beauty is but a partial unveiling of something ever-present and not other than that which we know – for when we speak of this world and a world beyond that lies in the future we confuse the issue by a verbal duality which has no real meaning. "Into another world," as John Donne says in one of his sermons, "no man is gone, for that heaven which God created and this world, is all one world." Yet it is curious that Donne for all his faith in the resurrection, is obsessed by the horror of the worm in the grave, and Delius, the unbeliever, proclaiming in his *Requiem* the soul's extinction, yet gives us intimations of immortality on every fine page of his music: and nowhere does he speak to the spiritual ear with more definite assurance than in his perfect setting of that poem of Fiona Macleod called *Hy Brasil*, with its alluring, haunting cadence: "Come away, come away!" Now *Hy Brasil* is the name given in the old Celtic mythology to the Hesperides that lay where the last stars touch the sea. But in the Celtic legends it was not through the gates of death that these islands of the blessed were attained. Rather did they stand as a symbol of that mystical victory of the soul over the circumstances of mortality, when the consciousness transcends the very conception of death and cries in laughing triumph, "Where is thy sting?" All the old legends of the adventurers who assayed "to sail beyond the sunset and the baths of all the western stars" are veiled records of adventures wholly spiritual. For those who attained there was indeed no death: for they were translated like Enoch, and thenceforward they walked with God. For Delius, as

for Traherne and Blake and many another mystic, Heaven is but the world transfigured and interpreted by spiritual vision. There is no "world" that is common to all mankind. Every man lives in a world of his own creating which is small or great, hideous or beautiful, according to the stature and disposition of his soul. And those who see, in all the manifestations of Nature, a fullness, a richness and loveliness that would for every excess break through the barriers of time and change and overflow into the Infinite may well deride the materialist's heaven of harps and glass which those have feigned who never saw the world aright. Whoever has known true ecstasy has already encompassed past and future, and having once attained is initiate, immune from disillusion. He is at one with Nature and strides fearlessly into the darkness, knowing that he will not fall, certain that the great river of separation comes in the end to the sea where all things are united. So he achieves within himself an inner harmony and peace tranquillity; which is not so much the "central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation" as an enfolding calm that is wrapped about a troubled and unresting heart.

The modern spirit in music is impatient, unreflective, restless and impetuous, for it is the spirit of an age of disintegration. There is very little tranquillity in the music of our time and such emotion as it contains is rather the instantaneous record of sensation than a quintessence distilled by long processes of meditation. Serenity seems to have forsaken music for a while; it is, at any rate, almost impossible to name any living composer, save Bernard van Dieren, in whose work this quality is conspicuous or even dimly apparent. But it is one of the essential qualities of the great art of all ages, and its presence in every work of Delius is one of the surest tokens of his immortality. The message of his music is one of ultimate assurance and peace. It is full of a great kindness which makes us feel akin to all things living and gives us an almost conscious sense of our part in the great rhythm of the universe. And as the lonely soul turns to the starry host for comfort and companionship, so may we turn to this music and hear reverberated in the tones of a lonely singer "the voices of the innumerable multitudes of Eternity."

No comments are here needed; nor indeed could they avoid, if they were offered, that heinous sin of pointing the finger to the obvious. One can only say that if such a

***A Lecture for the Melbourne Branch of the BMS (continued)***

mind as this happens to musical, it can hardly avoid being interesting, original, and beautiful in its musical utterances.

I have reserved one song to this late point in the lecture because it shows best of all the man. This is the song *Twelve Oxen* written at the request of Mr. John Goss for the first concert of sociable songs which he gave in London. This song fully shows Philip Heseltine's capacity for life, his abandon, his power, his comprehension of life as an all-in, full-blooded thing.

*Twelve Oxen* (Oxford University Press)

One could not ask for a better example of Philip Heseltine's Elizabethanism. This surely is the perfection of the 'mediaeval' movement so much derided in *Patience*. It is the mediaevalism which can absorb and reproduce the spirit of a period, and allow that spirit to be used solely to inform the letter. Here we have the old spirit rediscovered, re-thought out, re-expressed in modern music.

On the matter of Philip Heseltine particularly one dare not prophecy. He is an eccentric character, and how he will go on, I do not know, and do not pretend to. I think it unlikely that he will produce a large and expansive work for some years to come, but I am fairly sure (despite his own protestations) that he will continue producing those astonishing little masterpieces he has already produced; will continue his salutary criticism, and his engaging researches. Before long, I like to think, he will write another chamber work of great intimacy and charm.

At any rate we have *The Curlew* today. Whatever else he has written may go by; much that is charming, and beautiful, and interesting. So long as I am left with *The Curlew* I am content. It is a very beautiful and significant work. ■

**Note on the Melbourne Branch of the BMS**

The British Music Society was founded in 1818 in London with the aim to 'work solely for the good of music in its broadest sense' as 'the link between professional performers and their audiences' through centres in different cities and collaborations with other organisations. The chapter in Melbourne was (Louise) Dyer's 'baby' – the arts organisation she founded and led and nurtured as honorary secretary until 1927 and continued to support throughout her life.

It was a self-governing entity of the parent body, one of three in the southern hemisphere, the others being in Sydney and New Zealand. It was endorsed by Nellie Melba and managed by key music figures: chartered accountant Thomas Brentnall, the society's president, also president of the Melbourne Music Club, and educationists and composers Fritz B Hart, Professor William A Laver and Alberto Zelman Jr as vice-presidents.

**Archive Publications**

***Philip Heseltine – (1894-1930)***

**Hubert Foss** – from the *Monthly Musical Record*, January 1st 1931, Vol. LXI., No. 721

Foss wrote this article just a few days after Warlock's death. Foss had fallen out with Warlock some years earlier, so it is to Foss's credit that he writes so warmly about his former friend in this moving article.

I have but an hour or two, before this paper must seek the printer, in which to render account of 'Peter Warlock.' The attempt is doomed to failure. To compress so rich a personality into these few lame, hurried lines is a task much like trying to put a mountain on a sixpence.

That very richness which one despairs of conveying in words is exactly what we have lost by Warlock's untimely death. A list of his achievements would be a long if not a difficult one to make, but it would not express his personality in a manner adequate to what those who knew

the man had experienced in the company of his living mind. For Warlock had, first of all his gifts, a remarkable personality, which he was expressing only gradually, facet by sharp facet, still incompletely, alas! at the time when he died last month.

Warlock has joined the ranks of the young composers who never reached their fortieth year – that spiritual company of "lads that will die in their glory and never be old." The band is led by Purcell, Mozart, Schubert and Chopin: but it contains, too, Hurlstone<sup>1</sup> and Butterworth

## Archive Publications

### *Philip Heseltine – (1894-1930)*

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and Denis Browne,<sup>2</sup> of, we admit, lesser mien, but of great promise and of a kinship with us. It would be easy to excuse his achievement on the grounds of his youth, or regret the scholar's lapses into creative musical work or the creator's into research. It is far more difficult to understand – and to excuse – the lack of recognition which the users of music gave him in his lifetime.

More journalists and more of the public were interested in the fact of his death and the circumstances of it than ever were in the more important fact of his life or the predominant circumstance of his music. We may lament his demise, but we must at the same time recognize with shame how little as musicians we did for him before. The fact is indisputable that the world – and I mean the world of listeners who are given their fare by the concert-artist and concert-promoter – had not taken Warlock to its bosom, and the fault was not Warlock's. He spoke in a modern speech of song, but it was not more remote than a development of traditional speech and was excellently suited to his day. He made of song a kind of exquisite journalism, only comparable to the most delicate and cultivated periodical essays of an Austin Dobson,<sup>3</sup> a Montague,<sup>4</sup> a Walkley,<sup>5</sup> a Saintsbury,<sup>6</sup> a Henley,<sup>7</sup> a Davidson,<sup>8</sup> or an Andrew Lang.<sup>9</sup> He gave us music to use, and we have not used it; but it is also music that will last, and perhaps, when the mere occurrence of his life and death is forgotten, we may discover his music, and like it, and use it, and sing it.

For Warlock was essentially a song-writer – at least he had become one when he died. I had never felt sure how he would develop. We had hoped for a middle-aged day when longer works would come forth. Such longer and other works as we now have were inconsiderable in achievement when compared with the perfection of his best songs. *An Old Song* was a pastiche, the *Serenade for Strings* a delightful imitative offering of homage to his one-time idol, Frederick Delius. His set of piano pieces showed the elbow of Grieg sticking out through the mantle of Delius. His re-orchestration of *Capriol* was not highly successful, though it gave us the chance to see him as a conductor and to hear his caustic wit saying: “No one asks me to sing my own songs – why should I conduct my own works?”

But are not the songs enough? Only those who do not know them, their range, their mastery of detail, their exquisite linking of voice and verse, will ask for more than this considerable *corpus* can provide. I cannot critically survey them here: to do so in the way that Warlock himself

would have done with others, and have despised anyone for not doing with his own, is not a task to be begun under the supervision of the printer's devil. One can but mention the many that spring up in immediate recollection.

*The Curlew* first. It is one of those song cycles that are in essence symphonic commentaries on the words to be set. It has expressed, once for all for me, the whole of the Yeats idea, all that movement we know so well and so satirically from *Hail and Farewell*. Sympathy of sound is here matched with precision of intellectual meaning. Then there come crowding into mind *Milk Maids* and *Chop Cherry*, two of his new conceptions of Elizabethan words, the strophic discipline and the light humour of *Piggesnie*, the serious *Autumn Twilight*, the later Shakespeare settings like *Sweet and Twenty* and *Pretty Ring Time*, the carols, such as *Corpus Christi* and *Balulalow*, and those so recent that their very name has not sunk into the mind: the Belloc songs and *Captain Stratton's Fancy* and *Yarmouth Fair*. But there are also *The Distracted Maid*, as pretty a piece of controlled picturesqueness as can be found in modern English song, the elaborately technical *Peterisms*, and, remoter still, the *Saudades*. These last, influenced from an obvious source, show the second manner of this composer, where the fantasy of his mind could fly away into purely aesthetic regions and find there new shapes and thoughts to express, unrestrained by those neat patterns he came to love too much elsewhere.

Only this very day one has read a laudation (*temporis acti*) of the Victorian songs by Mr. Fuller Maitland<sup>10</sup> in *Music and Letters*. The death of so distinguished a song-writer could not but suggest the application of this praise of earlier contemporaries of that writer's to the ordinary singer's neglect of Warlock. If those songs of the 1860s and 1880s need revival today, do not our songs of the 1920s also need not revival but performance sometimes? Are the latter so bad or so remote from our consciousness that they deserve their shuttered oblivion? I do not believe it, and I speak, in frank truth, from knowledge of both kinds of songs.

Warlock's songs are a thousand heads in front of those we are told we should revive: that they cannot command in their day the old public of the older ones is, I am ready to assert, the fault of the singer and not of the composer. Nearly all the criticisms I have heard from singers of Warlock's songs refer to the difficulty of their accompaniments, or to some other meretricious accessory: many of them to ignorance of what the composer has written. In this

example, at least, I am sure the singer (and so the public) had not got into touch with the composer, and not that the composer was out of touch, in his conceptions, with the singer (and so the public). If nothing else should have attracted the singer's attention (and there is much else), Warlock's fastidiousness in choice of words should have made him understand what a rare mind was giving us songs at the present day.

So far I have touched only on Warlock the composer, or I would say the two composers. But there are to other personalities to deal with, and the third is Warlock the scholar and arranger, who had in many ways a profound influence upon his self-colleague. This one was he who knew his Elizabethans as only a musician with a scholarly mind can know them: for he knew their music and not only their dates and histories. His researches on the English 'ayres' (so he spelt them) he began in conjunction with Philip Wilson, the singer who met an also early death, at the hands of disease.

Warlock threw a crossbeam of light, with characteristic intellectuality, on current labours. He would have all the old people wrote, or none, and no more. He stipulated for every word in *Pammelia* and *Deuteromelia*; he fought with his own kind of abandon against an aid or expression mark (witness the parts of the *Lachrimae*): he denied one note extra or a transposition in transcribing lute for pianoforte. He was prejudiced no doubt, but he was here or elsewhere truthful in his own way. The sum of his researches is contained in his book *The English Ayre* and in the meticulousness of his published transcriptions. I cannot dissociate this part of his work from his exquisite diminutive handwriting.

The fourth Peter Warlock was publicly called Philip Heseltine, and known as a critic and as the biographer of Frederick Delius. This was the true name of the man, but it showed only one of his true functions. A profound interest in modern music, buoyancy and enthusiasm, violent prejudices both for and against, a detestation of his fellow-critics, a hatred of the cant-phrase, a minutely precise mind – the total of these and other qualities made him a brilliant but by no means an accepted critic. His judgments had influence, however, secretly penetrating (for here was a fine mind) from his writings and more direct by his talk – of late his most frequent medium.

It is, as I have said, impossible to pin down this wide-embracing mind to a museum specimen. I have not touched

upon anything but his sheer musical achievements: those other rarities of spirit, diabolism and charm, literary finesse and a passion for the limerick form, caustic expression and inner kindliness, and the rest, have passed away. But I can only comprehend this particular combination of precision and aesthetics by thinking of an old simile I have used before in lectures and writings on Warlock. This mind was like a funnel, with – not one but – four points, those of the two composers, the scholar, and the critic. Into the wide mouth were poured the observations and experiences of an acute and broad mind: they emerged through these tiny channels under immense pressure of intensity, focussed each upon its object. So we got the refined essence of the whole matter.

I cannot think of Warlock as having lived only in our time. There was something princely, something of the Borgias about him. He seemed to me to combine, as it were, Thomas Nashe and Aubrey Beardsley. His outlook was Elizabethan, he was a child of our age. The combination was astonishing. Let us hope that his death, so deeply to be regretted as the cessation of one of our best talents, will have the result of turning the attention of people to what he has left behind, his music. ■

## Notes

- 1 William Yeates Hurlstone (1876-1906), English composer and pianist. In 1906 he became professor of counterpoint at the Royal College of Music, only to die later the same year of bronchial asthma. He is one of the 'might have been great' composers of the early 20th century who died leaving a legacy of many chamber music works.
- 2 William Denis Browne (1888-1915), English organist, composer and critic. Educated at Cambridge, he was a friend of Rupert Brooke and was killed in World War II.
- 3 Henry Austin Dobson (1840-1921), English poet and essayist.
- 4 Charles Edward Montague (1867-1928), English journalist, novelist and essayist.
- 5 Arthur Bingham Walkley (1855-1926), English drama critic.
- 6 George Edward Bateman Saintsbury (1845-1933), English writer and critic.
- 7 William Ernest Henley (1849-1903), English poet, critic and author.
- 8 John Davidson (1857-1909), Scottish poet and playwright.
- 9 Andrew Lang (1844-1912), Scottish poet, novelist and literary critic.
- 10 John Alexander Fuller Maitland, (1856-1936), English critic, editor and harpsichordist.

Articles

*Incipit lamentatio Iacobi Joyce: Warlock's last tribute*

Dr. Andrew Plant explores this lavish, limited edition book, which was designed by Hubert Foss

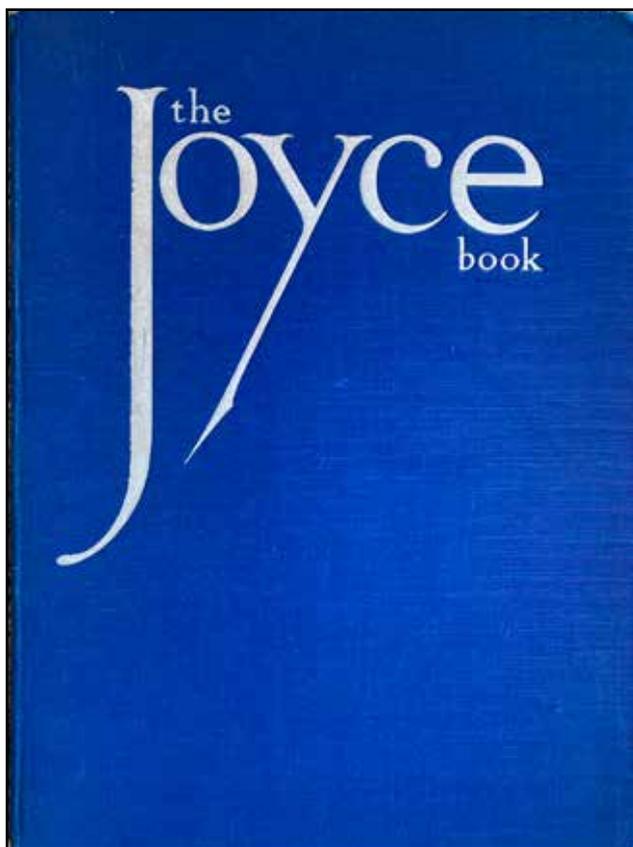


Fig. 1: *The Joyce Book* (1933)

The writings of James Joyce, particularly his seminal collection *Chamber Music* (1907), have proved greatly enticing to composers, and a complete list of such works would be substantial. The author himself most highly esteemed the legacy of Geoffrey Molyneux Palmer, who set almost the entire volume in 1909; Frank Bridge's *Goldenhair* (1925) inspired the young Britten to tackle the same text as *Chamber Music V* (1930, pub. 2013); Eugene Goossens set six poems as op. 51 in 1929; Warlock strongly approved of Moeran's *Seven Poems by James Joyce* which appeared the same year (the unbridled effervescence of the third song, *Bright Cap*, is particularly Warlockian). Samuel Barber's *Three Songs of James Joyce* op. 10 date from 1939, but three slightly earlier examples were eventually discovered among his manuscripts and published in 1994. In later decades, Mátyás Seiber would produce radiant interpretations of excerpts from *Ulysses* (1947) and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1957).

Warlock's notebooks<sup>1</sup> for the prolific year of 1922 indicate that he was considering making two settings of Joyce, but no further details are known; if ever completed, they were probably destroyed. That December he acclaimed the newly-published *Ulysses* as 'astounding ... a work of quite stupendous genius, a real masterpiece ...'<sup>2</sup> and in 1929 included five sozzled pages from the work in his anthology *Merry-Go-Down*.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, he subsequently lost few opportunities to praise Joyce, even contriving to reference *Ulysses* in his foreword to *English Ayres 1598-1612*.<sup>4</sup> However, following the banning of the novel, friends of Joyce grew concerned at his poverty-stricken languishing in Paris. In the autumn of 1929, *The Joyce Book* was conceived by Herbert Hughes and Arthur Bliss, partly in tribute but primarily in order to assist the author's financial recovery. In addition to a handful of literary contributions, together with a new portrait by Augustus John no less, it was proposed that a baker's dozen of composers would each set one of the thirteen miniature nocturnes that comprise *Pomes Penyeach*.<sup>5</sup> Bliss chose *Simples* for himself and believed that Hughes allocated the other texts.

Unfortunately, the whole project proved far more challenging than anticipated. In an attempt to increase potential funds, no fees or royalties were offered, and the ensuing delicate situation seems to have been badly handled. Milhaud objected strongly to the terms and withdrew, much to Joyce's distress, as he had personally invited the composer to set *A Flower given to my Daughter*. Other casualties, probably for similar reasons although elliptically expressed, included Holst, Lambert and Walton, as well as Warlock, so that several names who made the concluding list below, including some strikingly cosmopolitan figures, were second or third choices. Hughes naturally glossed over such adversities, presenting the variegated international assembly as a universal tribute to genius, and observing breezily that the task of finding collaborators was 'not a difficult one.'<sup>6</sup>

<i>Tilly</i>	E. J. Moeran <sup>7</sup>
<i>Watching the Needleboats at San Sabba</i>	Arnold Bax
<i>A Flower given to my Daughter</i>	Albert Roussel <sup>8</sup>
<i>She weeps over Ragoon</i>	Herbert Hughes <sup>9</sup>
<i>Tutto è Sciolto</i>	John Ireland
<i>On the Beach at Fontana</i>	Roger Sessions

**Incipit lamentatio Iacobi Joyce: Warlock's last tribute** (continued)

<i>Simples</i>	Arthur Bliss
<i>Flood</i>	Herbert Howells
<i>Nightpiece</i>	George Antheil
<i>Alone</i>	Edgardo Carducci <sup>10</sup>
<i>A Memory of the Players in a Mirror at Midnight</i>	Eugene Goossens
<i>Bahnhofstrasse</i>	C. W. Orr
<i>A Prayer</i>	Bernard van Dieren <sup>11</sup>

*The Joyce Book* was both handsome and expensive, printed on grey Dutch mould-made paper with silver blocking, and bound in blue hand-woven silk – which soon proved too fragile for purpose – retailing at a hefty two guineas (around £185.00 in 2023). Designed by Hubert Foss, it was published on 2 February 1933 (Joyce's birthday) by The Sylvan Press and Oxford University Press in a limited edition, now extremely scarce, of five hundred copies [Fig. 1]. Protracted delays so dogged the production that the majority of the first performances had already taken place almost a year before the volume appeared; and since there was little other publicity, it accrued no profit at all for the benighted author.<sup>12</sup> The songs were not heard again as a complete group until the Joyce Centenary in 1982.<sup>13</sup> As Stephen Banfield has pointed out, the great flourishing of English art song composition was already in decline by the time of publication, meaning that the volume was 'perhaps as much a tribute to the end of an artistic period as to James Joyce himself'.<sup>14</sup> While some of the scores would sink without trace, a few found outlets in various collected editions or under other imprints, but the most distinguished presentation was the reappearance of Bliss's limpid ecstatic setting (the only song he wrote during the 1930s) in a further edition of five hundred copies to mark the composer's eightieth birthday in 1971. Its dimensions and livery of grey-blue with silver lettering and portrait recalled the exclusivity of its original opulence – in contrast to its now shyly modest price of 80p.

Such was the general understanding of events until 1993, when Fred Tomlinson presented me with a single annotated page in Warlock's hand comprising the closing bars of a fair copy of *The Fox* [Figs. 2 & 3]. I do not know the whereabouts of the rest of the document, but his last completed masterpiece is still emerging here, with several re-voicings and additions – the descending line in the

accompaniment at 'The crumbled hoof' appears in genesis – with other emendations that are mostly concerned with enharmonic changes. At the foot of the page (and therefore presumably written after the fair copy was completed) are more pencilled drafts of bars 14–19, complete with *cantabile* direction. The sheet is dated Bramdean / July 29th 1930. It was exactly a week later, on 5 August, that Hughes invited Warlock and Bliss to dinner to meet Joyce and discuss the new venture.<sup>15</sup> Warlock was already painfully aware of supply and demand, later lamenting to his mother, 'there is absolutely no market for this kind of work at present',<sup>16</sup> and any proposal of unpaid labour would have been equally poorly received. *The Joyce Book* receives no mention in his correspondence, and it has been assumed that he dismissed the matter out of hand: 'Peter Warlock, shortly before his suicide, declined to attempt a song'.<sup>17</sup> But, in fact, he did begin one. On the reverse of the fair copy is the opening of an anguished setting of *Bahnhofstrasse*, and there can be little doubt that this was the poem suggested to Warlock by Hughes, perhaps during what may have been a rather awkward dinner. It is tempting to speculate that Warlock recommended van Dieren on that occasion, thus completing the list, although Lambert may already have done so; in any case, van Dieren's song was written very soon afterwards.<sup>18</sup>

The hasty scrawl contrasts strongly with the exquisite calligraphy overleaf, but while only the first line of text is present, the opening three words also appear by chance in the text of *The Fox*, and comparison confirms the authorship. The sentiments of both lyrics are coldly sardonic, uncannily alike in their sharp allusions to lost youth and approaching death. The music begins immediately with no title or tempo marking, although the two bars at the top of the page appear to be an introductory afterthought. In the transcription that follows I have added a double barline at this point, as it cannot be stated with certainty that they represent final thoughts. [Fig. 4] There are a few other dubious moments that would doubtless have been clarified or amended later, notably the two D-naturals in the RH of bar 4 that should patently be flats, and the curious but unequivocal G in the final bar. Logical construction built around a dotted rising figure (appearing in bars 3 and 5 as well as the 'introduction') is evident, and the ambiguous tonality of the vocal line, containing a descending form of the dotted figure, already

*Incipit lamentatio Iacobi Joyce: Warlock's last tribute* (continued)



Fig. 2: The end of *The Fox*, with drafts.

*Incipit lamentatio Iacobi Joyce: Warlock's last tribute* (continued)

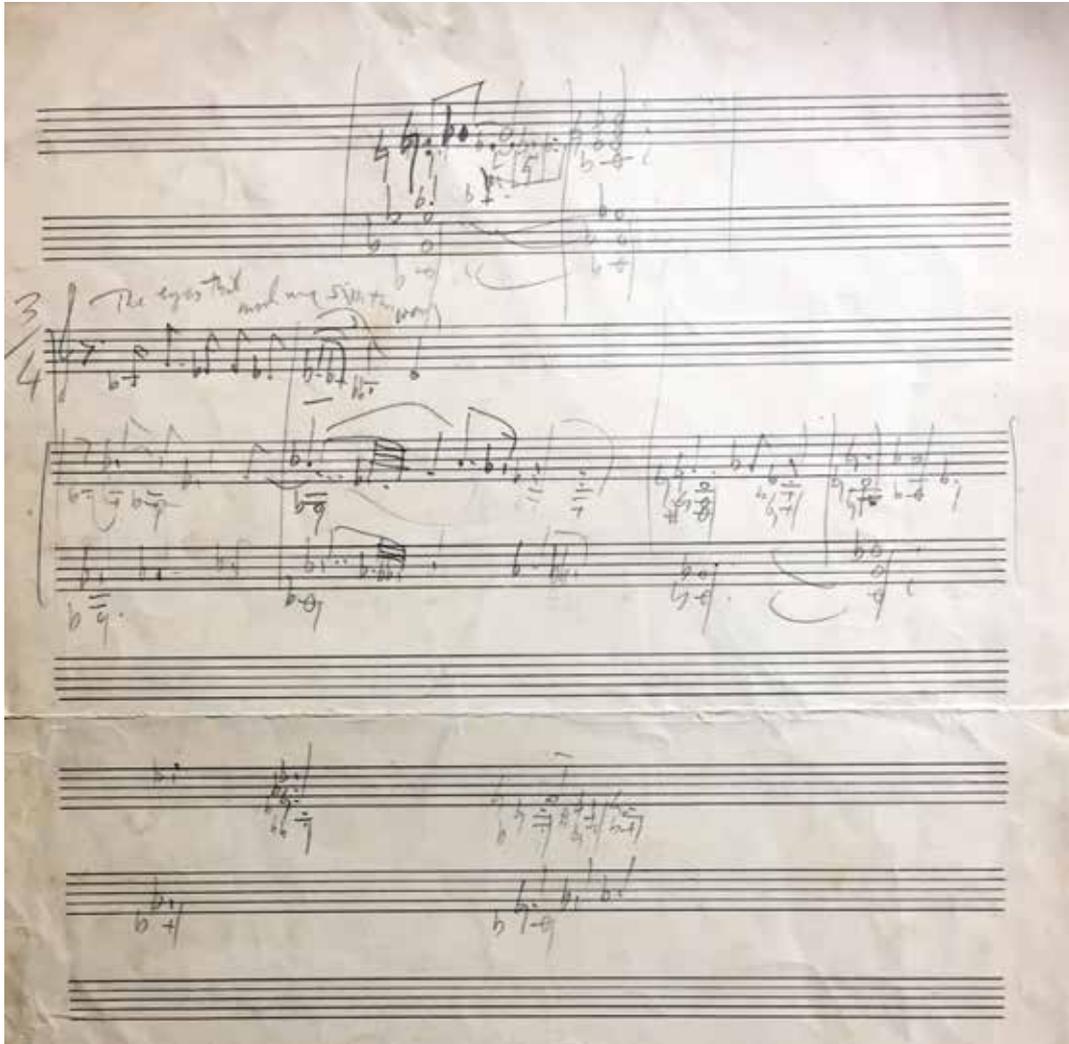


Fig. 3: Overleaf.

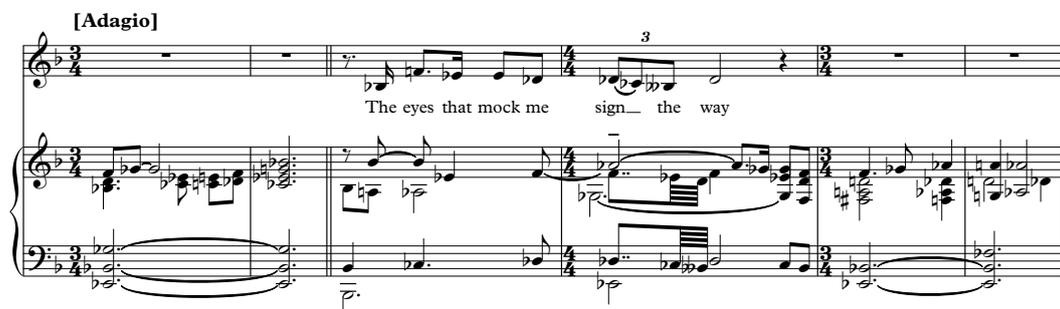
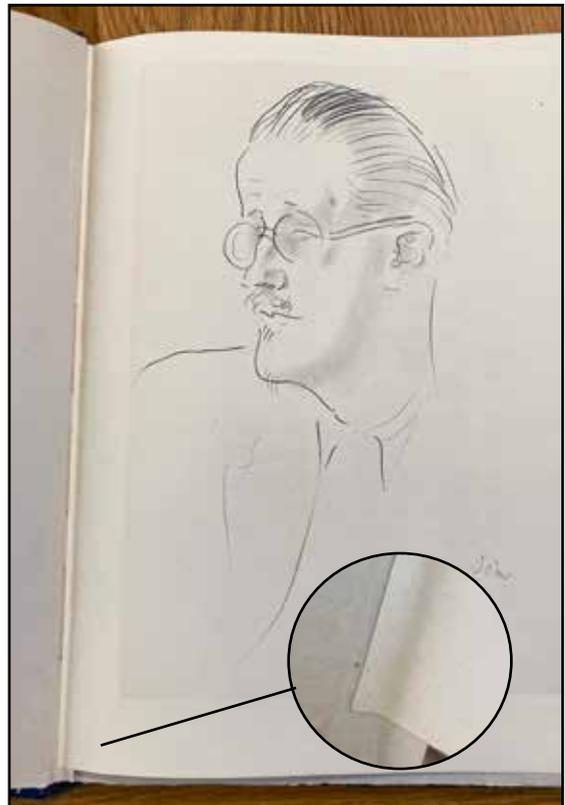
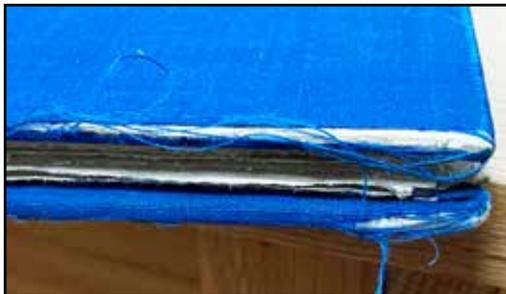
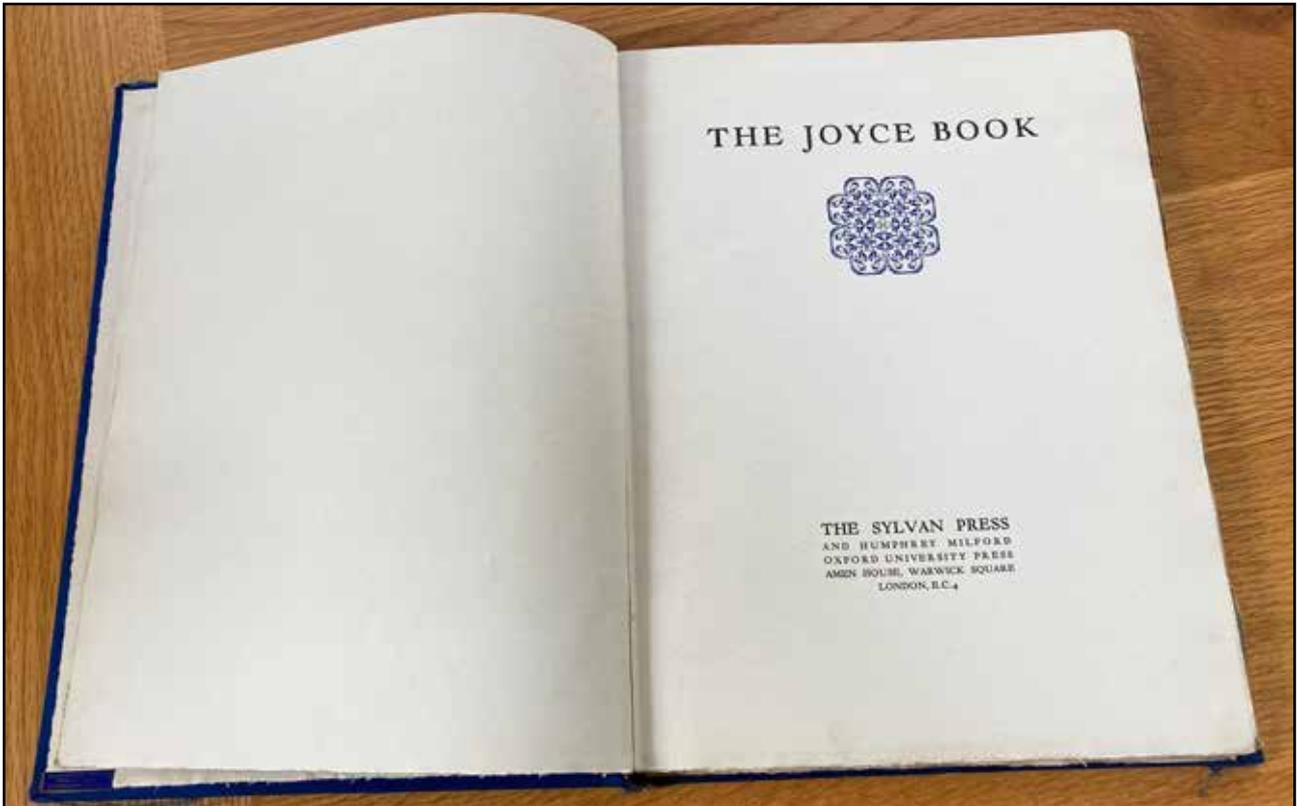


Fig. 4: Transcription of Warlock's sketch of *Bahnhofstrasse*

*Incipit lamentatio Iacobi Joyce: Warlock's last tribute* (continued)



Clockwise from the top: *The Joyce Book*, printed on grey Dutch mould-made paper; John's portrait of Joyce was printed on paper more suited to illustration, which was then glued into the book (see inset); The uncut edges of the mould-made paper pages; the blue hand-woven silk covered binding that soon proved too fragile for purpose.

*Incipit lamentatio Iacobi Joyce: Warlock's last tribute* (continued)

promises much; but early inspiration quickly evaporates into a few scattered and dislocated chords. Nonetheless, it is not too fanciful to imagine the resigned composer seizing the nearest sheet of manuscript and beginning to rework some of the materials utilised so memorably in *The Fox* – a slow trudge in triple-time, shifting semitones around a held note, even an echo of the hunting-horn rhythm in bar 4 – before fatigue or despair overtook him. Hymning the violet Celtic twilight in his own last months must have brought the calls of the *Curlew* uncomfortably close.

When C. W. Orr subsequently offered his services to Hughes ‘in a spirit of self-advertisement’ he pronounced

himself pleased to be allocated *Bahnhofstrasse*, as a poem he could understand.<sup>19</sup> Completed in 1931/2, it was republished in 1959 in a transposed version as the first of *Four Songs* by various poets, all departures from his customary Housman. Unlike the other three in this set, it has no dedicatee. If Orr was aware of the history of the commission – again, we have no way of knowing – it may have been some solace to undertake a text that his close and discerning friend could not. It is sadly ironic that the superbly haunting meditation which resulted – an example of what has been termed ‘the supreme distillation of Orr’s art’<sup>20</sup> – was engendered through Warlock’s inability to complete his own. ■

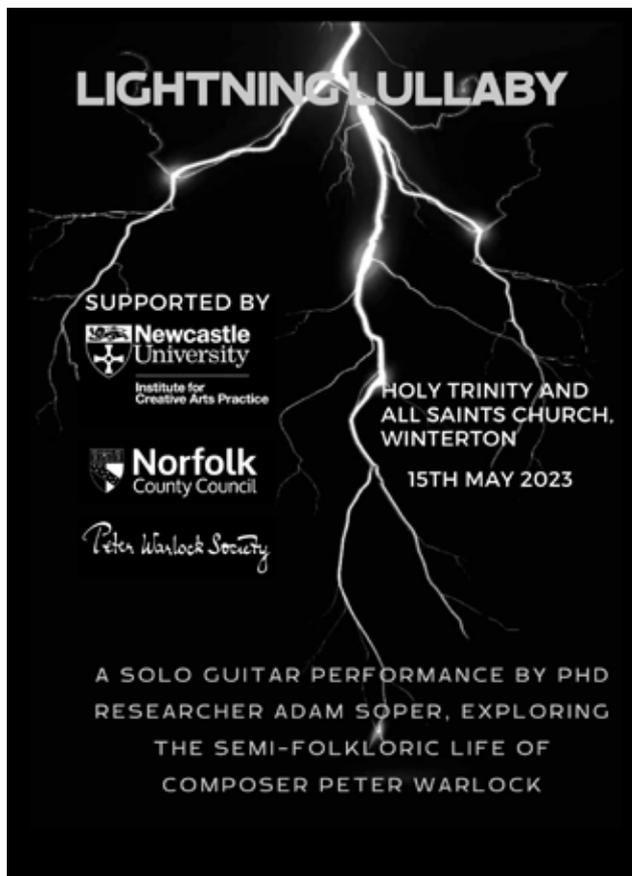
## Notes

- 1 BL Add MSS 57967.
- 2 Letter to Colin Taylor, 7 December 1922. See Barry Smith (ed.), *The Collected Letters of Peter Warlock (Philip Heseltine) IV* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), p. 52.
- 3 Rab Noolas, *Merry-Go-Down, a gallery of gorgeous drunkards through the ages [...]*, (London: The Mandrake Press [1929]), pp. 224–228.
- 4 London: Enoch & Sons, 1923.
- 5 Paris: Shakespeare & Co., 1927 – who published *Ulysses* in 1922.
- 6 Herbert Hughes, editor’s note, *The Joyce Book*, p. 9.
- 7 In addition to his *Chamber Music* collection, Moeran had already written *A Flower given to my Daughter* (under the title *Rosefrail*) in 1929, and subsequently asked Joyce for permission to set *Tilly*. As all the songs were to be newly-composed, the latter would become his contribution. See Ian Maxwell, *Ernest John Moeran: his life and music* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2021), p. 179. Without knowing the date of Moeran’s request or the date of his composition, it is not possible to confirm Maxwell’s suggestion that the composer’s choice of text was allied to his efforts to expurgate the trauma of Warlock’s death. In c.1946, Moeran made a setting of *She Weeps over Ragoon* (again under an abbreviated title, *Ragoon*), which would be his last solo song. It was dedicated to Ferrier, who gave the first performance on 3 November 1947 with pianist Frederick Stone.
- 8 Written in 1931, this was one of his last vocal works.
- 9 Hughes had also set poems from *Chamber Music*, but they have not survived.
- 10 1898–1967, largely known (if at all) for a handful of film music scores in the early 1940s.
- 11 van Dieren also set *A Flower given to my Daughter*, *Nightpiece* (both 1930), and possibly others.
- 12 Premieres were given by Dorothy (Dora) Moulton *soprano* with William Busch *piano*, London Contemporary Music Centre, 16 March 1932 (Hughes’s birthday). Howells’ *Flood* did not come roaring in until 1933, barely weeks before publication, and was not thereafter issued separately.
- 13 *The Joyce Book*, Meriel Dickinson *mezzo*, Peter Dickinson *piano*, BBC Radio 3, 11 February 1982 (rpt. 2 November), now issued on Heritage HTGCD 175.
- 14 Stephen Banfield, *Sensibility and English Song – critical studies of the early 20th century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), p. 322
- 15 See David Crackanthorpe, ‘To Herbert Hughes of Belfast from James Joyce of Dublin’, *James Joyce Quarterly*, xvii:2 (Winter 1980), p. 129. This article draws on unpublished papers and contains much valuable information about the production and reception of *The Joyce Book*.
- 16 Letter to Edith Buckley Jones, 15 November 1930. See Barry Smith, *Collected Letters* op cit., p. 287. Warlock was not referring to the Joyce project but contemplating a collection or cycle on Blunt’s poems (regrettably unrealised), to include *The Fox* and *The Frostbound Wood*.
- 17 Crackanthorpe, op cit., p. 131. *A Prayer* is dated 6 September 1930; see Fred Tomlinson, *Warlock and van Dieren* (London: Thames Publishing, 1978), p. 48.
- 18 C.W. Orr in conversation with M. J. Wilson (28 May 1972).
- 19 Quoted in Jane Wilson, *C. W. Orr – the unknown song composer* (London: Thames Publishing, 1989), p. 41. Did Warlock suggest him? Orr produced a long poem (21 verses!) *The Story of the Joyce Book*, expressing his less than reverent opinion of its production. This was sent to Stephen Banfield and appears as Appendix I in *Sensibility and English Song*, op. cit., pp. 397–98.
- 20 I.A. Copley, ‘An English Songwriter – C. W. Orr’ in *Composer* 29 (Autumn 1968), p. 14.

## Articles

**Lightning Lullaby:** 15 May 2023, Holy Trinity and All Saints Church Winterton, Norfolk

**Adam Soper** was inspired to create this improvised work when he learnt about the lightning strike that hit the tower of Winterton church, Norfolk, in April 1926. Warlock, accompanied by Moeran, Goss and Augustus John, was playing profane music on the church's organ at the time and was considerably shaken by the event. Here Adam describes his project.



On 15 May 2023 I undertook a performance at the Holy Trinity and All Saints Church in Winterton in Norfolk, England. The purpose of this project was threefold: to promote and celebrate the life and work of Peter Warlock; to act as a heritage project and encourage interest in a rural community's local history; and to introduce this community to professional contemporary improvised music. This performance featured a programme of improvised guitar music blended with three songs, all arranged for solo guitar. The three pieces featured in the performance were: the Norfolk folksong *Windy Old Weather* which is about managing through a storm on a fishing vessel off of the Norfolk coast; an arrangement of another Norfolk folk song titled *Down by the Riverside*, collected by E.J. Moeran, and the arrangement was based on Moeran's score; and lastly the song *Lullaby* by Warlock. The improvised element of the performance that acted

as prelude, interlude and epilogue to these three pieces hoped to weave these three distinct songs together into a single narrative and use this narrative to revisit an event reportedly experienced by Warlock and his contemporaries in the church 100 years ago.

The event that this work was revisiting occurred in the church in the late 1920s, when Peter Warlock visited along with a number of his friends. One of the members of the group he visited with was his colleague and housemate E.J. Moeran, who was the reason Warlock had come to Norfolk in the first instance: Warlock was accompanying Moeran while on a trip to collect folksongs from the county. On visiting this church Warlock is said to have performed Moeran's recent arrangement of the Norfolk folksong *Down by the Riverside* on the church's organ, whereby the church was struck by lightning. This was interpreted by Warlock, so accounts have stated, as a sign from God that profane

*Lightning Lullaby* (continued)



Above: Two newspaper cuttings describing the lightning strike on Winterton Church, Norfolk.

Below: The organ of Holy Trinity and All Saints Church, Winterton, although this is probably a more recent instrument than the one played by Warlock.

music shouldn't be performed in church. Although, having been witness to a divine intervention didn't seem to phase Warlock too much: immediately after having experienced the event, he rushed to the 'phone to call national papers in London with the hope he could sell the story.

At the performance on 15 May 2023, the church warden, Sandra Laws, produced a scrap book which featured a newspaper cutting of an article which may well have been the story sold by Warlock to the press. The article reported the event and the damage it caused to the church, as well as a list of names of those present, but made no mention of Warlock himself. This fits the account told in Barry Smith's biography that Warlock sold the story to the papers but omitted his name from those present. This story has been reported differently in a number of Warlock's biographies and academic articles, and in one early biography it was reported that the event occurred at the church in Stalham, not Winterton. My interpretation took the consensus of all of the texts I have read on this event to piece together what happened, and as such it is as much a fantastic folktale as it is a biographical account of an event in Warlock's life.



**Lightning Lullaby** (continued)



Adam Soper improvising on his cherished Höfner 'Verythin' semi-acoustic electric guitar, and the impressive effects pedal board he used in the performance to modify the guitar's sounds.

Brian Collins, in his PhD Thesis that analysed Warlock's music, wrote: 'what [Warlock] said (either in everyday speech or in letters and print) and how he behaved are more readily assimilable – and more instantly appealing – than his musical feats. [...] craft has been overtaken by reputation, real or apocryphal'. Collins portrays a negative view of how the reports of Warlock's hedonistic lifestyle overshadow his musical work, but I think that it is this drama and this tangle of truths and untruths spun by biographers, journalists, and by Warlock himself that are what make him such a fascinating figure and allow for us as composers, performers, historians and fans in the 21st century to pick up and use his work as a wonderful material and backdrop for our own creative understanding of the world around us.

Interestingly – for me at least, as a researcher into improvised music as a tool for revealing or occluding knowledge – this performance functioned initially as a tentative retelling of a misremembered story that may or may not have happened, but, going through the motion of the performance and being introduced to evidence,

such as the church records and the scrap book, this once imagined folktale returned again as a factual biographical account, perhaps soon to return once more at a future date as a folktale again. Furthermore, in the performance's choosing of a repertoire of songs and presenting them as instrumental arrangements, the performance covered over any linguistic message or meaning present in the libretto; thus, presenting a work that was haunted by content intentionally left unsaid. This is also echoed by the intentional omission of some content of the biographical account that perhaps would not be palatable to the church (and will remain omitted here) as well as Warlock's intentional omission of himself from the roster of attendees at the church of the event when he was reporting the story to the press at the time. In concluding, I would like to reflect on the event as a whole, as a reminder – to myself at least – that life as a whole is as fantastic as any folktale, and is always messy, confusing and full of details spoken in hushed tones, easily misheard, or intentionally left unsaid; and this performance and the event revisited for it were prime examples of this. ■

Adam's performance can be heard at:

**<https://adamsoper.bandcamp.com/album/lightning-lullaby>**

*Birds and Their Gift of Music*, by Michael Green

Published by [www.youcaxton.co.uk](http://www.youcaxton.co.uk)

PWS member Michael Green is the author of this remarkable book, which can only be described as a true labour of love. It is a feast of information detailing the influence of birds on composers and musicians around the world over the past millennium, encompassing classical, pop, jazz and present day music. It describes changing musical styles with brief composer biographies, sources of influences, especially poetry, and delightful original images.

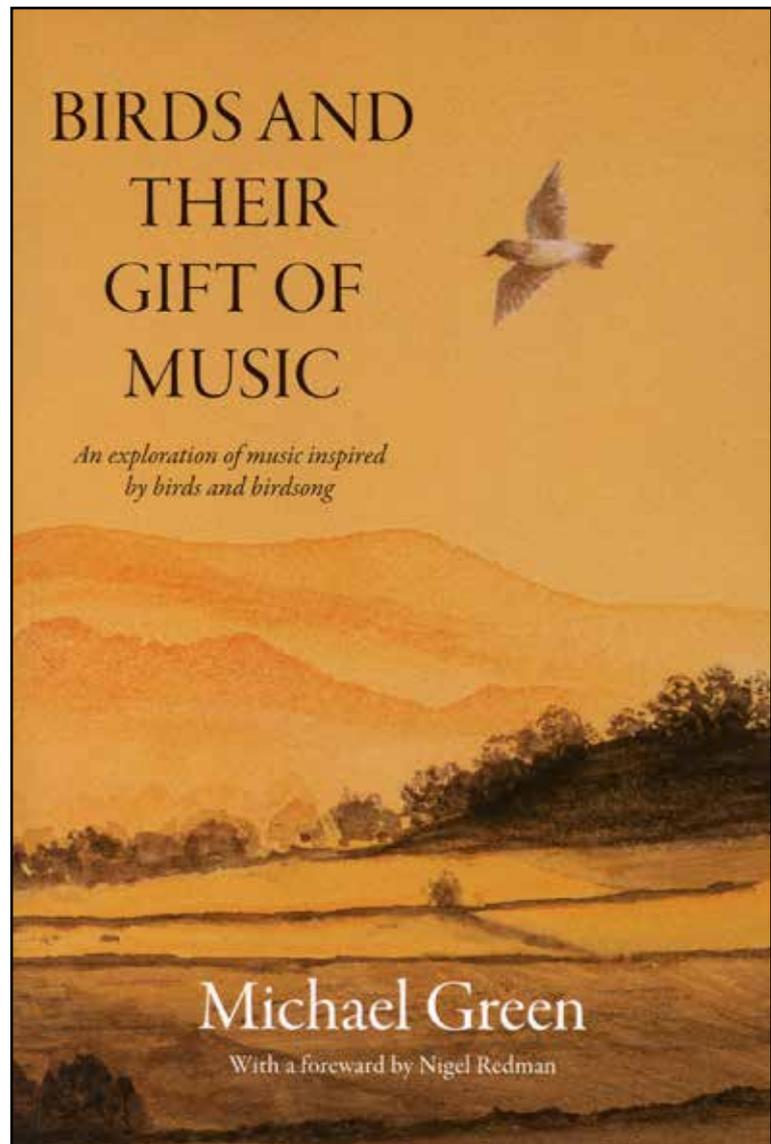
We all have different tastes, but if you enjoy Vaughan Williams' *Lark Ascending*, Paul McCartney's *Blackbird*, Duke Ellington's *Bluebird of Delhi*, Messiaen's *Catalogue d'oiseaux*, or Warlock's *The Curlew*, these are just a few of over 1200 examples of bird influenced music described here.

Extensive research has enabled the author to provide a unique book which will appeal to bird and nature enthusiasts who are fond of music and music lovers who are fascinated by birds. It also provides a hitherto unavailable source of ideas for performers, students of music and drama, authors and playwrights.

Given that over 1200 examples of bird influenced music are contained within the book, no single composer occupies a great deal of space. However, Warlock is mentioned on several pages in the book, and has a mini section of a page and a half (RVW has one and three quarters). The bird-related music of Warlock's includes *The Curlew*, *Spring*, *Call for the Robin*, *Redbreast and the Wren*, *The Birds*, *Pretty Ring Time* and *Little Trotty Wagtail*.

The book has nine chapters each dealing with a specific period of music from Folk through Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantics, Modern, 20th Century and beyond and Jazz. Each chapter is then divided into subsections according to country. There are five appendices.

This book will delight music lovers and bird enthusiasts alike and will make a perfect Christmas present for either.



## *Birds and their Gift of Music*

is available from

**Amazon (£15.99)**

and on **Kindle (£6.00)**

Published by

[www.youcaxton.co.uk](http://www.youcaxton.co.uk)

**Forthcoming Events**

**Bryn Philpott** provides the details

**Saturday 9 December 2023 at 4:00 pm**

***Peaceful was the Night***

St Peters Church, Hook Norton, OX15 5NH;  
North Cotswolds Chamber Choir, Cond. Edward Casswell

Warlock: *Bethlehem Down*

(Concert includes works by Poulenc, Weelkes, Byrd, McDowall, Sullivan, Porter, Willcocks)

Tickets £12.00, (concessions £8) Tickets at the door (until sold out)

.....  
**Saturday 9 December 2023 at 7:30 pm**

***A boy was born***

Canongate Kirk, The Royal Mile, Edinburgh, E8H 8BR  
Calton Consort, Cond. Rory Wilson

Warlock: *Bethlehem Down*

(Concert includes works by Britten, Howells, Briggs, Jones)

Tickets:£15 (concessions £12 under 18s Free) Tickets at the door (until sold out)

.....  
**Friday 15 December 2022 at 7:00 pm**

***A Classic Christmas*** with festive readings with Stephen Fry  
ORA Singers, Cond. Suzi Digby

St Giles in the Fields, St Giles High Street, London, WC2H 8LG

Warlock: *Bethlehem Down*

(Concert includes works by Roth, Skempton, Byrd, Campkin, Jacob Handl, Parsons, Louridsen, Lassus, Howells, Gardner, Chilcott, L' Estrange)

Tickets:£35, £50, £75 (includes a glass of 'Bubbly') Tickets on line only: [www.orasingers.com](http://www.orasingers.com)

.....  
**Saturday & Sunday 18-19 May 2024**

**The Peter Warlock Society Annual General Meeting  
Celebrating the 130th Anniversary of Warlock's Birth**

See back pages for details.

.....  
**Friday to Sunday 24-27 May 2024**

**The English Music Festival**

Dorchester-on-Thames.

There is plenty of interest for lovers of English (British!) music. More information on the Festival's website.

[www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk](http://www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk)

.....  
*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](mailto:pwsnewsletter@yahoo.com), or phone 01666 837334.*

**We warmly invite you to join us for the first social lunch of 2024, to be held at ...**

***The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London SW1W 8EZ***



**1pm Saturday, 20 January, 2024.**

**We look forward to seeing you then.**

## **Bequests and donations of Warlock's music and other Warlock related items received by the Society**

Over the last two years, the Peter Warlock Society has received several very generous donations and bequests. These have included considerable quantities of music scores and a number of books. Most scores are of Warlock's music, but many have a connection with Warlock in some way.

The donations have enabled us to fill a few significant 'gaps' in the Society's own archive, but many valuable items (ie. rare items not necessarily having monetary value) are surplus to the Society's requirements. We therefore intend to offer these to all members of the Society in due course. Some items will be offered as 'free to a good home' (with a polite request for a contribution to cover postage), whilst other items will probably be auctioned, as per John Mitchell's previous Newsletter auctions. (New(ish) members of the Society, unaware of this mysterious process, will be initiated in due course!)

As there are so many items, and also where their condition varies from poor/fair to very good, it will take a while to catalogue everything effectively in order to arrive at a comprehensive list that will contain all necessary information.

We hope very much to have the first list ready for the Spring 2024 edition of the Newsletter.

# Notice of the 2024 Annual General Meeting

Llandyssil, Montgomery, 18/19 May 2024.

To mark the 130th anniversary of Warlock's birth.



Warlock's family home was at *Cefn Bryntalch*, just over a mile from the village of Llandyssil. Warlock used to walk across the fields to play the organ at St Tyssil's Church and this route forms part of The

Peter Warlock Trail. Last year the community planted a wildflower meadow at the start of the trail and the PWS was pleased to support this venture financially as well as to attend the opening ceremony.

## Provisional plan for the weekend

### Saturday 18 May

Meet for lunch around noon – venue tbc

**The venue for all subsequent events will be St Tyssil's Church, Llandyssil**

2pm: Annual General Meeting,  
After the meeting there will be a Recital of songs by Warlock and 'Friends' with Jane Hunt (soprano).

This will be followed by a talk on *The Welsh Warlock* by Dr. Rhian Davies.

Complimentary afternoon tea buffet for all members

7.30pm: Concert of music by Warlock and others with the choir, Côr Trefaldwyn, Cond. Ian Morgan-Williams, and folk band Monty Folk, who will include some of the source folk-song/dance material that features in Warlock's music.

### Sunday 19 May

10.30am tbc Guided walk along the beautiful Peter Warlock Trail

**More details to follow**

**Enquiries to Claire Beach, Hon. Secretary.**

**[pwssecretary@yahoo.com](mailto:pwssecretary@yahoo.com)**