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PETER WARLOCK

A study of the composer
through the letters to Colin Taylor
between 1911 and 1929.

THESIS

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by

ALBERT ERIC BARRY SMITH

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To the memory of my Mother
who encouraged me in such things

There's labour a' learnin' afore ye grow ae,
For learnin' itself will never decay;
And a man without learnin' wearin' fine clothes
Is like a gold ring in a pig's nose.

Anon.

ABSTRACT

This thesis involves a comprehensive study of the letters written by Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock) to Colin Taylor from 1911 to 1929. Warlock first came into contact with Taylor at Eton in 1908 when he studied the piano with him as a schoolboy. Through Taylor's imaginative teaching during the next four years Warlock's interest in and understanding of music, particularly modern music, grew and matured. At the same time a strong bond of friendship developed between the two men and continued until Warlock's early death in 1930. This is clearly illustrated in the surviving 87 letters.

Warlock was a great letter writer and over a thousand of them have been preserved, mostly in the British Library. His letters to Taylor have a special significance in that they were written during the entire period of his adult life, most of them during the early formative and creative years. They cover a wide range of topics including the influential friendships with the composers Frederick Delius and Bernard van Dieren, contemporary British and foreign music and his own work as a composer, writer and scholar. They also give us many important insights into his life and personality, written as they are with rare candour and humour.

In this thesis each letter has been carefully and systematically studied and the resulting information used to augment and expand the existing knowledge of Warlock's life and personality, his friendship with Taylor, his music and writings.

Because of the wide field which the life and works of Peter Warlock cover, this study has been limited to subjects arising out of the correspondence with Taylor. Where necessary, additional information has been interpolated from other sources, mainly to give a sense of continuity and to explain references which might otherwise seem obscure. For a detailed study of Warlock's music readers are referred to Ian Copley's book, *The Music of Peter Warlock*, (Dennis Dobson, London, 1979). A definitive biography has yet to be written.

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INTRODUCTION

I would rather spend my life trying to achieve one book of little songs that shall have a lasting fragrance, than pile up tome upon tome on the dusty shelves of the British Museum.¹

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in the music of Peter Warlock. For this much of the credit must go to the efforts of the Peter Warlock Society (founded in 1963), particularly of their chairman, Fred Tomlinson, and his committee members. Not only have they constantly campaigned for more performances of his works, both on record, radio and in public performance, but they are at present in the process of producing a complete edition of his songs, many of which have been out of print for a number of years.² Through their untiring efforts, many have been introduced to the neglected music of this fascinating figure in twentieth century English music.

In the world of the arts, size and scale has always played an important part in the general public's critical assessment of an artist's achievement, and nowhere more so than in the field of music. Just as the average art-lover will be more easily awed and impressed by a colossal canvas by Rubens, or the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, than by the exquisite work of the Elizabethan miniaturist painter, Nicholas Hilliard (1547-1619),³ so will the average music-lover be drawn more to a Beethoven or Mahler symphony than to the equal perfection of a short song by John Dowland (1563-1626)⁴ or Peter Warlock.

¹ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, quoted by Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, p.24.

² *Peter Warlock Society Edition* (edited Tomlinson), Thames, London, 1982-89.

Vol.1 Songs 1911-1917

Vol.2 Songs 1918-1919

Vol.3 Songs 1920-1922

Vol.4 Songs 1922-1923

Vol.5 Songs 1923-1924

³ English painter of portrait miniatures.

⁴ English composer, singer and lutenist.

Warlock is often wrongly dismissed as having produced only a small output, but if one considers his achievements during a comparatively short period (in effect some fourteen years) in an equally short life (he died at the age of 36) then one might even describe him as being prolific. Most of his output consists of 119 solo songs with piano accompaniment (as well as some 16 movements of vocal chamber music), 23 choral works (some unaccompanied, some with keyboard accompaniment and a few with orchestra), the remaining handful of works being for orchestra or for piano (29 movements all told). He was also a distinguished editor and transcriber of early music (570 published items) as well as an author (9 books, 73 articles), editor and critic (51 reviews).⁵ Added to all this is a large number of letters. In his book, *Warlock and Delius*,⁶ Fred Tomlinson mentioned the existence of about 1000 surviving private letters, a number that must now be even higher as more Warlock material has been discovered in the intervening years. Even during the course of researching this thesis letters from Delius,⁷ Bernard van Dieren⁸ and Cecil Gray⁹ about Warlock, as well as copies of songs with annotations in Warlock's own hand,¹⁰ came to light in the University of Cape Town Library, the importance of which has not yet been noted.

Whilst at University I chanced to read Cecil Gray's memoir and from that moment on became almost obsessively interested in Peter Warlock's life and music. When I arrived in England for the first time in 1960, I bought every single piece of his music that was still in print and devoured everything I could possibly read or find out

⁵ Statistics from Tomlinson, *A Peter Warlock Handbook Volume 1*, Triad Press, London, 1974, p.45.

⁶ Tomlinson, Fred, *Warlock and Delius*, Thames, London, 1976, p.8.

⁷ Unpublished letter from Delius to Taylor, Cape Town, UCT Library. BC76 A4.149.

⁸ Unpublished letter from van Dieren to Taylor, Cape Town, UCT Library, BC76 A4.153.

⁹ Unpublished letter from Gray to Taylor, Cape Town, UCT Library, BC76 A4.151.

¹⁰ See Appendix C.

about him. I remember speaking about him to Charles Kennedy Scott (1876-1965)¹¹ (who was then 84 and still teaching at the Trinity College of Music in London) who had known Warlock and had conducted first performances of some of his choral works. I also visited Eynsford several times and even managed to find some aged villagers in the local pub, *The Five Bells*, who remembered Warlock and his escapades during the two and a half years he lived there. Even more amazing was that the station-master at Eynsford in 1961 was the self-same one who used to take Warlock off the train late at night when he arrived back from London somewhat the worse for wear!

Soon after I moved to Cape Town in 1964 I was delighted to discover that Colin Taylor (1881-1973),¹² Warlock's teacher at Eton (during the years 1908-1911), was living in Stellenbosch. We became great friends and I would often listen to his endless stream of fascinating conversation on every conceivable topic and especially about Warlock, a subject I tried to lead him on to whenever I could.

In due course I discovered that he had a collection of some 87 letters from Warlock which he presented to the British Library in 1967.¹³ These he kindly let me read and I was fascinated by the light they threw on Warlock's life and personality as well as being moved by the obvious affection and devotion Warlock showed to his former teacher and friend, from his first schoolboy letter right up to the last one written some eighteen years later.

¹¹ English choral conductor and teacher; founder of the Oriana Madrigal Society in 1904 and the Philharmonic Choir in 1919.

¹² English born South African pianist, composer and teacher.

¹³ London, BL, Add MS 54197. In 1954 Taylor made the following note at the end of his list and index of the Warlock letters (University of Cape Town Library, BC.76 C1.1): "There are others which, in the course of years, I have presented to enthusiasts. Also some MSS of music. Eton College Music schools has one [of the letters]". Taylor, in fact, presented *two* letters to the Eton Music Schools in 1939, dated 17.3.1912 and 6.8.1929. Unfortunately the earlier of the two letters was "apparently 'borrowed' during an exhibition and is missing". Unpublished letter from Fred Tomlinson to Jean Laurenson, University Librarian, 12.5.1975, UCT Manuscripts and Archives correspondence file.

The Warlock/Taylor letters are of unique importance in that, together with those to Delius,¹⁴ they cover the longest period of major correspondence with one single person. Not only do they embrace a wide variety of topics, most of which will be discussed in this thesis, but they also give a rare insight into Warlock's development both as a person and as a composer.

Because the vast majority of these letters, full of erudition and humour, are unpublished, and because he had such a superb command of the English language, Warlock will be allowed to speak for himself wherever possible. Too much paraphrasing would deprive the reader of the chance to discover the mercurial vitality that was part of Warlock's character. Where appropriate there are quotations from other Warlock letters, not written to Taylor, but relevant to the subject under consideration. An attempt has also been made to avoid too many cross-references and so, hopefully, obviate irritating page-turning. This has been done at the risk of occasional repetition of some of the material contained in the letters. All quotations from the Warlock/Taylor correspondence used in the following pages may be found in the British Library Add MS 54197, typed transcripts of which are housed in the Colin Taylor Collection in the Library of the University of Cape Town (Manuscripts and Archives) catalogued as BC 76 C1.2.1 to BC 76 C1.2.90. In the course of this thesis quotations from letters written by Warlock to Taylor will be identified only by the date on which they were written and not by their catalogue numbers.

¹⁴ Warlock's first letter to Delius was written as a schoolboy from Eton on 17.6.1911. Their correspondence continued until 1930, the year of Warlock's death though, because of his illness, the Delius letters from 1923 are in his wife's, Jelka's, handwriting.



1. Peter Warlock (c.1924)
(Colin Taylor Collection, UCT Library. B76 C4.6)

CHAPTER 1

PETER WARLOCK'S BIOGRAPHY

"Now for autobiography," said I. "I have none," said Warlock, abruptly retiring; "nothing that matters. Why not invent that part?" Now, inventing biography is an easy, amusing and popular pursuit; but since truth is often stranger than fiction I refused..."Very well, then," he said. "I was born in 1894 on the Embankment..." I pointed out that this was not useful and that I could invent better. "But I was really born on the Embankment and it was 1894. It was in the Savoy; but the Embankment sounds better". Gradually the facts came out, and here they are....¹

All musicologists and Warlock enthusiasts would agree that a new, up-to-date biography of Peter Warlock is long overdue. In fact a full, unexpurgated account of his life would afford a first-rate biographer the opportunity to produce a potentially engrossing best-seller containing a wealth of fascinating material.

All the right ingredients are there: here is someone who suddenly appeared on the London artistic scene, flouting all the traditions and norms of his upper middle-class, Eton-Oxford establishment background and of society in general. Here is a stormy petrel, a rebel, a bohemian whose life-style raised more than a few eyebrows. Here is a man who was a talented composer, author and critic. A stirrer of hornet's nests, a fighter for what he considered to be just causes, a man who could be incredibly generous with what little money he had, yet, at the same time, could be caustic and cruel if he felt the occasion so demanded. In short, a colourful, eccentric figure of the 1920s: a friend of the artistic and literary greats of the time, possessed of a brilliant mind and an equally brilliant pen, a kind of meteor in the London artistic sky of whom all had to take notice whether they liked it or not. And then, of course, there was the additional strange Heseltine-Warlock dichotomy which has caused endless speculation, as well as the sensational circumstances surrounding his death.

¹ Bennett, R., "Peter Warlock: The Man and his Songs", *The Bookman*, September 1923, v.64, no.384, p.301.

Much of the material necessary for such a new biography is ready and waiting in the form of a large amount of surviving correspondence together with a wealth of information available from numerous other sources. But even a thousand letters and a host of legends can never ever quite reveal the full story as it deserves to be told. In portraying the life and times of a personality like Peter Warlock, the contribution of the countless characters who were part of the complete scenario is of crucial importance.

For one who was a living legend in his own lifetime the pictures painted by those who came within his orbit would have helped to give a full, three-dimensional portrait of the principal character. Until quite recently many of those who had known him both as friend and as enemy were still alive. Even as late as the 1960s, some thirty years after his death it was possible, for example, to hear about him at first hand from people like Colin Taylor and Charles Kennedy Scott who had known him so well.² In Cape Town and Harrismith, respectively, his cousins, Cyril Leigh ('Sonny') and Irene ('Freddie') Heseltine were alive until a few years ago whilst his son, Nigel, aged 74 has been in Australia until recently. And there were a host of others. To mention just a few names at random shows what opportunities have been lost: Sir William Walton, Kaikhosru Sorabji, Sir Thomas Beecham, Eugene Goossens, Adrian Allinson, Alec Rowley, Anthony Bernard, Nina Hamnett, Frida van Dieren and Barbara Peache, who was living with him at the time of his death. Many of these were alive until quite recently and, as the years passed, more and more opportunities of recording such personal recollections for posterity were missed.

But even if the right author and a sympathetic publisher were to be found that would not mean that the problems would be solved. In a way that would raise yet another set. It is all very well saying that many opportunities were lost and that

² The present writer had discussions about Warlock with both these men, particularly with Taylor.

there were so many people who could have contributed valuable information to the full story. All this really is hypothetical. Warlock was a highly controversial figure in the English music scene and much of what he said and wrote was often of a highly inflammatory if not downright libellous nature. He left many enemies and many bruised egos when he died in 1930 and, as Copley expressively puts it, "even now, so many years after his death, the dust of conflicts which surrounded him has not wholly settled".³ Many of those who knew him would not have been willing to talk of a man they loved or treated with suspicion. Much of what they knew about him they would doubtless have regarded as classified information and may have been quite unwilling to allow it to appear in print. Perhaps it is true to say that few biographies can ever tell the real story as it should be told. When the time is ideal for writing there are too many people alive to risk the publication of the truth and when the opportunity eventually presents itself, there are few left to tell the story the way it should.

Cecil Gray (1895-1951)⁴ comes in for a great deal of criticism for the picture he drew in his memoir which appeared some four years after Warlock's death.⁵ But his task was, in a way, unenviable. He knew so many of the people involved and to what extent his hands were tied in any attempt to relate the whole story with all its characters. He says as much in the introductory section to his memoir:

No one could be more conscious than I of the manifold faults and deficiencies of the following attempt...some at least of them were unavoidable...For example, in writing about one so recently dead, and especially one who led such a stormy and controversial existence...it is obvious that much, if only for purely practical legal reasons, must necessarily be omitted....⁶

³ Copley, *The Music of Peter Warlock: A Critical Survey*, Dobson, London, 1979, p.27.

⁴ Scottish composer, author and critic.

⁵ Gray's scholarship is also not always reliable. For example in his book he combines two different letters from Warlock to Taylor: those of 6.12.1911 and 2.10.1912 under the date of the first (op. cit., pp.48-49). He also misquotes from time to time. (e.g. the letter from Delius to Warlock, 4.12.1911, op. cit., p.43.)

⁶ Gray, op. cit., p.27.

Whatever the shortcomings of his memoir (he never actually called it a biography), Gray must be credited with the enthusiasm and courage to initiate the whole project and to see it through. For him there must have been constant problems as he tried to write a book with so many constraints. He himself voiced certain misgivings about the undertaking:

On the other hand, if I were to propose to wait patiently until everyone who had been intimately connected with him were dead, the odds are that I should be dead myself as well....

...to write a timid bowdlerized version of the life of Peter Warlock, of all people, would have constituted a gross and unforgivable betrayal of all that he stood for. I have sought to show him to the best of my ability as he was and as I knew him, with all his faults, in the firm belief that the shadows which appear in the picture will only serve to enhance the brightness of the whole.⁷

Colin Taylor was one of those friends who appreciated Gray's memoir and wrote to tell him so. He had a particular interest in the book, not only because of the obvious long association with Warlock, but also because he had lent Gray the letters that are extensively quoted throughout the book. In the Colin Taylor Collection in the University of Cape Town Library there is a hitherto unpublished letter from Gray thanking Taylor for his kind comments.⁸ The postscript is of particular interest as it highlights the importance of the Warlock/Taylor correspondence among all the other Warlock letters. For one of his closest friends to describe these letters under consideration in this thesis as being "among the most interesting and illuminating of all" at his disposal is a most significant observation for the consideration of Warlock scholars:

I wanted to write and thank you for your very kind and charming letter about my book on Philip....

I greatly appreciate your words, although I cannot help feeling that you do me more than justice. On the whole the book was surprisingly well received, but I fear it caused a certain amount of annoyance in certain quarters - Mrs B.J.⁹ for example - but how could it have been otherwise? If it had pleased her it would have been a bad book, and it is very reassuring

⁷ Gray, *ibid.*, p.28-29.

⁸ Letter from Gray to Taylor, 6.4.1935, Cape Town, UCT Library, BC76 A4.151.

⁹ Edith Buckley Jones, Warlock's mother.

6/4/35

RECEIVED 2014

ROSEHILL LODGE,
PORCHESTER GATE,
LONDON, W. 2.

Dear Taylor,

I wanted to write and thank you for your very kind and charming letter about my book on Philip, but you didn't give any address. I learnt from von Weizen what I ought to have known, that "College of Music, Capetown" would get you. Please excuse the delay in replying.

I greatly appreciate your words, although I cannot help feeling that you do me more than justice. On the whole the book was surprisingly well received, but I fear, caused a certain amount of annoyance in certain quarters — Mrs B. J. for example — but how could it have been otherwise? If it had pleased her it would have been a bad book, and it is very reassuring to see that a close friend^{of his}, such as you,

2

finds it not altogether unworthy of his memory. It was for such as you — only a small handful, perhaps, of those who knew him and loved him — that the book was written — certainly not for his damned relations who, as you probably know, hated him abominably; and, not least, his mother. Look me up next time you are in England.

yours sincerely

Cecil Gray

P.S. Many thanks, incidentally, for the kind loan of letters, of which I made good use. Some of his to you were among the most interesting and illuminating of all at my disposal.

to see that a close friend of his, such as you, finds it not altogether unworthy of his memory. It was for such as you - only a small handful, perhaps, of those who knew him and loved him - that the book was written - certainly not for his damned relations who, as you probably know, treated him abominably; and, not least, his mother....

P.S. Many thanks, incidentally, for the kind loan of the letters, of which I made good use. Some of his to you were among the most interesting and illuminating of all at my disposal.

Later that same month Taylor heard from Bernard van Dieren in reply to an enquiry about these letters which Taylor had lent to Gray and which were now in van Dieren's possession. This letter which, up until now, has remained unpublished, is also part of the Colin Taylor Collection.¹⁰ It too contains some interesting remarks about the Gray memoir, once again from one of Warlock's closest friends. Taylor had evidently spoken favourably about the book in his letter to van Dieren but there seems to be a certain caution in van Dieren's own references to this work. They are somewhat guarded even though he seems appreciative of Gray's efforts, taking pains to point out the problems which faced Gray in his unenviable task. At the end of this letter there is a reference to a manuscript, one of Taylor's which he had asked Warlock to send to a London publisher and which van Dieren had inherited together with Warlock's other possessions. In a subsequent letter to Taylor, quoted below, van Dieren refers once again to this manuscript, a two-piano arrangement by Taylor of a Bach work¹¹:

Thank you very much for your letter. I entirely agree with everything you say about Gray's book. It has been bitterly criticized by some of Philip's friends, but, on the other hand, none of those critics have themselves produced anything. It was very difficult for Gray, of course, to deal with the subject in a more or less abstract way where his own feelings were so strongly involved. I am glad that you had such a favourable impression.

With regard to the letters, are you in any hurry about them? Or is there any prospect of your visiting England in the near future? If you prefer I will send them on to you, but anyhow I shall await your instructions as also I shall do about the manuscript you mention, which certainly was preserved among Philip's things.

¹⁰ Cape Town, UCT Library, BC76 C2.2.2.

¹¹ A Bach Toccata in c; see unpublished letter from Fred Tomlinson to Jean Laurenson, UCT Librarian, 12.5.1975, Cape Town, UCT Library, Manuscripts and Archives correspondence file.

There is one last remaining letter to Taylor from van Dieren in the Colin Taylor Collection.¹² In it he discusses what he intends doing with the originals of the Warlock letters as well as mentioning his forthcoming book, *Down among the Dead Men: and other Essays*¹³ and the Taylor two-piano arrangement of Bach already referred to:

Thank you very much for your letter. As you suggested I will keep the letters for the time being unless you change your mind about them, when naturally I shall return them at once.

My book, which you mention, ought to be out about the time when you receive this letter. It is most kind of you to suggest that you might mention it in one of your broadcast reviews. I shall anyhow ask Foss¹⁴ to send you a copy.

There is one thing which you do not mention, and that is your two-piano arrangement of the Bach. Tell me what you want me to do with it....

The biographical details which follow will, in no way, attempt to fill the need expressed above.¹⁵ In a study such as this, limited to particular aspects of Warlock's life and works, all that can be done is to give an account of the major events together with details of the principal characters in the story. In the chapters that follow, the reader will then, hopefully, be able to place everything more easily in context and so better understand the central figure and his music.

When interviewed by Rodney Bennett¹⁶ for an article entitled "Peter Warlock: the Man and his Songs,"¹⁷ Warlock made the following typical facetious remark when asked for some autobiographical details:

¹² Cape Town, UCT Library, BC76 C2.2.4.

¹³ O.U.P., London, 1935.

¹⁴ Hubert Foss, 1899-1953, English pianist and editor; first head of the Oxford University music department when it was founded in 1924.

¹⁵ Besides Warlock's correspondence with Taylor and other relevant material in the British Library (particularly the Nigel Heseltine Papers, Add MS 57958-57970), this chapter also relies on biographical details included in the following three books: Gray, op. cit., Copley, op. cit., and Tomlinson, *A Peter Warlock Handbook, Vol.1*, Triad Press, London, 1974.

¹⁶ Father of the composer, Richard Rodney Bennett.

¹⁷ Bennett, op. cit., pp.300-303.

I was born in 1894 on the Embankment. I have a horoscope somewhere. I was born under Gemini, which signifies duplicity. It was in the Savoy; but the Embankment sounds better.

Gray in his memoir devotes a long section to this very horoscope mentioned by Warlock.¹⁸ To refer to a horoscope in a serious study of this nature may seem somewhat mundane and even suspect, but it is uncanny how many accurate assessments and predictions of Warlock's life and personality appear in the few extracts quoted here:

A document found among his papers at his death is of great interest. It is a horoscope, cast for him by an adept in the art, in 1917,¹⁹...I quote the more salient passages. "...You like a good fight, particularly a battle of brains, and you don't care how many difficulties you find in your path, you charge straight at them and rather enjoy it all. You are neither shy nor pessimistic; you have a happy knack of forgetting any failures you may experience, and you carry through your undertakings with a confidence, dash and brilliancy that disarm criticism. You are enthusiastic and warmhearted in your friendships almost to a point of rashness. You like a change of surroundings and acquaintances...You will be a determined lover, difficult to turn aside in your affections and desires...You naturally have an active mind and a good memory. You can be sarcastic when roused by any injustice, and you have a ready wit. Your Sun...is also in Scorpio. This makes you very determined, gives you great magnetic power, and critical perception...The conjunction of the Sun and Venus gives you a love of art and refinement. The trine with Jupiter gives you abundant vitality...The nerves are inclined to be tensely constituted. You are at times pessimistic but this does not last for long...This makes you often at loggerheads with convention. It also gives you a gift for prophecy and a fondness for dual experiences. Neptune is in Gemini, and this is a good position for developing occult or inspirational faculties. It is the signature of genius in many directions, but it makes you restless, and makes it difficult for you to concentrate on one thing for a great length of time...You will have an irresistible impulse to do at least two things at the same time and, what is more extraordinary still, you will succeed in doing them".

It is somehow in keeping with his subsequent, eccentric life-style that Warlock should have been born on October 30th, 1894 in as unexpected a place as the fashionable Savoy Hotel in London though no-one has yet explained why Mrs. Heseltine should have chosen this particular establishment for her confinement.²⁰

¹⁸ Gray, op. cit., pp.164-166.

¹⁹ The so called "Irish" year when Warlock became involved in black magic and the occult.

²⁰ In a letter to his mother from the Grand-Hôtel in Rome Warlock writes the following which may be significant: "In this excellent place I begin to understand how you must have loved your years at the Savoy! But we are only here for one night...." Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 4.4.1921, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

Christened Philip Arnold, he came from a large, well-to-do London family, of which a number had proved highly successful in their chosen careers. His paternal grandfather had been a successful stockbroker and two of his uncles had entered the family profession amassing considerable fortunes. His grandmother had evidently been a brilliant classical scholar and a cousin, Michael Heseltine, followed in her footsteps, producing in 1913 one of the early standard editions and translation of the works of the Roman poet, Petronius.²¹ Warlock was less than impressed with Michael's scholarly skills and "refused to have any truck with his cousin who had done the expurgated version of Petronius".²²

There were also artistic connections in the family: one of the uncles, John Postle Heseltine (1843-1929), was a well-known art-collector and connoisseur and also a Trustee of the National Gallery in London. His Uncle Evelyn²³ had contributed towards the erection of a remarkable Art Nouveau church²⁴ at Great Warley, Essex in 1902, in memory of Warlock's father, Arnold. Another uncle, Arthur Joseph "Joe" Heseltine (d.1930), was an eccentric, not very good, amateur painter who had left the Edwardian respectability of the London family and settled in the village of Marlotte, outside Paris. He was considered to have been something of a rebel (what would now probably be described as a "drop-out") and Warlock no doubt identified with him to some extent. There seemed

²¹ *Petronius; with an English translation by Michael Heseltine*, Heinemann, London, 1913.

²² Lindsay, J., *Fanfrolico and After*, The Bodley Head, London, 1962, p.87. In the Introduction to his translation Michael Heseltine had written "the translator...must leave whole pages in the decent obscurity of Latin". Warlock also wrote a sarcastic review of his cousin's poetry in the *Oxford Magazine*, 30.10.1913, v.32, no.3, p.49.

²³ Evelyn Heseltine, 1850-1930. He and Edith Buckley Jones were nominated executors and trustees by Arnold Heseltine in his will of 6.2.1897.

²⁴ For a description of the church see Wellings, A.W., *The Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Great Warley, Essex: History and Guide*, 1988, s.n., s.l., and Rudland, M., "The Warlock Jaunt of 1982: Essex and Norfolk", *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, December 1982, no.29, pp.8-10: "Evelyn offered the sum of £5000 towards the building of a new church...The architect was to be [Charles] Harrison Townsend and the sculptor and interior designer to be [Sir William] Reynolds-Stephens...The designer's intentions were 'to lead the thoughts of the worshippers onward through his decorations to the glorified and risen Christ'...the agreeable confection of marble, walnut, bronze, silver gilt, enamel, and mother of pearl give...more the impression of some stage set..."

to have been a good rapport between the two of them and Warlock visited him in 1911 and twice in 1913.²⁵ Although none of Warlock's letters to this uncle survive there are some of Uncle Joe's preserved in the Warlock collection in the British Library.²⁶ A rather telling quotation from one letter neatly sums up his opinion of the family: "I trust you will have as pleasant a Christmas as possible under the horrible regime that we have to submit to".²⁷

Warlock's mother, Bessie Mary Edith Coventon (nicknamed "Covey") (1861-1943), was from Knighton in Radnorshire in Wales,²⁸ a part of Britain with which Warlock was to have strong ties throughout his life. The "admirable and tranquil"²⁹ Welsh countryside, as he described it, was of particular importance to him and he often wrote of its beauty³⁰ and "enchantment...stronger than wine and woman, and intimately associated with music".³¹ As early as 1911 he was singing its praises to Taylor:

I like as much of Wales as possible...I should be awfully pleased if you would pay us a visit in Wales: I am sure you would like the country, and it always looks well in August and September.³²

Warlock's father, Arnold, was a solicitor who died suddenly on 13.3.1897 at the early age of 45 when his son was only two years old.³³ After his death his wife, Edith, continued to live in their house, 27 Hans Road, Hans Place, London and it is from this period that some of Warlock's first letters date. From all accounts she seems to

²⁵ He died suddenly in 1930. Jelka Delius wrote to Warlock on 6.3.1930 to inform him of his uncle's death. Carley, *Delius: A Life in Letters 1909-1934*, Scholar Press, Aldershot, 1988, p.364.

²⁶ London, BL, Add MS 57962.

²⁷ Unpublished letter from Joseph Heseltine to Warlock, 23.11.1922, London, BL, Add MS 57962.

²⁸ Parrott, I, "Warlock in Wales", *Musical Times*, 1964, pp.740-741.

²⁹ Letter from Warlock to Gray, 19.11.1921, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.242-243.

³⁰ For example Warlock wrote to Delius from Cologne on 12.2.1912: "...I continue to hope...that you will come over...to Wales...I long to roam the wild hills with you, who understand them...." Letter from Warlock to Delius quoted in Gray, op. cit., p.46.

³¹ Letter from Warlock to Gray, 19.11.1921, quoted in Gray, *ibid.*, pp.242-243.

³² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

³³ He had been previously married, his first wife, Florence Marion Heseltine (formerly Hull), having died in 1880. Arnold, Florence and Philip Heseltine are all buried in the same grave in the old cemetery in Godalming.

have been a powerful and dominating lady. Warlock's composer friend, E.J. Moeran (1894-1950)³⁴ in his later recollections,³⁵ described her as "the most dominating woman he had ever met". Sir Kenneth Clark (1903-1983)³⁶ adds a little to what scant information exists about her:

[My mother's] greatest friend, called Mrs Buckley-Jones, had a son by an earlier husband named Heseltine...She was my favourite playmate and a great uninhibitor, who could make even my mother laugh. Her son, Philip, was a musician of considerable talent...As a boy he had been gentle and withdrawn; I always remember him on our yacht suffering tortures of seasickness, but soldiering on through a score of Purcell. It seemed admirable to me though ridiculous to the rest of the party. But when he broke loose on the world he developed a strain of combative amorality which made him legendary in the life of the early 'twenties...His mother was not at all strait-laced, but Phil went too far for anyone brought up in nineteenth century England, and she used to send my mother long, despairing letters relating all her son's misdoings. My mother would read them at breakfast with ill-disguised relish and when I came in to see her would roll her eyes to heaven and say in a tragic voice: "Phil's broken out in a new place"....From about 1915 onwards Phil was held up as an awful example of what could happen to me if I became an artist, and I was never allowed to see him; but we kept in touch.³⁷

In the British Library there are over 300 letters from Warlock to his mother, dating from 1899 when he wrote to her at the early age of 4,³⁸ to late 1930, just before his death.³⁹ She was no doubt one of the major problems in his life, attempting as she did to control and influence him whenever she could. Although aware of her obvious machinations and manipulations, Warlock was never able to break the knot completely, mainly because he had not inherited any money from his father's estate and was frequently reliant on her when in financial difficulties.⁴⁰ This fact, coupled

³⁴ English composer of Irish descent.

³⁵ Cockshott, G., "E.J. Moeran's Recollections of Peter Warlock", *Musical Times*, 1955, pp.128-130.

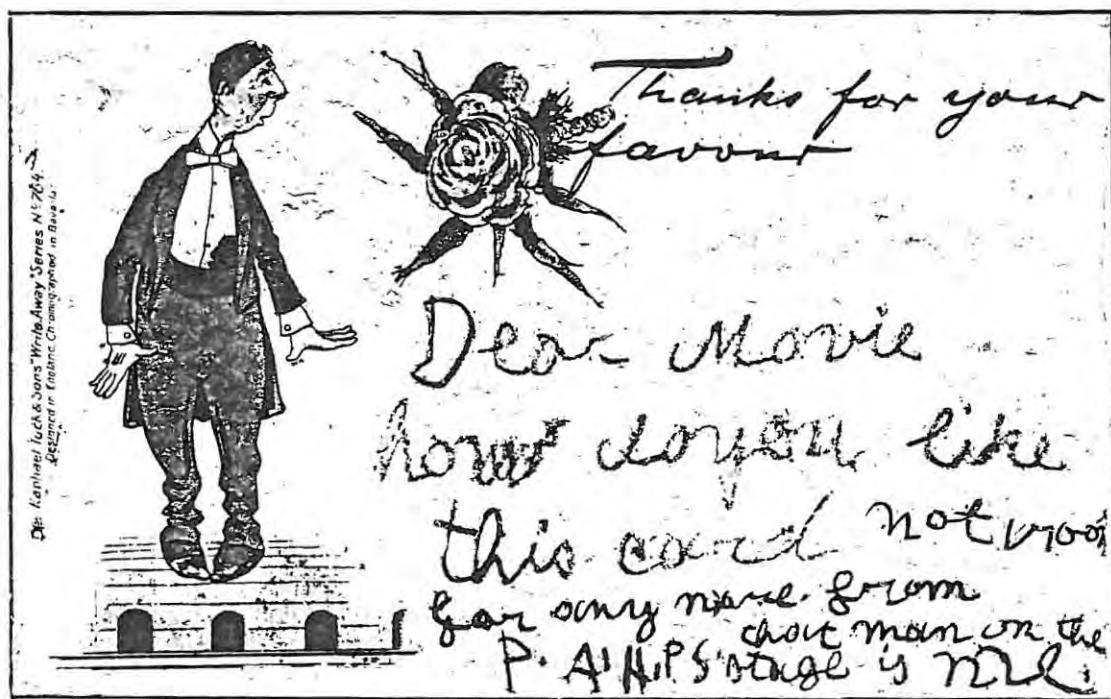
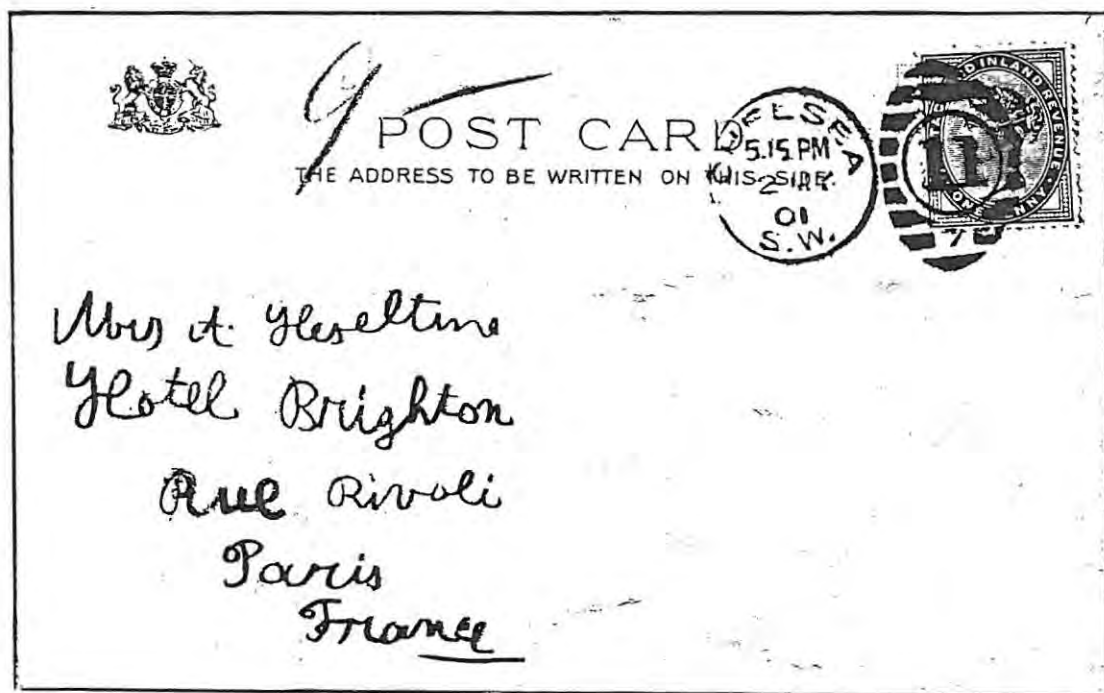
³⁶ English writer on art.

³⁷ Clark, K., *Another Part of the Wood: a Self-portrait*, John Murray, London, 1974, pp.52-53.

³⁸ In the early letters he addresses his mother as "Dear Bhig Wooley Sheep" and signs himself "Lambkin". See unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 1.5.1904, London, BL, Add MS 57958.

³⁹ London, BL, Add MS 57958-57970.

⁴⁰ "In three years' time, when I am 21, I shall have an income of £80 a year of my own; all my father's money was left to my mother for her life, so that anything over and above that £80 will have to come from her". Letter from Warlock to Delius, 8.1.1913, quoted in Gray, op. cit., p.52. There is no reference to this "income of £80 a year in Warlock's father's will, dated 6.2.1897. Arnold Heseltine left his entire estate to his wife, Edith, naming her and his brother, Evelyn, as trustees: "My



3. Postcard from Warlock (aged 7) to his mother (2.5.1901) (author's collection)

with his singular lack of business sense, meant that Warlock was constantly having to ask his mother for money.⁴¹ Time and time again, usually after some disastrous scheme or undertaking, he was forced to return to stay with her and his stepfather in Wales. Whatever kind of person she may have been, it is to Edith Buckley Jones' credit that she was prepared to provide a place where he could retire to comparative security and tranquillity and much of his creative work was produced during these periods in Wales.

At the age of five he started school at an establishment run by a Miss Quirinie in nearby Sloane Street and began piano lessons at the age of six which he professed later to have hated. Early memories are of a small boy⁴² with "an entirely individual character, and a highly original mind...fond of improving on, and usually dramatizing, any game [he] happened to be playing". He also became "very emotional when moved by any tune".⁴³

In 1903 his mother married Walter Buckley Jones (1864-1938), who was the squire of Llandyssil in Montgomeryshire⁴⁴ and, although the family home now became Cefn Bryntalch⁴⁵ in Wales, the house in London was kept on until October 1910

trustees...shall stand possessed of my said residuary moneys and the investments...in trust to pay the income thereof to my said wife during her life for her sole and separate use...."

⁴¹ There are constant references to money throughout Warlock's correspondence with his mother. For example: "I hate coming to you like this for money, more especially as you have several times expressed to me your conviction that I regard you solely as a convenience from which to extract money: which grieves me more than I can say. During the last two or three years there seems to have arisen between us an inseparable barrier of misunderstanding...so that I feel doubly guilty whenever the subject of money has to be turned up...." Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 10.7.1913, London, BL, Add MS 57960.

⁴² In the BL there is a letter to Edith Buckley Jones from a Florence Peck describing the seven-year old composer: "This little boy was perfectly charming and had very delightful manners...He was slim, had a pale oval face, wonderful blue-grey eyes and soft fair hair, and had a quite unusual bearing for a child of his years...He was intensely interested in all matters appertaining to music". London, BL, Add MS 57964.

⁴³ Copley, op. cit., p.1.

⁴⁴ ApIvor, D., "Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock): A psychological study", *Music Review*, May 1985, v.46, no.2, p.119.

⁴⁵ See Parrott, I., "Warlock in Wales", *Musical Times*, October, 1964, pp.740-742: "Talch means fragment; bryn means hill; and cefn means ridge...The house where Mr. and Mrs. E. Buckley Jones lived is therefore on the 'ridge of part of a hill'...this substantial building dates from 1869".



4. Cefn Bryntalch, Montgomeryshire, Wales
(photographed by John Allison)

when it was bought by Harrod's Department Store for extensions to their premises. From Gray's account it would appear that Warlock had a good relationship with his stepfather and they seemed to have "always been the best of friends and companions".⁴⁶ In 1904, at the age of nine he was sent to a private boarding-school, Churchill's Preparatory School in Broadstairs, Kent, where he spent four years (1904-1908). About ninety letters survive from this period and these give an interesting account of his early progress and development.⁴⁷ He was an outstanding pupil and after only two weeks was top of his form. This pattern of excellence was maintained and by 1905, even though he was the youngest boy in the class, he came top in the Lower Sixth. The following year he was made captain of his dormitory and was head of the school at the age of twelve.

It was at about this time that his interest in music seemed to have been awakened. The headmaster's son operated a pianola and it was through this instrument that he was introduced to the music of Schubert, Mendelssohn, Chopin and Liszt.⁴⁸ There were also school concerts in which the young Warlock took part, playing piano solos or duets with the music teacher as well as singing in excerpts from Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. Even at this early age, during his school holidays in London or Wales, he seemed to have shown a flair for organizing concerts. His family and friends were pressed into these entertainments for which he wrote plays and poems.⁴⁹ On these occasions he also recited, sang and played the piano, the flageolet and zither harp. At the same time he was gradually expanding his musical horizons and by January 1907 was beginning to experience the vast opportunities of the London musical scene, attending a performance of Handel's *Messiah* in the Albert Hall on New Year's Day. This was performed by the Royal Choral Society,⁵⁰ the contralto soloist being the legendary Dame Clara Butt (1873-1936).

⁴⁶ Gray, op. cit., p.36.

⁴⁷ London, BL, Add MS 57958-57970.

⁴⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 16.12.1906, London, BL, Add MS 57958.

⁴⁹ See Appendix B for an amusing poem written by the young Warlock in 1904.

⁵⁰ *Musical Times*, 1907, p.113.

In July 1908 he sat the prestigious Eton scholarship exam and, although he came fourth and was eligible for a scholarship, the Headmaster of Stone House advised his mother to send him as a so-called Oppidan⁵¹ writing: "If I may advise...I should not send him into College. I believe it will do his character far more good to be an Oppidan".⁵² There was a feeling at that time that it was not the done thing to accept a scholarship. There is evidence, however, that Warlock felt a certain degree of resentment at being denied the privileges which were reserved for scholarship holders at Eton, especially as he knew he had, in fact, earned them.

He started at Eton on 17.9.1908 and there are 112 letters⁵³ written over the next three years which describe his time there.⁵⁴ The Precentor (Director of Music) was Dr. Charles Harford Lloyd (1849-1919)⁵⁵ and after an interview with him Warlock joined the College Musical Society. Despite a breaking voice he was able to experience at first hand the works of Palestrina, Bach, Handel, Schubert and Brahms. He even took part in a performance of the *Eton Memorial Ode* especially written for the occasion by two old Etonians,⁵⁶ when Edward VII came to open the Memorial Hall in November 1908.⁵⁷ Dr. Lloyd had engaged a professional orchestra for the occasion and the choir, the Eton College Musical Society, consisting of an impressive 229 voices, was sub-conducted by Colin Taylor in a gallery at the opposite end of the hall to the orchestra.

Warlock also became involved in a number of other musical activities at the school: he studied the clarinet with the school bandmaster and played the percussion in the

⁵¹ An Oppidan is a fee-paying pupil who is a member of one of the twenty-four houses presided over by a housemaster. In Warlock's case this was Warre House.

⁵² Unpublished letter from the Rev. John Churchill to Edith Buckley Jones, 15.7.1908. London, BL, Add MS 57964.

⁵³ London, BL, Add MS 57958-57970.

⁵⁴ Tomlinson, "Heseltine MSS in the British Museum", *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, April 1974, no.14, pp.1-5.

⁵⁵ English organist and composer. His nickname at Eton was "Pussy".

⁵⁶ Music by Sir C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848-1918, who conducted the performance, words by the poet, Robert Bridges, 1844-1930.

⁵⁷ "Opening of the New Memorial Buildings, Eton College" (by our Special Correspondent), *Musical Times*, 1908, pp.780-782.

school orchestra which was conducted by Thomas Dunhill (1877-1946),⁵⁸ one of the assistant music masters at Eton (from 1899 to 1908). He recorded two occasions in which he took part in performances as a percussionist: in December 1909 he played cymbals and bass drum in Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt* suite and in February 1911 he wrote wittily that he had been "admitted free of charge [to a concert of the Musical Society] for striking a dozen times in one piece".⁵⁹

But it was in his piano teacher, Colin Taylor, that he found someone of rare sympathy, insight and understanding.⁶⁰ To quote the words of Gray:

He was fortunate in finding a sympathetic and stimulating influence in the person of the assistant music-master, Mr. Colin Taylor, from whom he received piano lessons which he now actually enjoyed, though he was never to attain any great proficiency on the instrument.⁶¹

Taylor was to write about the young schoolboy some fifty-six years later:

When Heseltine came to Eton in 1908 at the age of fourteen I was twenty-seven, and had already been an assistant music master at the College for four years. Dr. Charles Harford Lloyd was Precentor...a kindly, gifted and excitable little man who lived in a perpetual state of imagined haste.

From the very outset of Heseltine's advent it was apparent that in this well knit and rather pale little boy there was something arresting, something apart, something strikingly different from the ordinary run of our music students. Not that he showed musical or pianistic precocity, but it was his approach, his attitude that differed. This posed a problem.

Sensing, and I hope rightly, that had I insisted on the stereotyped drill commonly meted out to those in my charge, the boy as likely as not would give up music altogether. The upshot was that I devoted the greater part of lesson time to an attempt to enlarge his musical horizon. This was done by playing the accepted classics, romantics and moderns to him, and by discussing and exploring music. By these means his keenness grew and his interest consolidated. In those days I probably considered myself the deuce of a go-ahead modern, for I was playing and teaching Debussy, Ravel, Schönberg, Scriabin and the then available Bartók hot from the press, so to speak...I may have been among the first to play and teach Bartók at an English private school, possibly among the few to do so in Britain at that time.

⁵⁸ English composer and writer.

⁵⁹ Tomlinson, op. cit., p.1.

⁶⁰ Warlock first mentions Taylor during his first term at Eton: "I am going to learn music with Mr. Colin Taylor, who plays the organ in lower Chapel where I go every morning at 9.15". Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 21.9.1908, London, BL, Add MS 57959.

⁶¹ Gray, op. cit., p.37.

Of course pianistic drill was not altogether neglected. My bait in his case as in many another, was to extol sightreading as a means towards exploration. The boy was sensible enough to see that lacking at least a workaday technique the bulk of our musical heritage would be literally a closed book to him. We must remember that mechanical reproduction barring the pianola was then virtually non-existent.⁶²

Here at last was someone who really understood him and could help show him how to unlock the doors to the world of music. It was from those teenage days that a real friendship was to develop, blossom and to last throughout Warlock's life. In the first letter he wrote to Taylor as he prepared to leave Eton at the end of July, 1911 he expressed his gratitude in the following sincere and moving words:

Just a few lines to say good-bye and a few inadequate words to thank you for all your kindness to me during my time here. I cannot possibly tell you how grateful I am for all you have done for me, and for your influence in making me know and love modern music, which has become the greatest joy in my life....⁶³

It was Taylor who on 16.6.1911 managed to wangle permission to take the young schoolboy to hear a concert of music by his boyhood hero, Delius, an event which was to have a profound effect on his life. Warlock's interest in Delius's music had already begun as early as 1909 when he had written to his mother announcing his intention to obtain Delius's autograph through the agency of his Uncle Joe, who lived in France not far from the composer.⁶⁴ By the time of Warlock's first meeting with Delius during the interval of this historic concert in 1911 he had already become totally obsessed with his music. At Christmas in 1910 he had asked for money as his gift so that he could buy scores of Delius's music.⁶⁵ He then proceeded to study and arrange these scores, an extraordinary achievement for a young schoolboy who, up till then, had not yet actually heard a note of the composer's music.

⁶² Taylor, "Peter Warlock at Eton", *Composer*, Autumn 1964, no.4, pp.9-10.

⁶³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.7.1911.

⁶⁴ "I am going to ask Aunt Jessie to write to Uncle Joe for Frederick Delius's autograph...." Letter from Warlock to his mother, 17.5.1908, quoted in Tomlinson, *Warlock and Delius*, Thames, London, 1976, p.8.

⁶⁵ Tomlinson, op. cit., pp.1-5.

From the day of that first meeting at the Queen's Hall in London dated a quite remarkable friendship. Warlock wrote to Delius from Eton the next day describing the concert as "the most glorious evening"⁶⁶ he had ever spent and from the age of sixteen, for the next seven years, Delius was his mentor and one of his principal correspondents, an influence that was to have a profound effect on his future life.

Warlock's years at Eton were apparently not particularly happy ones. In his interview with Rodney Bennett he had harsh words to say about his time there: "I shall always hate that housemaster. I became a moody, vindictive youth and absolutely lost a rather real concentration that I had".⁶⁷ In his later letters to Taylor his few references to the Eton days are not particularly complimentary. Writing to Taylor about a schoolboy contemporary, he had the following to say in July, 1915:

...he seems tremendously Anti-Eton; and anyone of his opinion is immediately beloved of me, ex-officio, as it were!⁶⁸

And again in a letter to Taylor from Dublin two years later he gives vent to his feelings about the inadequacies of his education at Eton:

General education is more important than specialized training: but in this century one is as bad as another. Look at the curriculum at Eton!!! I have just managed to cast out the devil it implanted in me and to sweep and garnish myself in the hopes if not of an angel at least of some power that is only negatively evil. At this point one has to begin to educate oneself.⁶⁹

It had almost been taken for granted that at the end of his studies he would follow in the family footsteps and work in the Stock Exchange or possibly the Civil Service. However, as there seemed to be a certain indecision about his immediate future, it was decided that he should spend a few months in Cologne, studying German and the piano. During the two brief spells abroad, between October 1911 and February 1912, he took the opportunity of hearing as much music as possible and his letters

⁶⁶ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 17.6.1911, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.39-40.

⁶⁷ Bennett, op. cit., pp.300-303.

⁶⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1915.

⁶⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.9.1917.

dating from this period are full of perceptive comments and criticism.⁷⁰ His musical studies with Frau Epstein,⁷¹ on the other hand, were disastrous and depressing and he returned home convinced he had little or no musical talent.⁷²

More or less resigned to a non-musical career, he settled down to cram Latin and Greek with two successive clergyman-tutors in preparation for the Oxford entrance examination. His first tutor was the Rev. C.E. Rolt,⁷³ who was vicar first at Chadlington and then at Newbold Pacey; the second, whom he preferred and with whom he was on excellent terms, was the Rev. H. B. Allen,⁷⁴ vicar of Didbrook. But, as time progressed, he slowly began to feel an increasing sense of apprehension at the thought of what the future held in store for him. He expressed these concerns in letters to Taylor and Delius, the latter having no hesitation in recommending what he thought Warlock should do:

You ask for advice in choosing between the civil service, in which you have no interest whatever, and music, which you love. I will give it to you. I think that the most stupid thing one can do is to spend one's life doing something one hates, or in which one has no interest; in other words it is a wasted life...I should advise you to study music....⁷⁵

He wrote to Taylor early the next month telling him of Delius's advice. From this letter it is apparent that Warlock's mother was becoming more and more unhappy with the direction in which her son's ambitions were moving:

⁷⁰ Unpublished letters from Warlock to Taylor from Cologne dated 6.12.1911, 13.12.1911 and 9.2.1912.

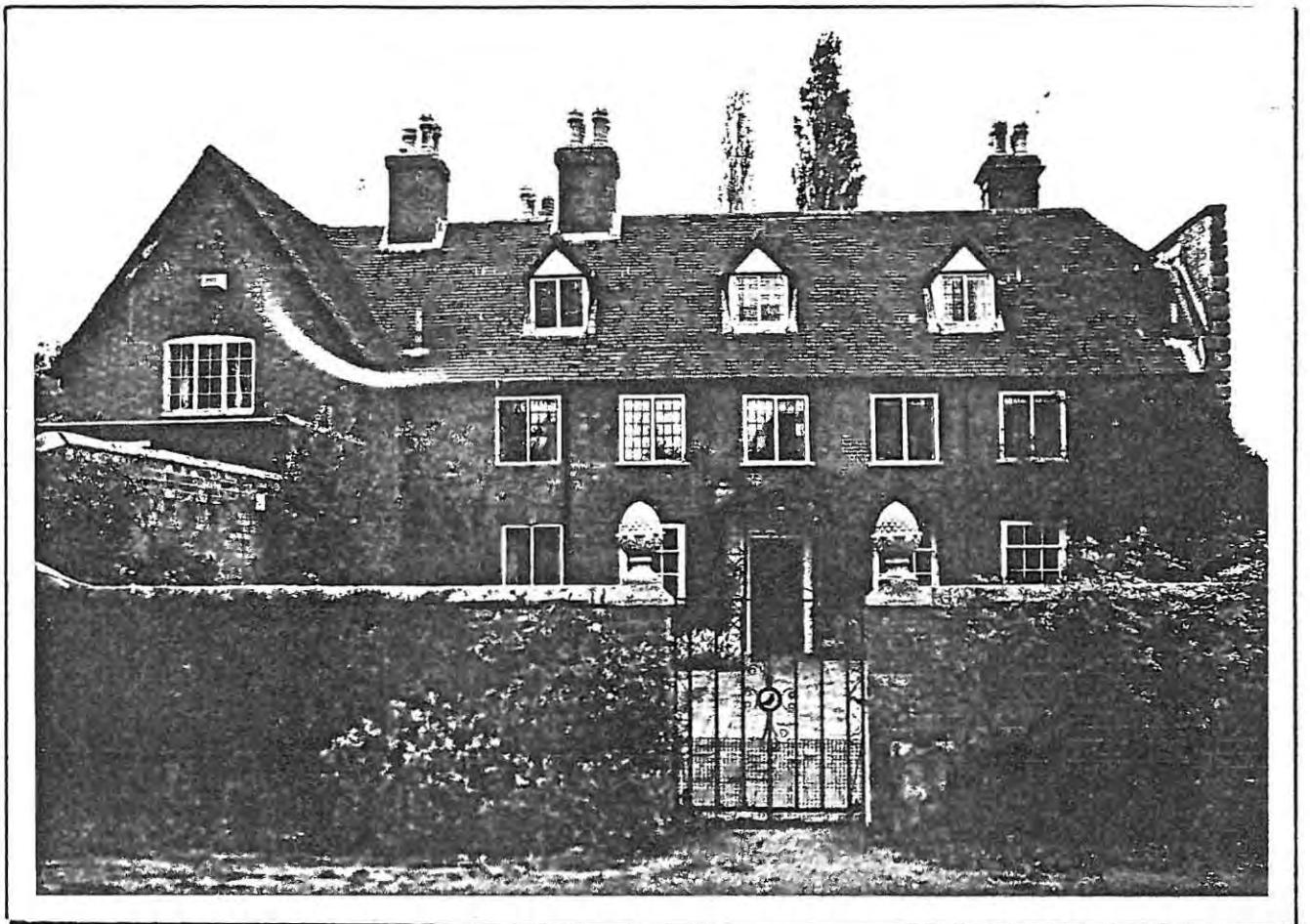
⁷¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 31.10.1911, London, BL, Add MS 57960.

⁷² "I am having piano lessons, but for five weeks now I have been given but finger exercises to practise...." Letter from Warlock to Delius from Cologne, 25.11.1911, quoted in Gray, *op.cit.*, p.43. On 24.1.1912 Warlock wrote to Taylor: "I have definitely abandoned piano lessons in Germany, as I could not stand them any longer".

⁷³ Clarence Edwin Rolt, educated Queen's College, Oxford (B.A. 1904, M.A. 1911), priested 1908; vicar of Chadlington, 1910-12, appointed vicar of Newbold Pacey in 1912.

⁷⁴ Hubert Bancroft Allen, 1856-1950, educated at Winchester College and Brasenose College, Oxford (B.A. 1879, M.A. 1882), priested 1882; vicar of Didbrook, 1912-22.

⁷⁵ Letter from Delius to Warlock, 11.1.1913, quoted in Gray *op. cit.*, pp.53-54.



5. Newbold Pacey and Didbrook vicarages
(photographed by John Allison)

I had a most kind and encouraging letter from Delius ...he advised me strongly and unreservedly to devote myself entirely to music...anyway, I had an immense row with my mother, who, however, seems to be becoming more amenable....⁷⁶

He had, however, badly miscalculated the strength of his mother's determination as to his future career and, despite the personal intervention of both Delius and Taylor, he entered Christ Church, Oxford, as an undergraduate in the Michaelmas term on October 10th 1913. He had passed the entrance examinations that April, even though he had mistakenly prepared the wrong set book.

Studying Classics at the University now seemed to him a complete waste of time and energy and he became increasingly unhappy and depressed as he realised it was the musical life of London that really attracted him. He expressed his frustrations not only to Delius,⁷⁷ but also to Taylor in a letter from Grez-sur-Loing:

...I simply cannot stand Oxford: it has an enervating, depressing influence on me...I shall never do anything whatever until I can get away from the place.⁷⁸

The more he implored his mother to let him leave Oxford the more determined and unrelenting she became and endless rows ensued. She tried everything in her power to discourage and prevent his ever-increasing interest in music. One of her actions is described in a letter to Taylor written from Cefn Bryntalch during the University vacation:

When I arrived here the week before last, I found that the pianola had vanished!! I have asked no questions, since it was quite obviously sold in order to spite me...It just shows what all my mother's professed love of music amounts to, when, simply to score me off, all means of hearing music is removed from the house....⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1913.

⁷⁷ "I am burning to find some means of escape from the appalling, enervating, and depressing atmosphere of Oxford; the place is just one foul pool of stagnation...Oxford leads nowhere...." Letter from Warlock to Delius, 24.3.1914, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.93-94.

⁷⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.4.1914.

⁷⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 29.12.1913.

During his time cramming in Didbrook, Gloucestershire, he made friends and eventually fell in love with Olivia ("Viva") Smith, one of four sisters who lived in the village. Theirs was a particularly vital friendship and 101 letters from Warlock to her (1913-1918) have survived.⁸⁰ He evidently taught her to ride a motor-bike and they even went up as far as Greenock in Scotland to register their bikes so that they could have her initials enshrined in their VS registration numberplates.⁸¹ They continued their friendship whilst he was at Oxford, meeting most Saturdays on their bikes half-way between Didbrook and Oxford.⁸² These letters to her furnish further evidence of the hostile relations between mother and son, and show how Warlock often succeeded in getting his own way by suggesting to his mother that she adopt an opposite course of action.

One of the more positive aspects of his unhappy time at Oxford was his meeting and ensuing friendship with a fellow undergraduate, Robert Nichols (1893-1944),⁸³ whose poetry was some of the first he set to music. Nichols later contributed a perceptive chapter, entitled, "At Oxford", to Gray's memoir.⁸⁴ Warlock also seems to have had some respect for Ernest Walker (1870-1949),⁸⁵ one of the most

⁸⁰ London, BL, Add MS 58127. In these love letters Warlock often addresses her as "darling little mouse". He was also very frank with her, especially in their later correspondence: "It was particularly wicked of me to keep you so long without a letter, more especially since you have been thinking bitterly that that preoccupation with the little French harlot we discussed together had banished every thought of you from my mind!! - which is far from being the case, since the damsel in question, though quite attractive in bed, proved equally tedious when out of it...." Unpublished letter to Viva Smith, 24.3.1915, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

⁸¹ Viva's bike had the registration number VS 316. Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 4.7.1914, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

⁸² This friendship developed into an intense relationship and Warlock must have written frankly to Delius about it. He received an equally frank reply with advice on subjects such as birth-control and virginity ("Prolonged virginity for women is always very bad...."). Letter from Delius to Warlock, 2.1.1914, quoted by Carley, *op. cit.*, pp.117-120.

⁸³ English poet and dramatist who served in France from 1914-16 and eventually found his way to Hollywood writing film-scripts. From 1921-4 he occupied the chair of English Literature at the University of Tokyo.

⁸⁴ Gray, *op. cit.*, pp.61-92.

⁸⁵ English composer and scholar. "Walker never bluffed, and was deeply musical, and this made him specially effective with the sensitive, sceptical, or rebellious type of young man. There were not a few of this kind who found, like Philip Heseltine, a sympathetic understanding in Walker which they did not find elsewhere". Deneke, M., *Ernest Walker*, O.U.P., London, 1951, p.66.

distinguished Oxford musical academics at the time and also for the Dean of Christ Church, Dr. Thomas Strong (1861-1944),⁸⁶ who later became Bishop of Oxford and to whom Warlock dedicated his *Corpus Christi* carol. He also took the opportunity of reading widely and of generally expanding his intellectual horizons. But his chief concern for most of that year was how he could persuade his mother to let him leave Oxford. The long-awaited opportunity suddenly presented itself quite unexpectedly with the outbreak of the First World War as Warlock explained to Delius in a letter from London:

I have left Oxford for ever! This step was facilitated by the financial panic which is the inevitable concomitant of war. My people, being thoroughly pessimistic, imagine...that they will be ruined, so, discovering that it would be cheaper to keep me in London than at Oxford, they welcomed my proposals.⁸⁷

This decision at last left him free to move to London and for a short while, on the advice of Balfour Gardiner (1877-1950),⁸⁸ he entertained the idea of studying composition with Gustav Holst (1874-1934).⁸⁹ In the end, however, he eventually enrolled at the University of London to study English Language and Literature. By this time Taylor had enlisted in the army and, during his absence from Eton, Warlock took over, for a short while, Taylor's small amateur orchestra in Windsor.

Warlock's second attempt at a University career was even shorter lived than his first. His real desire was to be involved actively in the London music scene, an ambition which was at last fulfilled with his appointment as music critic on the staff of the *Daily Mail* in February 1915 at a salary of £2 a week. Up until recently it was believed that Sir Thomas Beecham had been instrumental in securing this appointment for Warlock.⁹⁰ However in 1982 new evidence came to light which

⁸⁶ Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, later Bishop of Oxford.

⁸⁷ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 18.10.1914, quoted by Gray, op. cit., p.95.

⁸⁸ English composer and promoter of concerts.

⁸⁹ English composer of Swedish descent.

⁹⁰ Copley, op. cit., p.8 and Gray, op. cit., p.98.

revealed that it was not Beecham, but Nancy Cunard (1896-1965)⁹¹ who helped him obtain this position.⁹² He evidently found this work extremely frustrating: his critical reviews were often suppressed if, indeed, any space could be found for them in a newspaper operating under wartime conditions. Small wonder then that he only lasted in this post until June. For a while Beecham made promises of appointing him as editor of a new music journal to be called *The Sackbut* (or *The Anti-Ass*) which he intended launching but nothing ever came of this. Warlock blamed Beecham and in an angry letter to Taylor wrote that he was contemplating taking legal action:

...I might make Beecham pay a couple of hundred...by threatening legal proceedings on the strength of my three years' "Sackbut" agreement! I must consult a solicitor as to my legal rights. I think his signed document is binding.⁹³

Such a journal did, in fact, materialize five years later but not under Beecham's aegis. It is not surprising then that, although the two men were to co-operate again in later years, they regarded each other with a certain degree of mistrust. This comes out repeatedly in Warlock's letters while Beecham was to write in less than complimentary terms about him in his biography of Delius⁹⁴ many years later.

Warlock's life-style was already becoming somewhat unconventional, to say the least. Gray relates an incident during a summer holiday in Gloucestershire in 1915 when he rode "a motor-bicycle through the village streets at about sixty miles an hour, stark naked".⁹⁵ Another friend, Jack Lindsay (1900-1990),⁹⁶ gives a highly amusing account of Warlock's penchant for "streaking":

⁹¹ English writer and poet, daughter of Lady Maud Alice Cunard, the brilliant American-born hostess and patron of the arts who was Sir Thomas Beecham's mistress.

⁹² See *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, May 1982, no.28, p.3.

⁹³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.3.1916.

⁹⁴ Beecham, *Frederick Delius*, Hutchinson, London, 1959, pp.175-180.

⁹⁵ Gray, op. cit., p.103.

⁹⁶ Australian-born author and editor; his Fanfrolico Press began in Australia in 1922 and was re-established in London in 1926.

[Friends] had just taken over the house in Ebury Street, Chelsea, where Peter Warlock, the musician, had been living. Shortly before his removal he had acquired the habit of stripping all his clothes at a certain stage of drink and running about in the street. The Ebury ladies still peeped through their midnight curtains in the hope-fear of seeing his white form speed along the pavement, chanting snatches of some relevant hymn or ballad-refrain.⁹⁷

One of Warlock's early interests and love was Elizabethan and Jacobean literature and, now finding himself temporarily unemployed, he began studying and editing early music, something which was to become one of his most important musical activities in later years. He wrote to Taylor at the end of 1915 describing these early days of embryonic scholarship:

...I am delving deep into the origins of keyboard music, and receiving daily delights and surprises from the works of Byrd, Gibbons, Tomkins, Farnaby, and many another astonishing master...I am also scoring from the old part-books in the British Museum a quantity of early seventeenth-century chamber music....⁹⁸

It was during this period that he met the author, D.H. Lawrence, whose work he had admired for some time. He wrote to Taylor from his Chelsea studio about Lawrence and his philosophy of art:

Last week I met D.H. Lawrence, whom I have long venerated as the greatest literary genius of his generation. He has an outstanding philosophy of art - diametrically opposed to that of Delius, and, I suppose, 99% of the best artists of our time, though one would not infer it from his work.

He is against conscious self-expression, introspection and reducing analytic methods in general. "I believe" he writes to me, "that music too must become now synthetic, metaphysical, giving a musical utterance to the sense of the whole"⁹⁹...The outlook is so novel and startling - it is positively terrific - and needs a great deal of pondering.¹⁰⁰

Lawrence, who had a great need to surround himself with disciples and supporters, was immediately attracted to this intelligent young man and Warlock soon found himself part of the Lawrence circle, planning wild schemes to establish a Utopian

⁹⁷ Lindsay, op. cit., p.27.

⁹⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.12.1915.

⁹⁹ The full text of this letter from Lawrence to Warlock (22.11.1915) is included in *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, Vol.II (ed. Zytaruk, G.J. & Boulton, J.T.), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, pp.447-448.

¹⁰⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.11.1915.

settlement, "a colony of escape",¹⁰¹ in Florida, a plan which, needless to say, came to nothing. In early 1916 Warlock went down to Cornwall to stay with the Lawrences and soon involved himself in yet another venture, this time to promote and publish Lawrence's books. This scheme also proved unsuccessful, with Warlock receiving only 30 replies to his 600 circulars.¹⁰² Relations between Warlock and Lawrence soon proved highly volatile and, after various machinations and intrigues, the two men parted company under acrimonious circumstances,¹⁰³ partially revealed in this letter to Delius:

My sojourn with Lawrence did me a lot of good, but not at all in the way I had anticipated. Lawrence is a fine artist and a hard, though horribly distorted thinker. But personal relationships with him are impossible - he acts as a subtle and deadly poison.¹⁰⁴

At this time the Café Royal was one of London's most popular meeting places for artists and musicians and it was here, soon after his return to London that the sculptor, Jacob Epstein (1880-1959),¹⁰⁵ introduced Warlock to the young Scottish composer and critic, Cecil Gray, who had just settled in London. The two soon became the closest of friends, sharing a studio in Battersea with a large black cat (which evidently "shared with its master a veritable passion for the music of Delius"¹⁰⁶) and generally living "an enjoyably bohemian existence".¹⁰⁷ Together they planned a number of grandiose schemes by which to bring about the "regeneration of music in England", as Warlock described it. This was to be accomplished by "the launching of a monthly musical journal...a scheme for getting modern works cut for pianola by private subscription" as well as the hiring of a large studio or room "where free concerts...of all the best contemporary music can be given every week. Also lectures on music - very simple and non-technical...The publication...of an anthology of songs or short pieces representative of the real tendencies of today...in

¹⁰¹ Gray, op. cit., p.107.

¹⁰² Letter from Warlock to Delius, 22.4.1916, quoted in Gray, ibid., p.118.

¹⁰³ See chapter 2 for a fuller account of Warlock and Lawrence's association.

¹⁰⁴ Gray, op.cit., p.118.

¹⁰⁵ American-born sculptor.

¹⁰⁶ Gray, op. cit., p.129.

¹⁰⁷ Copley, op. cit., p.11.

addition...a book on Modern British Composers".¹⁰⁸ Gray adds to this list in his memoir¹⁰⁹ saying that they also intended inaugurating a school for the teaching of composition, and, lastly and most ambitious of all, the presentation of a full-fledged opera season at a West End theatre. Warlock invited Taylor to be part of these plans:

Gray and I are quite resolved to start a school of music and on revolutionary lines. And of course you must join us - but one can't promise riches to anyone.¹¹⁰

His meeting in June 1916 with the Anglo-Dutch composer, Bernard van Dieren (1887-1936), who had settled in England in 1909, was to have a profound effect on Warlock. Just as he had been a devoted disciple of Delius since his youth, so now he became an intense devotee and champion of the music of van Dieren.¹¹¹ Gray became an equally enthusiastic admirer and he and Warlock jointly promoted a concert of van Dieren's music in February 1917 which was promptly condemned by every music critic who attended.¹¹²

The Webster dictionary definition of the word, *warlock*, comes from the Old English *wærloga* and the Middle English *warloghe* and *warlach*, and means one that breaks faith, a scoundrel, the Devil; synonyms being: conjurer, demon, enchanter, magician, magus, necromancer, sorcerer, witch and wizard. It was in November 1916 that Warlock had published an article on Eugene Goossens' (1893-1962)¹¹³ chamber music in a journal, *The Music Student*¹¹⁴, and for the first time used the pseudonym, Peter Warlock, to conceal his true identity from the editor, Walter Wilson Cobbett

¹⁰⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.6.1916.

¹⁰⁹ Gray, op. cit., p.129.

¹¹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 8.11.1916.

¹¹¹ This relationship with van Dieren and its effect on Warlock's own music is discussed in greater detail in chapter 6.

¹¹² Heseltine, untitled article on Bernard van Dieren, *The Palatine Review*, March 1917, no.5, pp.25-29.

¹¹³ English conductor, violinist and composer.

¹¹⁴ Warlock, "Notes on Goossens' Chamber Music", *The Music Student*, November 1916 (Chamber Music Supplement no.22a), pp.23-24.

(1847-1937),¹¹⁵ an enthusiastic musical amateur. In a letter to Goossens Warlock wrote "for various important reasons please conceal the authorship from Cobbett and Co. It is by your dear friend Peter Warlock".¹¹⁶ Bearing in mind all its various associations, it is significant that he should have chosen this particular pseudonym.¹¹⁷

Another possible origin of this name could well be a sentence in chapter XI of Sir Walter Scott's¹¹⁸ novel, *Guy Mannering* (1815), "There were no sae money hairs on the warlock's face as there's on Letter-Gae's ain at this moment". In this sentence the warlock's face is being compared to that of the letter-gae, a jocular Scottish name for the precentor of a kirk or "he who leads off the singing" - literally "let's go".¹¹⁹ Warlock's knowledge of literature, his sense of humour and his familiarity with the traditions of the singing world, particularly those of the British Isles, could have latched on to this. As a composer of songs he would have seen the appositeness of the name, especially as the extract contained a reference to a beard which he grew shortly thereafter.

Throughout his life he was always fascinated by curious sounding names, many of which he used as alternative pseudonyms on various occasions. There exists in the British Library a small notebook containing a list of highly improbable names which Warlock had assembled at some time or another.¹²⁰ He signed some of his early manuscripts Huanebango Z. Palimpsest or Prosdocimus de Beldamandis (c.1375-1428),¹²¹ a name which obviously amused him. Later articles were signed A. Whyte

¹¹⁵ English businessman, amateur violinist and concert promoter. Warlock wrote disparagingly of him: "...Mr. Cobbett, with his galaxy of mediocrities...." Heseltine, "The Condition of Music in England", *The New Age*, June 1917,, no.1292, v.21, no.7, p.156.

¹¹⁶ Letter from Warlock to Goossens, 12.9.1916, London, BL, Add MS 57794. Quoted by Tomlinson in "Cecil Gray Papers in the British Museum", *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, September 1973, no.13, pp.7-8.

¹¹⁷ "Heseltine once told Cyril Beaumont that he had found it [the name Peter Warlock] on a 'sampler' in the window of an antique dealer's". Copley, op. cit., p.11. A South African, Prof.G.H. Findlay, pointed out "how close Warlock is to the name Warley where the family lived". See correspondence in the *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, September 1980, no.25, p.8.

¹¹⁸ 1771-1832, Scottish novelist, poet and man of letters.

¹¹⁹ *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, Cassells, London, 1963, p.544.

¹²⁰ London, BL, Add MS 57968-9.

¹²¹ Italian theorist and teacher.

Westcott,¹²² Apparatus Criticus, Jerry Cinimbo, Obricus Scacabaroqus and Barbara C. Larent¹²³ while some of his controversial letters to the *Musical Times* were signed Mortimer Cattley and Cambrensis.¹²⁴ Rab Noolas¹²⁵ was a popular one in more light-hearted writings. He even proposed in a letter to Taylor that the latter might consider using the pseudonym, Roger A. Ramsbottom, a play on the letters R.A.M. (the Royal Academy of Music) and one full of double entendre:

And you could wear a false beard and call yourself Burton-on-Trent - in case the R.A.M. should sack you - or, in view of your connection with that venerable institution, why not - with exquisite irony - adopt the pseudonym Roger A. Ramsbottom!!!¹²⁶

Warlock himself, in fact, later used this very pseudonym, Roger A. Ramsbottom, as the signature to the highly entertaining preface to a series of largely unprintable verses now housed in the British Library.¹²⁷

Little has been written and, indeed, little seems to be known about his relationship with Minnie Lucy (Bobbie) Channing (1894-1943),¹²⁸ nicknamed "Puma"¹²⁹ and referred to as an "artists' model".¹³⁰ Lawrence reported in a letter to Lady Ottoline

¹²² A white waistcoat.

¹²³ A play on the words *Barbara Celarent*, a mnemonic for classical formal logic syllogisms.

¹²⁴ Welshman.

¹²⁵ "...Heseltine was sitting in a saloon bar somewhere and suddenly he saw a wonderful name written on the smoked glass. It spelt RAB NOOLAS. It was, of course, Saloon Bar written backwards. Heseltine used several pseudonyms when he wrote letters of abuse to papers or rude limericks to musical critics, of whom he disapproved. He had composed a limerick, I think, on the name of every musical critic and composer. Many of them were far from polite. He immediately adopted Rab Noolas as another pen name". Hamnett, N., *Is She a Lady?*, Allan Wingate, London, 1955, pp.30-31.

¹²⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.5.1918.

¹²⁷ London, BL, Add MS 57796.

¹²⁸ She later married Edward Sassoon (1892- ?) and died in Glasgow, the official verdict of an enquiry being suicide by barbiturate poisoning. From a letter to the present writer from Robert Beckhard, 9.4.1990.

¹²⁹ Warlock's song, *Love for Love* (1919), has the dedication "To Puma".

¹³⁰ "She was a hanger-on of the bohemian set that frequented the Café Royal, a pretty and wayward opportunist who hoped to get some lasting advantage out of the floating world in which she lived". Delany, P., *D.H. Lawrence's Nightmare: The Writer and His Circle in the Years of the Great War*, Harvester Press, London, 1979, p.168. D.H. Lawrence liked her: "She is a quiet, nice little thing really, unobtrusive and affectionate" (letter to Ottoline Morrell, 27.1.1916) adding (in another letter to Ottoline Morrell, 15.2.1916): "She is very nice and very real and simple, we like

Morrell that "[Warlock] says he despises her and can't stand her, that she's vicious and a prostitute..." adding rather wryly: "She's not bad, really. I'm not sure whether her touch of licentious profligate sex isn't better than his deep-seated conscious, mental licentiousness."¹³¹ She was the fourth daughter of a mechanical engineer, Robert Stuart Channing,¹³² and was described by Eugene Goossens, who met her in August 1915, as Warlock's "East Indian mistress, whose dusky charms caused considerable comment...."¹³³ She bore Warlock a son, Nigel, on 13.7.1916.¹³⁴

He eventually agreed to marry her on 22.12.1916¹³⁵ though he wrote cynically, from Cornwall to Phyl Crocker, wife of Boris de Croustchoff, about the whole affair.¹³⁶ Croustchoff was for a time a friend of Warlock¹³⁷ and Gray, "a *boyar* mentioned in the Boris Godounov of Pushkin and Mussourgsky, an eminent bibliophile¹³⁸ and the greatest living authority on edible fungi".¹³⁹ He was also the dedicatee of Warlock's song, *Mr. Belloc's Fancy*, (1921), though when it appeared in a revised version in 1930 the dedication was dropped.¹⁴⁰ Warlock had written to Croustchoff some while

her...She is quite intelligent, in her way, but no mental consciousness..." ed. Zytaruk & Boulton, op. cit., pp. 517 and 539.

¹³¹ Letter from Lawrence to Ottoline Morrell, 13.1.1915, quoted in Zytaruk & Boulton, op. cit., pp.503-504.

¹³² These details are from Warlock's marriage certificate. Minnie Channing's birth certificate (registration district: Brentford, Chiswick) gives her father's name as Robert *Silas* Channing, occupation: hotel waiter. Her mother was Fanny Channing (formerly Fleming).

¹³³ Goossens, E., *Overtures and Beginners*, Methuen, London, 1951, pp.111-112.

¹³⁴ The boy was evidently named "Peter" by his parents and two letters refer to him as such. "Shall you still keep dogs when you come back - or would you like my Peter for a present - with his private income...? Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 13.5.1917, London, BL, Add MS 58127 and "...P.S. I am longing to know that Peter is safe with you", Unpublished letter from Puma Heseltine to Edith Buckley Jones, 1.10.1917, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

¹³⁵ They were married in the Chelsea Register Office.

¹³⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Phyl Crocker, 19.4.1917, London, BL, Add MS 57794.

¹³⁷ Warlock mentions him in a letter to Viva Smith as "Boris de Ghrustchoff - a Russian anthropologist". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 3.5.1914, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

¹³⁸ He is described as "a Russian bibliographer", in Zytaruk and Boulton, op. cit., p.448.

¹³⁹ Gray, *Musical Chairs*, Home & Van Thal, London, 1948, p.291.

¹⁴⁰ Apparently an oversight on the part of the publisher. "Composer and dedicatee remained on friendly terms, visiting Cefn Bryntalch together on a motor tour a few months before Warlock's death". Tomlinson, Preface to Vol. III, *Peter Warlock Songs (1920-1922)*, Thames, London, 1984, p.4.

before telling him about his love for Juliette Baillot (b.1896)¹⁴¹ and his determination to be rid of Puma.¹⁴² Here is a short excerpt on the subject of marriage from the letter to Phyl Crocker:

I have always looked on the institution of marriage as the supreme blasphemy. What have rude, official, or ecclesiastical, hands to do, meddling with the most subtle and wonderful of human relationships! The whole idea is filthy - and I, for my part, would never permit the paws of officialdom to mess about with any relation that really existed between me and any human being. So, when I was badgered by our mutual friend (with whom I had never had and could never have had any but a purely bestial relation) to make her a final present of forty shillings worth of respectability in a "certificate of marriage", I made no objection, seeing that the ceremonial meant no more for me than to make a mock of what was already a mockery.¹⁴³

The marriage seems to have lasted for only a short while though there is evidence that his wife joined him briefly during the early part of his time in Ireland.¹⁴⁴ Hopefully, when the full Warlock biography comes to be written, more will have been unearthed to clear up some of the mystery surrounding this unhappy "on-off" relationship.¹⁴⁵

In April 1917 Warlock returned for a brief while to Cornwall and, outwardly at least, cordial relations were resumed with the Lawrences for the brief period he was there. What Warlock did not know was that the vindictive Lawrence was even then busy writing *Women in Love* in which he and Puma were being introduced as two rather unattractive characters, Halliday and Pussum. Gray, having read the manuscript, informed Warlock about this and, although he did nothing at the time, when in 1921

¹⁴¹ Swiss governess of Lady Ottoline Morrell's daughter; in 1919 she married (Sir) Julian Huxley, 1887-1975, the eminent biologist.

¹⁴² Copley, *A Turbulent Friendship*, Thames, 1983, pp.7-8.

¹⁴³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Phyl Crocker, 19.4.1917, London, BL, Add MS 57794.

¹⁴⁴ "I called at his rooms soon after his arrival [in Dublin]...He was...reading aloud...to his extremely beautiful wife". Goldring, D., *Odd Man Out*, Chapman & Hall, London, 1935, pp 181-182. See also unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 1.10.1917, London, BL, Add MS 57961: "Puma sent the vests back because we thought them too thick...We are having lovely sunny days...Dublin suits us both...."

¹⁴⁵ In the letter to Phyl Crocker, 19.4.1917, quoted above, Warlock refers to Puma thus: "In the Café Royal, which is the very vortex of the cesspool of corruption, you have heard something of me from the intelligent being who seems so proud to boast herself the wife of a monster".

he learnt that the book was about to be published, Warlock decided to take legal action. A reluctant and irritated Lawrence was as a result forced to rewrite certain passages changing both the names and descriptions of these two characters. Lawrence was so angered that he wrote to his publisher, Martin Secker, using four-letter language worthy of his later novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*: "Heseltine ought to be flushed down a sewer for he is a simple s**t".¹⁴⁶ For those interested in reading the text of *Women in Love* as it originally stood, the Cambridge Edition, published in 1987, has restored all these passages. Unflattering as they may be, they do perhaps cast some interesting light on what Lawrence perceived in the unhappy relationship between Warlock and the pregnant Puma in early 1916 though of course, being a novel, this should not be regarded as a reliable source.

Although Warlock had intended settling in Cornwall for a time, he became alarmed at the renewed possibility of military conscription. Earlier he had been declared medically unfit and was, in any case, by then a conscientious objector, but the authorities revised all exemptions from military service in mid-1917 and Warlock received a summons to another medical examination. He decided to ignore the summons and in August that year he moved to Dublin where he remained for the next twelve months.

This move to Ireland was an important one which proved both beneficial and productive. Away from the pressures of his family and the fear of conscription he was able in his new-found surroundings to devote his considerable energies to numerous and varied interests. He studied the Celtic languages, Irish, Welsh, Gaelic, Breton, Manx and Cornish and was eventually able to read, write and speak fairly fluent Irish. This was accomplished by spending two months on an unidentified, small, desolate island in the Atlantic somewhere off the coast of Ireland. He wrote to Taylor telling him something of his experiences there:

¹⁴⁶ Letter from D.H. Lawrence to his publisher, Secker, 10.11.1921. Roberts, Boulton and Mansfield, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, Vol.IV, (June 1921 - March 1924), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987, p.116.

For over two months, I was away on an inconceivably desolate island in the West, studying the Celtic languages and Irish in particular - a hard study but one from which I have derived a great deal of profit...my host - the schoolmaster, was a charming person...living only for the preservation of the Irish language. He is also a champion bag-piper, and almost taught me to play that wonderful instrument!¹⁴⁷

During this period Warlock also became very involved in the occult, partly the result of his growing renunciation of orthodox religion, Christianity in particular.¹⁴⁸ Gray gives a fairly detailed description of Warlock's dabbling in black magic, expressing the opinion that this involvement caused him "certain psychological injuries from which...he never entirely recovered".¹⁴⁹ It was also during this period that Warlock grew a beard for the first time, his "fungus", as he called it. It is significant that he wrote to Taylor in 1918 saying that he had grown it "for a purely talismanic purpose"¹⁵⁰ for it doubtless helped him subconsciously, if not consciously, to create something he had always felt he lacked. The beard was a symbol of a new, confident self-image with which he could return to London to face the music scene without any of his previous feelings of inadequacy. Gray, in preparing his readers for his much-criticized split-personality theory, describes it rather dramatically as:

...the first decisive step towards the assumption of the elaborate mask which he was ultimately destined to adopt permanently, as a defence against a hostile world.¹⁵¹

This "Irish" year was also a very positive and productive one for Warlock. Apart from delivering an illustrated lecture entitled, *What Music Is*, in Dublin's Abbey Theatre in May, he spent some time pursuing his researches into early music in the Trinity College Library.¹⁵² It was also a year marked by a sudden surge of remarkable artistic productivity when, in the space of a fortnight, he wrote ten

¹⁴⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.4.1918.

¹⁴⁸ "Heseltine, when I first met him [in 1917], was greatly occupied in the study of magic and occult phenomena". Goldring, op. cit., p.182.

¹⁴⁹ Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, p.163.

¹⁵⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.7.1918.

¹⁵¹ Gray, op.cit., p.171.

¹⁵² "If I can obtain access to the manuscript room in Trinity College Library, I shall transcribe 'William Ballet's Lute Book' - a collection of priceless Elizabethan tunes not otherwise available...." Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor from Dublin, 12.9.1917.

songs, some of which rank amongst his finest compositions in this form. As he wrote to Taylor:

The present is a most critical and eventful period for me...I am sensible of a tremendous liberation of spirit...and I have written ten songs in the last fortnight.¹⁵³

In August 1918 Warlock returned to England and immediately became involved in various musical pursuits. He sent seven of his recently composed songs to the American expatriate publisher, Winthrop Rogers, under the pseudonym, Peter Warlock, feeling that to submit them under the name Heseltine might result in outright rejection. He knew that the name Heseltine was already regarded by many musicians and critics with an ever-increasing degree of hostility though, in all probability, he also welcomed the anonymity that such a pseudonym would provide. The ploy worked, the songs were enthusiastically accepted for publication and it was only when Anthony Bernard (1891-1963),¹⁵⁴ one of the readers for Rogers, saw the manuscripts and recognized Warlock's unmistakable handwriting that the true identity of the composer was eventually revealed.¹⁵⁵

It was from this time on that Warlock became more and more involved in a number of public and private quarrels which marked many of his undertakings for the rest of his life. These, as often as not, took the form of bitter confrontations with music critics such as Ernest Newman¹⁵⁶ over their unwillingness to espouse the cause of new, unknown composers (such as van Dieren and Kaikhosru Sorabji [1892-1988])¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 22.8.1918.

¹⁵⁴ Conductor, pianist and composer.

¹⁵⁵ "Perhaps it was your handwriting which suddenly dawned on Anthony Bernard, who roared with glee and then was full of chagrin for fear he had made a mistake in telling me whose handwriting it was...At all events, it is a gay secret, and the songs, so clear and straight and true, are like fresh breezes on a sultry day. I am very happy to have my name on the outside of them". Unpublished letter from Winthrop Rogers to Warlock, 13.11.1919, London, BL, Add MS 57964.

¹⁵⁶ BL, Add MS 57964 contains the following brief unpublished letter from Newman to Warlock: "Dear Heseltine, You are making the mistake of supposing that rudeness can do the work of reason".

¹⁵⁷ English-born composer, pianist and writer.

and also with Edwin Evans (1874-1945)¹⁵⁸ with whom he was involved in a punch-up in the Cafe Royalé during a heated disagreement over the music of Bartók.¹⁵⁹

In 1920 Winthrop Rogers decided to reorganize a magazine, *The Organist and Choirmaster*, which he owned, into something of more general interest. Warlock's own words to Delius tell the story very succinctly:

He [Winthrop Rogers] took over...a very miserable paper called *The Organist and Choirmaster*...Early this year it occurred to him to reorganize the paper and try to make it into something better and of more general interest, and a few weeks ago he suggested that I should take over and edit it...I succeeded in persuading him that nothing could be made out of this rotten corpse of a paper, and that it would be far better as well as more profitable to start a new paper on quite different lines. Accordingly *The Sackbut* will absorb *The Organist* next month....¹⁶⁰

It will not take long, I feel sure, to make this the best musical journal in England. Rogers has given me an absolutely free hand in the matter of contributions...I feel very elated about the project, for it is now on a very much firmer financial basis than it could ever have been if I had started running it on my own account, and I am actually getting paid for running it.

I want the first number to be very first-rate, to drop like a bomb into musical and pseudo-musical circles.¹⁶¹

Warlock was to receive £50 an issue, an amount which was, in fact, never paid. Between May 1920 and March 1921 nine issues appeared and included a vast and varied amount of material much of which was, needless to say, of a somewhat controversial nature. Although *The Sackbut* was beginning to succeed, Rogers, no doubt nervous of the implications of this contentious material, withdrew his financial backing after five issues. For a time Warlock and Gray acted as proprietors until, during Warlock's absence in France and Italy during December when Gray was left to edit the magazine, a misunderstanding between the two men caused Gray to pull out his support. Warlock, having completed the March 1921

¹⁵⁸ English music critic.

¹⁵⁹ Gray, *Musical Chairs*, Home & van Thal, 1948, pp.112-113.

¹⁶⁰ Hubert Foss described *The Sackbut* as "a paper, of too short a life, which gave the opportunity for personal expression to several very able people. It was more than an admirably informed musical journal, more even than a paper with a wholly personal attitude, it was also a paper that was often alarmingly right". Foss, "Introductions: XIX. Philip Heseltine", *Music Bulletin*, v.6, no.7, p.202.

¹⁶¹ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 16.4.1920, quoted by Gray, *Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, 1934, pp.205-206.

edition, left on another more extended trip abroad together with Gerald Cooper (1892-1947),¹⁶² a musicologist-singer friend. They travelled via Marseilles and Algiers to Biskra, spending three days in the Sahara and then moving on to Tunis from where they sailed to Naples. After a few days in Rome and Venice they moved on to Budapest, via Vienna, where Warlock visited Béla Bartók (1881-1945),¹⁶³ whose music he much admired, as well as Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967).¹⁶⁴ Towards the end of April he returned to London via Vienna and Munich staying only a short while in England before leaving again for France where he spent some weeks in Brittany, writing a typically Warlockian letter to Gray:

I have been staying here on the Breton - and quasi-Cornish - coast for some weeks, working very hard - and, really, for a change, getting on quite well, and drinking practically nothing. In fact I haven't been anything but strictly sober since the afternoon I left Paris when, staggering towards the Gare Montparnasse with a bag in one hand and a bottle of Calvados in the other, I fell prone before a tramcar and but for timely assistance might easily have missed more than my train.¹⁶⁵

While Warlock was in France, telling Gray in the same letter that John Curwen (1881-1935)¹⁶⁶ had taken over *The Sackbut* and was going to run it, pay all expenses and contributors and give him an entirely free hand as editor, a quite different scenario was being enacted back home. Without either telling him or forwarding any money to him, Miss Voules, *The Sackbut* secretary, had pieced together a June issue from some of Warlock's manuscripts. The end was swift: Curwen took over the publication of the journal and Warlock was summarily relieved of the editorship. Warlock was extremely bitter about the way in which he had been treated. The accounts had finally been arranged so that he received nothing: in fact he ended up paying some of the contributors, including Bartók, out of his own pocket. Curwen appointed Ursula Greville as the new editor¹⁶⁷ (Warlock nicknamed her Miss UG)

¹⁶² Musicologist, singer and "concert entrepreneur"; see Gillies, M., *Bartok in Britain: A Guided Tour*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, p.122.

¹⁶³ Hungarian composer, pianist and folklorist.

¹⁶⁴ Hungarian composer and teacher.

¹⁶⁵ Letter from Warlock to Gray, quoted in Gray, op. cit., p.214.

¹⁶⁶ Head of the firm of music publishers, J. Curwen & Sons.

¹⁶⁷ Curwen was obviously intent on furthering Miss Greville's career: in the *Musical Times* of 1920, p.751, there is a review of a song-recital given by her on 15.10.1920

and the first issue of *The Sackbut* in its new format appeared that September. He wrote to Taylor from Wales telling him of the whole disgraceful affair:

The unhappy Sackbut, having expired for lack of funds, was put up for sale and I was thoroughly swindled and otherwise disgracefully treated by Mr. Curwen who gave the poor old paper to his slut-like mistress for a new toy...Mr. C. added insult to injury by first insisting that I should continue to edit the paper for him and then, without even communicating with me or telling me even that he proposed to resume publication on a certain date, he raked about among the MS articles I had collected, published a new number on his own account and then quietly appointed his whore as editor in my place - swindling me over the purchase money and refusing to pay the contributors to the number made up of MSS appropriated from me. The week afterwards appeared a paragraph in the Daily Mirror with a picture of Miss UG "editress at seventeen" (!!) - "London's youngest girl editor" - etc, etc. So if you receive a copy of the filthy rag that now dishonours the fair name of Sackbut you will know what to make of it.¹⁶⁸

After *The Sackbut* debacle and his return from France in late 1921 Warlock moved back to the family home in Wales where he was to live almost continuously for the next three years. Here he applied himself to a large number of projects, telling Taylor that the only way "to escape boredom is to work from morning to night".¹⁶⁹ During this period he completed his book on Delius, made a number of arrangements of Delius's works, mostly for piano-duet,¹⁷⁰ as well as producing an enormous number of transcriptions of early vocal works, assisted by a singer-friend, Philip Wilson (1886-1924).¹⁷¹ He also composed a large number of original works and in June 1922 completed his acknowledged masterpiece, the song-cycle, *The Curlew*, which was given its first performance that December. Taylor had, by this time, moved to South Africa and from then on Warlock regularly sent him copies of works which he had composed. Many of these, with their inscriptions and

"at a concert organized by Messrs. Curwen" whilst on 6.3.1922 *The Times* of London announced on p.10 that "Messrs. Curwen have arranged, with the cooperation and assistance of Miss Ursula Greville, for a concert tour to be undertaken at their joint risk during March in Germany and Austria".

¹⁶⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

¹⁶⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.12.1922.

¹⁷⁰ *Dance Rhapsody* (no.2), *North Country Sketches* and *A Song before Sunrise* for piano duet, Augener (1922). *Song of the High Hills* was also arranged as a piano duet and *In a Summer Garden* for piano solo in 1921 (unpublished letter to Taylor 17.10.1921) but were never published.

¹⁷¹ English singer and editor of early music.

annotations, are to be found in the S.A. College of Music Library at the University of Cape Town.¹⁷²

In June 1924 Warlock returned again to London for a brief six months, eventually deciding in January 1925 to settle in Eynsford in Kent, which he described to Taylor as "a very pleasant place, only 20 miles from London...a quite unspoiled country village".¹⁷³ Here he shared a small cottage with a composer friend, E.J. Moeran, together with a collection of cats and a Maori housekeeper/factotum, Hal Collins (Te Akau) (18?-1929).¹⁷⁴ During his time at Eynsford he ran a kind of open house and it is from this period that much of the Warlock "legend" originates.¹⁷⁵ Besides composers such as Constant Lambert (1905-1951),¹⁷⁶ Arnold Bax (1883-1953)¹⁷⁷ and Lord Berners (1883-1950),¹⁷⁸ there was a constant stream of visitors ranging, in the words of Gray, from:

poets an painters, airmen and actors, musicians and maniacs of every description, including pyrophils and claustrophobes - everyone who was in any way unusual or abnormal was sure of receiving a ready welcome at Eynsford.¹⁷⁹

During this Eynsford period he wrote his study¹⁸⁰ of the composer, Don Carlo Gesualdo (c.1560-1613),¹⁸¹ the book, *The English Ayre*,¹⁸² continued with his early

¹⁷² See Appendix C for details of Warlock association copies in the S.A. College of Music Library.

¹⁷³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.6.1925.

¹⁷⁴ Warlock's Maori friend and factotum during the Eynsford period.

¹⁷⁵ "Next to the house was a [Baptist] chapel. It was the delight of the company to rival Sunday services in the chapel with its own ribald performances, sometimes including stentorian unexpurgated sea-songs. The congregation in its charity prayed for its tormentors". Self, G., *The Music of E.J. Moeran*, Toccata Press, Exeter, 1986, pp.62-63. A friend, Nina Hamnett, 1890-1956, illustrator, portrait and landscape painter, gives further details: "When the service started, we began with several works by Max Reger, the noisy German composer, some of whose music sounds completely drunk. These were played on the pianola...we ended up by roaring sea songs, ending up with the unexpurgated version of 'Nautical William'". Hamnett, op. cit., p.33.

¹⁷⁶ English composer and conductor.

¹⁷⁷ English composer.

¹⁷⁸ Gerald Hugh Tyrwhitt-Wilson, English composer, painter, author and diplomat.

¹⁷⁹ Gray, op. cit., p.255.

¹⁸⁰ Gray and Warlock, *Carlo Gesualdo: Prince of Venosa: Musician and Murderer*, Kegan Paul, London, 1926.

¹⁸¹ Italian composer and lutenist.

¹⁸² Warlock, *The English Ayre*, O.U.P., London, 1926



6. Peter Warlock's cottage in Eynsford
(photographed by the author)

music transcriptions, as well as producing a slowly decreasing number of original compositions, including songs and perhaps his best known work, the *Capriol Suite*.¹⁸³ By the autumn of 1928 Warlock had found it financially impossible to maintain the Eynsford life-style and in October he moved back to Wales yet again.

Having felt the gradual onset of a slow drying up of his creative abilities,¹⁸⁴ he was more than grateful when Sir Thomas Beecham invited him to assist in the organization of the great Delius Festival held in October 1929. The major works of Delius were to be performed in six concerts and Warlock tackled the task with characteristic enthusiasm. The wheel had come full circle and now his last major musical undertaking was to help in the honouring of the man whose music had meant so much to him in his early days. He visited Delius in France in May 1929 and looked through some of his early works, finding some items that had not yet been played, "a few novelties for the Festival".¹⁸⁵ By July he had established himself in London in the new office of *The Imperial League of Opera* at 90 Regent Street, had drawn up the preliminary prospectus for the Festival and was planning the publishing of a new magazine called *MILO*, (the magazine of the *Imperial League of Opera*), three issues of which appeared between October and December 1929. The Delius Festival itself was a great success but by the beginning of 1930 Beecham's venture had collapsed and Warlock was once again out of work.

¹⁸³ *Capriol Suite*, composed 1928, Curwen, 1928.

¹⁸⁴ "I have definitely abandoned musical composition - it is more than a year since I wrote even a pot-boiler, and the demand for any but purely educational music in this country is absolutely nil". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1921.

¹⁸⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1929.

Life became bleaker and bleaker for Warlock as the year 1930 progressed.¹⁸⁶ There seemed to be little demand for his songs, if indeed the inspiration or will to compose was still there.¹⁸⁷ His friend, Jack Lindsay, writes of that last year:

He had been depressed at Collie's¹⁸⁸ death by galloping consumption; and he found his sources of income drying up. The song market had been spoiled by radio, and he had largely used up the sort of music he wanted to transcribe...His many schemes, for a magazine and for opera, broke down; he asked Victor Carne to help him to a job in Columbia Gramophones; he wanted to write notes for classic recordings, and act as adviser, and offered as a start to conduct gratis his own *Capriol Suite*. The wage he asked was £5 a week; he was turned down. He applied to various official seats of learning; and again was turned down.¹⁸⁹

One of the last works to be composed in July that year was the song, *The Fox*, an inspired setting of a poem "of death and dissolution"¹⁹⁰ by his friend, Bruce Blunt (1899-1967),¹⁹¹ two of whose carols he had set to music a few years earlier.

In April 1930 his rich uncle Evelyn Heseltine died leaving nothing to Warlock who, from then on, symbolically renounced his family by using only his pseudonym. The last words which he wrote to Taylor were already hinting at the imminence of such a decision: "I am now officially Peter Warlock for all public communications".¹⁹² Black moods of depression now settled more frequently and Warlock was found

¹⁸⁶ Shortly before his death his friend, Moeran, employed him to make a copy of one of Moeran's recent works. Anne Macnaghten recounted how she took the fee to his flat in Tite Street: "I saw him in his big camel-hair coat, walking towards me on his way to the pub; he was very pleased to have the two guineas but when I asked him what he would do with it he only laughed and said 'drink it' and brushed aside my protest. It was very soon after this that he killed himself" Letter from Macnaghten to Geoffrey Self, 27.6.1983, quoted in Self, op. cit., p.74.

¹⁸⁷ "The lamentable neglect towards Warlock's magnificent output, many of them masterpieces, has embittered me against singers in general. The majority of his songs he never even heard sung. I cannot help feeling that he might have still been with us had he been given some of their recognition he deserved. The musical profession as a whole is to be blamed for allowing a man of his genius to exist very nearly in penury". Letter from Moeran to Arnold Dowbiggin, 18.2.1931, quoted by Self, op. cit., p.74.

¹⁸⁸ Hal Collins.

¹⁸⁹ Lindsay, op. cit., p.185.

¹⁹⁰ Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, p.301.

¹⁹¹ English writer and poet. Warlock and Blunt were arrested in Cadogan Square in February 1927 for being drunk and disorderly and were fined ten shillings each for shouting and singing. Tomlinson, *Peter Warlock Handbook*, Vol.2, Triad Press, London, 1974, p.44.

¹⁹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1929.

dead, of gas-poisoning in his flat, 12A Tite Street,¹⁹³ Chelsea, on 17.12.1930. At the inquest five days later the coroner recorded the jury's verdict that there was insufficient evidence on which to decide whether death was the result of suicide or accident.

There has always been a great deal of speculation about Warlock's death with loyal friends such as van Dieren and Sorabji maintaining that it could only have been accidental. But perhaps some of the most interesting theories come from Fred Tomlinson. Whilst reading this extract, however, it must not be forgotten that, fascinating though Tomlinson's theories may be, they are, after all, pure speculative conjecture. Miss Virginia Fortescue, one of Frida van Dieren's last pupils, expressed her horror at the word "scroungings" which she thought to be a particularly offensive word. She could not believe that the very correct Frida would be associated with that kind of visit about money on the night of Warlock's death.¹⁹⁴ Both Miss Fortescue and Miss Eiluned Davies (another ex-pupil) remember Frida speaking with great affection and admiration for Warlock.¹⁹⁵ His death had obviously been an enormous shock to her and her husband. Tomlinson writes:

We may never know the facts, and no doubt the argument will go on. There is no doubt that in 1930 views on suicide were very different from those held now. Relatives were most anxious to avoid the stigma and "the gentry" were better able to sway a coroner's decision towards "the sensible thing".

I think we can ignore the verdict at the inquest. The evidence (apart from the gas technicians and, for some unaccountable reason, John Ireland, who hardly knew Philip Heseltine) came from three people with vested interests - PH's mother, who kept a tight hand on the purse-strings and yet could not understand how PH could come to have financial problems; Bernard van Dieren, who had been living off his scroungings from PH and others for several years and now stood to gain more than he had ever earned himself; and PH's mistress ("Mrs. Warlock"),¹⁹⁶ who after a "tiny and unimportant" quarrel spent the fatal night in a hotel.

¹⁹³ Now no.30 Tite Street. The houses were later renumbered. See *Peter Warlock Newsletter*, January 1985, no.34, p.2.

¹⁹⁴ Oral communication to the present writer.

¹⁹⁵ Letter to the present writer from Miss Eiluned Davies, 27.1.1990.

¹⁹⁶ Barbara Peache, whom Warlock first met at a party in Chelsea in the early 1920s. She lived with him through the Eynsford period until his death, eventually moving to Malta in later years. Eric Fenby described her as "a very quiet, attractive girl, quite different from Phil's usual types". Carley, *op. cit.*, p.351. Unfortunately she



7. 12A Tite Street, London, where Peter Warlock died
(photographed by John Allison)

My opinion...is that PH was literally "sick to death" of a number of things. Bruce Blunt wrote of "a combination of tendencies, events and atmosphere all meeting at zero hour"¹⁹⁸ and this to me is the key. Individually each item may not seem sufficient reason for such a drastic step, but consider the cumulative effect, added to his well-known depression at that time of year. (Was this mood brought on by memories of early Christmases with his sanctimonious Uncle Evelyn, who had died a few months earlier leaving over half a million pounds but ignoring PH in his will?)

The market for his songs - his only really successful output - appeared to have dried up. Was this due to PH having exhausted his goodwill, flogging Bernard van Dieren compositions to OUP and Curwen for far more than they could hope to recoup in sales?

He had quarrelled with his girl-friend. However serious that was, she was certainly spending the night elsewhere.

His mentor, Bernard van Dieren, arrived. No one knows what their conversation was about, but judging by existing correspondence it seems safe to bet that money came into it. PH was hopeless about money, and although fed up with van Dieren's importunities his regard for the older composer was never affected.

PH was broke as usual, even without a bottle of beer in the flat. His only source of extra money was his mother, who many years previously had formed a strong antagonism towards van Dieren. Was this final straw the realization by PH that suicide, far from being a negative act, was a positive way of helping van Dieren and annoying his mother?

This is conjecture. Let me quote Winifred Baker, the nurse who had loved Warlock for many years and to whom he wrote a very moving letter a few months before his death (Letter to van Dieren, 22.12.1930):

"I can feel almost gladness now that it is over - that he has at last found the peace and quietude he so loved and never or seldom - could find in the world".¹⁹⁹

Dr. Peter Heseltine, Warlock's grandson and a medical doctor, has another interesting possible explanation:

Deliberate suicide is the explanation most usually accepted and the one of most concern to his family (i.e. mother). It also seems unlikely. True, times were hard, it was the beginning of the depression...and he was (chronically) short of money and out of work. Still, he had written to Colin saying that he did have the desire to write more musical pieces, not simply that he could

destroyed all Warlock's letters. See item, "We Meet Barbara Peache", *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, February 1975, no.16, p.2.

¹⁹⁸ Letter from Bruce Blunt to Gray, 25.5.1943, quoted by Tomlinson in *Warlock and van Dieren*, Thames, London, 1978, p.35.

¹⁹⁹ See correspondence in the *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, January 1979, no.23, p.3.

not write.²⁰⁰ In fact his talent as an editor, musical or literary, seemed to be growing. No doubt one can find reasons enough why he might have committed suicide, but there is much against it and, most importantly, there are several epidemiologic factors that mitigate against this theory. One, he was the wrong age: most suicides are among the elderly (over sixty-five) and the young (teenagers). Two, he was not living alone: more than 80% of adults who commit suicide live alone. He was, until that night, sharing a flat with Ms. Peache and three, the method (gas) was most unusual for an adult young man. Evidently so uncommon, even in Britain, that the coroner found for death by misadventure.

I believe that a more plausible explanation is that his death was a suicide "gesture", one that was unfortunately successful. We know that he had written to his mother several days before to ask for money, which along with some royalties were, a few days too late, forthcoming. He had rowed with Ms. Peache and with some other of his friends - not an unusual occurrence. But, his whole nature and indeed his prior dealings with his mother, Puma etc. lead me to believe that he had a very child-like and manipulative approach to his relations with women. A suicide gesture in response to a quarrel with his girl-friend and apparent recalcitrance by his mother would be typical of his prior behaviour and seems the most likely explanation for his death. Which he thought, I speculate, would not occur because he would be found by Ms. Peache when she returned that night to the flat or by other friends who might happen by. Both the choice of gas as the method (and the circumstances) make me believe this a logical explanation.²⁰¹

Many obituaries and tributes appeared soon after his death, but it was his old friend, Bernard van Dieren, who wrote most movingly of all:

...His heaviest burden possibly was his distracting versatility. In his earliest days he found himself burning to write about music, with the conviction that he could say more than others, and say it better. Delius's timely and discerning advice made him see that he was a composer first and foremost. Later, in a brief career as a concert reporter, he speedily discovered that a daily paper is not a suitable medium for the dissemination of ideas or the propagation of convictions.

After he had already established his fame as a composer, he returned again and again to musical journalism with conspicuous success. On a wider basis of literary endeavour he aimed higher, and again justified every ambition. As editor of the *Sackbut* he displayed a brilliance that compelled the admiration of his adversaries, and his own contributions to this and other periodicals always gave proof of an ease beyond his experience, and a knowledge beyond accepted sources. In his independent literary works...he eclipsed all these achievements and revealed a mastery of prose style, a lucidity in argument, and a constructive ability that in themselves would suffice to establish an author's reputation.

Neither Philip Heseltine nor "Peter Warlock" wrote music in the grand manner or planned on a large scale. The very fact compels us to respect his

²⁰⁰ "...I am glad to say that I have found plenty of work in the last few months, indeed I have never been so busy". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Colin Taylor, 6.8.1929, Eton College Library, Windsor, England.

²⁰¹ Letter from Dr. Peter Heseltine to the author, 8.5.1990.

artistic integrity, for he possessed all the technique required. But he distrusted the sweeping gesture as much as he feared the possibility of, like the lesser artist, repeating himself, whether for gain or fame or from habit.

Very much was still to be expected from a man who at thirty-six had acquired a sound scholarship that enabled him to meet with unwavering confidence, and on their own ground, experts schooled in the course of long lives of specialised work.

Such capacities were gained by him while an unabating flow of transcriptions, arrangements, paraphrases and adaptations - all of incontestable merit - came from his pen... Here was already a productivity, of high merit, on which a man's fame could securely rest. But yet all this was only part of his activity. He wrote some enchanting works for small orchestra, and enriched music with an impressive number of songs of the most exquisite workmanship, and dictated by real inspiration. I need not draw attention to their loveliness; most of them have already become well-known. In their finely-drawn melodic lines, their beautiful transparency and balanced structure, they show, as in everything Heseltine did, a consummate orderliness, a perspicuity and understanding that makes them worthy counterparts of the words which, with unfailing taste, he selected from the best of English poets. Can one give higher praise? If I knew how to, I would do it.

But if genuine emotion, infinite charm, and grace, can preserve a spirit as a living reality for future generations, the tribute of my admiration is unneeded. Much of "Warlock's" music will have become a national treasure when all that was ever said or written about it today will be forgotten.²⁰²

Peter Warlock was one of the first to recognize the talent of a young South African poet, Roy Campbell (1901-1957),²⁰³ and it was in the pages of *The Sackbut* that some of his poems first appeared. It would, therefore, seem fitting to allow Campbell to pay the final tribute in a poem, written in memory of his friend, and which appeared in a volume entitled *Mithraic Emblems*.²⁰⁴

Dedication of a Tree

To "Peter Warlock"

This laurel-tree to Heseltine I vow
 With one cicada silvering its shade -
 Who lived, like him, a golden gasconade,
 And will die whole when winter burns the bough:
 Who in one hour, resounding, clear, and strong,
 A century of ant-hood far out-glows,
 And burns more sunlight in a single song
 Than they can store against the winter snow.

²⁰² *Musical Times*, 1931, pp.117-119.

²⁰³ South-African born poet.

²⁰⁴ Campbell, R., *Mithraic Emblems: Poems*, Boriswood, London, 1936.



8. Peter Warlock's grave in Godalming old cemetery
(photographed by John Allison)

CHAPTER 2

PETER WARLOCK'S PERSONALITY

This strange and gifted youth was born out of his time and suffered from a duality of nature whose two divisions were opposing and irreconcilable. One half of him looked wistfully back to the healthy naturalism of the sixteenth century while the other faced boldly the dawn of an age whose music shall have parted company with every element which for centuries we have believed to be the essence and justification of its existence. Such types have small part in the present; they "look before and after and pine for what is not", and either consciously or subconsciously are in perpetual conflict with it....¹

On the whole my life is a burden which I should be glad for any night to relieve me of....²

When an attempt is made to assemble a complete picture of Warlock's complex personality from the jigsaw puzzle of letters, reminiscences, accounts of his life and his own writings, the result is a portrait of a remarkable man. He emerges as one who was highly intelligent and musical, well-read, sensitive, creative, witty, generous, a loyal friend, a dreaded foe, an intrepid fighter for causes which he believed to be right and intolerant of pretence. All this was coupled with boundless enthusiasm and an endless capacity for work, often produced at tremendous speed and with an equal intensity.³ At the same time he had an almost wicked delight in creating legends around himself. This was symbolized by the alternative personality he seemed so eager to create: Peter Warlock, the alter ego, the bearded, macho, reckless, bohemian figure, the heavy drinker, the fast liver, the womanizer, full of rodomontade. It is, however, significant that to his closest friends the "differences between Heseltine and Warlock were little more than the differences between

¹ Beecham, Sir Thomas, *A Mingled Chime*, Hutchinson, London, 1944, pp.188-189.

² Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 28.8.1920, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

³ Spike Hughes wrote the following about Warlock: "He had a vitality about him which frightened me in the way that lightening frightens - and fascinates - me: his wit, charm and unpredictableness were wonderfully stimulating...I was always conscious that I was in the presence of a man whose gentleness, enthusiasm and kindness were a constant source of inspiration and encouragement. Hughes, S., *Second Movement*, Museum Press Ltd., London, 1951, pp.49-51.

Philip sober and Philip drunk".⁴ It is also interesting to note that Warlock could provide the literary model for two such differing characters⁵ as that of the effete Halliday in Lawrence's *Women in Love* and the boisterous Coleman in Huxley's *Antic Hay*.⁶

It was here that Gray created his most fanciful theories:

The struggle between the Mild and the Melancholy one and the Complete Man⁷ was only one part of the deadly conflict which came to be waged upon every psychological front. The critic fought against the artist in him, the Elizabethan against the modern and the medieval against both, the internationally minded pacifist with his private Cornish language against the bellicose and insular Englishman, the cultured and exquisitely refined aesthete against the beer-swilling pub-crawler, the mystic and occultist against the cynical blasphemer; and the struggle became fiercer and more intensified as the years went on, in a gradual, inexorable crescendo...whenever the mental conflict threatened to become intolerable, as it frequently did, he would launch out into violent personal quarrels and public controversies in a desperate attempt to compose his inner discord. This, I think, is to a great extent the explanation of much of the aggressiveness and ferocity which earned for him so many enemies....⁸

Gray then continues in an even more fanciful vein:

It is curious to observe, by the way, that the dichotomy even extended to things physiological. In the days when I first knew him his alcoholic predilection was for liqueurs and other sweet and sickly compounds; later he rarely drank anything but beer. At Oxford...Philip was a vegetarian; Peter's favourite dish, inevitably, therefore, was steak tartare - raw meat with a strongly flavoured sauce.

There was only one aspect of the change which seriously troubled me, personally - his attitude to children. Philip had always been fond of children...Peter, on the other hand, could find no words strong enough to

⁴ Copley, *The Music of Peter Warlock: A Critical Survey*, Dobson, London, 1979, p.25.

⁵ A thinly disguised Warlock appears in a number of literary works besides those mentioned here. He is Paul Weaver in *The Birds* by Frank Baker (Peter Davies, London, 1936); Robert Durand in *Dead End of the Sky* (the third of four short novels entitled *Rainbow Fish*) by Ralph Bates (Jonathan Cape, London, 1937), Giles Revelstoke in *A Mixture of Frailties* by Robertson Davies (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1958) and Julian Oakes in "Till September Petronella" by Jean Rhys (*London Magazine*, January 1960, v.7, no.1, pp.19-39). See also Copley, "Warlock in Novels", *Musical Times*, 1964, pp.739-740.

⁶ Lawrence, D.H., *Women in Love*, privately published (1250 copies), New York, 1920. First English edition, Secker, London, 1921. Published with the restored text in the Cambridge Edition in England in 1987 and Huxley, A., *Antic Hay*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1928.

⁷ The references to the "Mild and Melancholy one" and the "Complete Man" come from chapter 9 of Huxley's novel, *Antic Hay*.

⁸ Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934 pp.234-235.

express...a frenzied detestation and loathing which, I frankly confess, used rather to upset me....⁹

Gray added that found among Warlock's papers after his death was the following cryptic note:

When I see, and smell, a crowd of Battersea children swarming round the doors of Stephenson's bakery I am minded with disgust of a swarm of obscene flies hovering over a clot of dung in the roadway. But when I turn away there sweeps over me the unspeakable poignancy of the Good Shepherd and His Lambs.¹⁰

As Gray's book was for many years the only source of information about Warlock it is not surprising that his views formed the basis for further writing on the composer. Whenever articles and notes for programmes or recordings were written it was almost certain that Gray's theory would feature in some form or another. It is therefore not surprising that after all these years the same question still arises whenever Warlock's name is mentioned: was he schizophrenic? Were there in the end two distinct people, Philip Heseltine and Peter Warlock, a kind of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde? Or was this mere fantasy on Gray's part? Another friend, Jack Lindsay, with whom Warlock collaborated in the production of two books for the Fanfrolico Press,¹¹ writes more perceptively about his character:

I think we can get behind the dichotomies; and I feel it is important to understand Heseltine as a typical character of the Twenties...one who drove the characteristic conflicts to their limit. Though drinking a lot, there were periods when he shut himself up and worked hard; one has only to glance at the list of his works, and to estimate their quality, to realize that. Yet he had set out to build up a legend, and it steadily swallowed him up. He had created for the public and for himself, the image of the possessed Warlock and he could not run away from it. Whether or not he wanted to, he had to carry on with his drinking-bursts. Fresh admirers as well as old kept surrounding him expecting him to act up to his legendary role. Enclosed in a limelight he had himself fabricated, he felt a growing strain.

It came out in the tarantelle that was liable to snatch him up, send him racing naked in the street or whirl him in strange acrobatic steps...without concern for where he was or what sort of people were around him...The strain came out too in his way of dropping dead-asleep, in concert-hall or

⁹ Gray, *ibid*, pp.234-235.

¹⁰ Gray, *ibid*, pp.234-235.

¹¹ Lindsay, J., (editor), musical transcriptions by Warlock, *Loving Mad Tom*, Fanfrolico Press, London, 1927 and Warlock and Lindsay, (editors), *The Metamorphosis of Ajax*, Fanfrolico Press, London, 1927.

train. The train-slumbers became a problem as they often whisked him beyond his station,¹² and in the end they caused the wild leap that broke his leg.¹³ Jestingly he insisted that he must have been sober as no drunk ever hurts himself...And he pointed to the fat volumes of a composer:¹⁴ "At last I have learned the true value of his compositions".¹⁵

As the subject of this thesis is being studied through his correspondence with Colin Taylor, it is especially important to note what the latter wrote in this connection in his article, in the *Composer*:¹⁶

Was Heseltine schizophrenic - a dual personality ? By birth, certainly not. But even if the gradual emergence of Peter Warlock was not deliberately cultivated, it was welcomed rather than checked. Peter Warlock shielded the sensitive other self from the outer world; a mask, symbolized by the beard - his fungus he called it. Philip actually said as much in one of his letters to me. Once created, the spectacular success of this Mr. Hyde appeared to surprise none so much as the very man who brought him into being. As far as I personally was concerned, the quiet rather introverted Philip Heseltine was a constant and ever loyal friend, whereas the bearded swashbuckling Peter Warlock I regarded as little more than an occasional acquaintance. Geographical considerations dictated the difference. Both, however, in their respective ways could be the most delightful of companions unless black moods of depression prevailed.¹⁷

Copley has a very sensibly written section on this whole subject in the short biographical sketch in the first chapter of his book. He begins by quoting from a letter written to him by Sir Thomas Armstrong (b.1898)¹⁸ on the attitude of the ordinary professional musician towards Warlock during his lifetime:

"Philip Heseltine was always just outside the ordinary professional circle in a rather private set of his own. He was regarded as a composer of distinct talent, but rather precious and amateurish in equipment. As a critic, he was thought to be highly intelligent but too much biased against the more conventional composers of his generation. As a scholar he was regarded as altogether outstanding and one who might have developed into a musicologist of the finest quality. As a man, he was loved by some people,

¹² "I'm still living at Eynsford...the only drawback is when one goes to sleep in the last train down and finds oneself penniless in the small hours of the morning at Maidstone (19 miles off) whence I had to walk a few nights ago". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.6.1925.

¹³ Lindsay is incorrect. Warlock fractured his ankle, not his leg, on the platform at Eynsford station, May 1928.

¹⁴ Presumably he had his leg propped up on them.

¹⁵ Lindsay, *Fanfrolico and After*, The Bodley Head, London, 1962, pp.86-87.

¹⁶ Taylor, op. cit., pp.9-10.

¹⁷ This quotation comes from the original typescript of the article which differs slightly from what eventually appeared in print in 1964. Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection, BC 76 C3.11.

¹⁸ English organist, composer and teacher.

understood by very few, and regarded by the majority with fear and suspicion. His character was so complex and the developments that were observed in his lifetime were so strange that people lost sight of the eager, fastidious and sensitive Philip Heseltine, and were repelled by the unpleasant manifestations of Warlock...but as a young man, I understand, from those who knew him well...that he was sensitive, courteous and gentle".

The question is frequently asked as to whether Heseltine was in any way a split personality. That he was schizophrenic in the ordinary medical sense cannot easily be accepted, and many who knew him have doubted the accuracy of the Heseltine/Warlock portrait painted by Cecil Gray....¹⁹

In addition to a comparative outsider's observations, Copley includes the following tribute from one of Warlock's close friends and collaborators, Bruce Blunt:

"Peter Warlock was only a pen-name at first, but latterly he used it for every purpose. This started the extraordinary legend that he was really two persons in one, and that the sinister Peter Warlock eventually destroyed the gentle Heseltine. Every time that any reference is made to Peter Warlock or his work, this myth is trotted out. It's time that it was forgotten...This suggestion of the sinister gives an absolutely false impression of Philip Heseltine, who was fundamentally so simple and sincere. Anyone who has any character at all has many sides to that character, and so it was with Philip. That was all. Of the many times that I was with him, I was quite unaware that a dread figure was my companion: on the contrary.

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

"Philip's entry into a bar or taproom was apt to be dramatic. That vivid creature, with the handsome face, fair hair and pointed beard, was bound to attract attention.²⁰ Eyes turned towards him, and talk ceased. But not for long. No one was quicker at melting barriers than Philip. He was perfectly at ease with all kinds of people, and so were they with him. Many who had known him for only a few hours felt that they had known him all their lives. That is why there are people at places which he only visited once or twice who still remember him, and feel more than a vague sorrow that they will never see him there again. He had that rarest quality in human beings, that when you were with him you were never dull. But what was the secret of that charm he inspired? He had great charm and a brilliant mind, but these are not enough. Like other people with the quality of true greatness, he was very modest. He never put on airs. And his was a most generous spirit".

¹⁹ Copley, *The Music of Peter Warlock: A Critical Survey*, Dobson, London, 1979, pp.24-25.

²⁰ Arnold Dowbiggin, an amateur singer, research chemist and a friend of Warlock, described him as a "tall, handsome man with his neatly trimmed Van Dyke beard, grey shirt, red tie, wide-brimmed velour black hat and tall Malacca cane with a large silver engraved knob. In no sense flamboyant: it all seemed perfectly natural, and his urbane and friendly manner immediately put one at ease". Dowbiggin, "Peter Warlock Remembered", *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, May 1970, no.5, p.1.

He was perhaps a man of great wit rather than humour, and certainly he was a man of moods. There were periods of almost pathological gloom, or, to use his own phrase, "grisliness", which came and went throughout most of his adult life....

As for the rest, he was a man of unselfish enthusiasms and virulent hatreds; a staunch friend and a doughty foe. Even now, so many years after his death, the dust of the conflicts that surrounded him has not wholly settled.²¹

Before continuing any further with this discussion it would seem at this stage appropriate to look at a concise medical definition of schizophrenia. This might help clear up some of the misconceptions caused by Gray's theories and, at the same time, assist in further evaluations emerging from this study of Warlock's letters to Taylor:

A mental disorder of a psychotic level characterized by disturbances in thinking, mood and behaviour. The thinking disturbance is manifested by a distortion of reality, especially by delusions and hallucinations...The mood disturbance is manifested by inappropriate affective responses. Behaviour disturbance is manifested by ambivalence, apathetic withdrawal and bizarre activity.²²

Even with only a cursory knowledge of Warlock and his behaviour it would be both irresponsible and inaccurate to apply such labels to him. His friends certainly observed a gradual gathering of clouds of black depression but at no stage did any of them voice fears as to his mental condition and stability. Douglas Goldring (1887-1960),²³ a friend who first met Warlock in Ireland soon after his arrival there in 1917, wrote the following comments about the two sides of his personality:

I look back on many evenings passed at the Café Royal, at the Café du Dome, or at the now famous "Antelope"²⁴ - where the beer he most approved of was dispensed - when I had the opportunity of watching the mild and gentle Philip slowly developing, by stages into Peter Warlock...Tall, pasty-faced, with a wisp of a beard, it was his deep-set eyes and demoniac smile - a smile which became more lewdly devilish as the

²¹ Copley, op. cit., pp.24-27.

²² Freedmann, A.M., Kaplan, H.I. and Sadock B.J., *Modern Synopsis of Psychiatry*, Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, 1976.

²³ Author and journalist.

²⁴ A pub in Eaton Terrace, off Sloane Square in London, often frequented by Warlock and his circle. "At the time of the Delius Festival I am now perforce at the office from 9.30 am till about 8.30 pm when I lapse exhausted into "The Antelope". Letter from Warlock to Bruce Blunt, 12.10.1929, quoted in the Chairman's Report, attachment to *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, March 1980, no.26, n. pag.

evening proceeded and his blasphemies became more daring - which gave the *clou* to his enigmatic character. The fashionable theory of "schizophrenia" which I once used to describe the discrepancy between Heseltine and Warlock has been rejected by a friend, who asserts that the only real difference between them was that between "Philip drunk and Philip sober".²⁵

The swings of mood from elation, often exhibited at times of intense pressure of work and creativity, to those of withdrawal and depression are clearly apparent in many of his letters. Reading this and other correspondence and taking note of his behaviour and the comments of those who knew him, it would probably be more accurate to diagnose Warlock's condition as one of manic-depression.

In many of his letters to Taylor, Warlock comments about himself, his moods and his feelings, in a highly significant way. In this chapter all the relevant passages will be extracted to see if any noticeable pattern or trend emerges and in what way they add to the knowledge of his personality. Some of these quotations refer simply to his mental state at the time of writing, others are more complex, involving religious or philosophical reasonings which give further depth and dimension. Some passages are very short, some are extremely long and some are frustratingly obscure. However it is fortunate that there is so much material in this series of letters to a life-long friend, letters in which he allowed his innermost feelings to pour out honestly and his thoughts to wander candidly from one subject to another.

The first time that there is any such reference to depression is in a letter written by the seventeen-year-old Warlock to Taylor from the family home, Cefn Bryntalch, in the middle of the winter holidays. Here the surrounding dense fog seems to mirror his inner feelings:

Snow, partial thaws, rain and then snow have contributed to make the weather as disagreeable as it well could be. We are also enveloped by a misty fog which never lifts!...it is very depressing.²⁶

²⁵ Goldring, *The Nineteen Twenties*, Nicholson and Watson, London, 1945, p.101.

²⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.1.1912.

Knowing how unhappy he was at Oxford it is not surprising that he wrote the following to Taylor from Christ Church:

I am still in a hopelessly unsatisfactory state, and can scarcely explain things clearly and logically to myself, much less put them on paper. I have tried to write you an explanation, but I cannot write it, because I am so fearfully confused myself.²⁷

And again in similar vein a few months later:

I simply cannot stand Oxford: it has an enervating, depressing influence on me and I am quite sure that I shall never do anything whatever until I can get away from the place.²⁸

However, once he had begun the slow process of convincing his mother that he should leave Oxford, he seems to become less anxious. This is what he wrote to Taylor on this particular subject:

My plans are still vague, beyond a settled determination to take up residence in London in September - a resolution which, now that it is firmly fixed, in my mind, if not yet in my mother's, leaves me in a much more hopeful and tranquil state of mind.²⁹

Writing again the following month he makes reference to Taylor's decision to enlist in the Army. The "baser motives" which he mentions are doubtless his desperate longing to escape not only from Oxford but also from maternal control:

I fear that my nervous stricture³⁰ and general unfitness give me a rather mean advantage: otherwise I should doubtless have followed your example, but, I fear, I should have done so from far baser motives than those which have prompted you to join!³¹

1915 was not a particularly successful year for Warlock. First of all he abandoned his studies at London University and then took on a post as a music critic of the *Daily Mail* which lasted only a short while. In October he sought some kind of

²⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 23.1.1914.

²⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.4.1914.

²⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.8.1914.

³⁰ Delany suggests that this "nervous stricture" was possibly either "an inability to urinate in public or a spastic colon". Delany, P., op. cit., p.404.

³¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.9.1914.

satisfaction in the British Museum studying the origins of English keyboard music, writing programme notes and beginning work on the projected Delius biography. These were the "musical works of divers kind" referred to in the following letter to Taylor from 34 Southwold Mansions in Maida Vale, London. What is important to note here is the early manifestation of a poor self-image as well as the first of many references to a recurring fear of a lack of any genuine musical talent, feelings which reappear in many of his letters. He refers also to more serious bouts of depression which seem to have been brought about by the war and by the fear of conscription³² constantly hanging over his head:

I am recovering from a fearful, nerve-racking and entirely horrible three months, and trying to drown the memory of this period in much musical work of divers kinds. Composition is entirely impossible - but in December I am going to begin a long and strenuous course of lessons with Goossens, in the hope that I may be relieved of the fear which is haunting me, that I have no musical bowels at all!...But the fearful gloom of the war makes the whole of one's life black, and often one simply cannot take one's mind away from it. I have never felt so consistently depressed and nervous and unfit for hard brain-work - except at lucid intervals which only come and go like faltering gleams of sunshine on a November day.³³

In a letter to Delius written from Crickley Hill in Gloucestershire while on holiday a few months earlier he articulates very clearly and in most poetic language this appalling sense of depression which was to haunt him for the rest of his life:

My mind at the present moment is fitly comparable to the blurred humming of the distant peal of bells, whose slow, monotonous droning seems to blend with the grey, listless sky and the still trees, and the far-off, shadow-like hills, in an atmosphere of intolerable dejection and lifelessness on this late summer Sunday evening. Over the wide landscape there hangs a false mood of peace - something seems to have died - or gone out - and there is no peace, but only a weary restlessness. My head feels as though it were filled with a smoky vapour or a poisonous gas which kills all the finer impressions before they can penetrate to me, and stifles every thought, every idea, before it is born...One lives thus perpetually behind a veil. I watch the sun go down behind the hills, flooding the broad valley with a glory of golden light that would in former days have made my whole being vibrate with its beauty - but I wait in vain for that old, ecstatic feeling. The colour and intensity of these pictures have become things external to me - they are no longer reflected in me, I can no longer merge myself with the Stimmung of Nature around me...Creative thought or work, or anything

³² On 29.12.1915, the British Cabinet accepted the principle of compulsory military service.

³³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.11.1915.

remotely approximating thereto, is entirely impossible, and the chances of their ever becoming otherwise seem every day more remote - yet without them existence, for all who desire them, is void and desolate...Hence those tears....³⁴

In March 1916 Warlock wrote a letter to Taylor from 13 Rossetti Mansions, Chelsea in which there was the intimation that something awful had happened and that he was urgently in need of help:

Do come up soon. I am utterly desolate - just existing from day to day. I won't write more details - they would be painful for both of us.³⁵

To understand Warlock's state of mind in this letter it is necessary to look briefly at what had recently been happening. Already for some time an admirer of D.H. Lawrence, Warlock eventually met him and wrote enthusiastically to Taylor ten days later from his lodgings in Chelsea:

Last week I met D.H. Lawrence, whom I have long venerated as the greatest literary genius of his generation.³⁶

Warlock soon found himself absorbed into Lawrence's circle of friends³⁷ which included the remarkable society lady, Lady Ottoline Morrell. On a visit to her home, Garsington, Warlock met and fell in love with Juliette Baillot, the Swiss governess to Lady Ottoline's daughter. Although his affection was not returned, the whole incident was crucial in his decision not to return to Minnie Lucy Channing, "Puma"³⁸ At the beginning of January 1916 he decided to move down to join the Lawrences in Cornwall where they had gone to avoid the adverse publicity caused

³⁴ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 22.8.1915, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.100-101.

³⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.3.1916.

³⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.12.1915.

³⁷ Lawrence wrote to Robert Nichols on 17.11.1915: "I went to dinner with Heseltine. I like him very much: I think he is one of the men who will count, in the future. I must know him more." edited Zytaruk G.J. & Boulton J.T., *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, Vol. II (1913-1916), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981.

³⁸ "Heseltine became infatuated with her, and made her into one of the two poles that shaped his adult life. The other was his mother, a rigidly conventional and moralistic woman who dominated him both emotionally and through her control of his allowance of three pounds a week. Heseltine both despised Puma and...himself for being sensually in thrall to her. Then, as if to seal their uneasy alliance, she became pregnant; this aroused some sense of obligation in him, but also a strong desire to flee the whole imbroglio - he was, after all only twenty-one and entirely dependent on his mother's goodwill for means of support". Delany, op. cit., p.201.

by Lawrence's recent novel, *The Rainbow*.³⁹ Warlock may also, in a way, have been trying to escape from London and the consequences of Puma having recently fallen pregnant.

Considering the circumstances it was strange then that Puma should have come down to Cornwall on 2.2.1916 to join them, evidently at Warlock's suggestion. Earlier that year he was particularly savage when discussing her with Lawrence⁴⁰ and this visit was the subject of correspondence between Lawrence and Lady Ottoline.⁴¹ Lawrence approved of Puma and it may very well have been that Warlock sensed an attempt on Lawrence's part to manipulate the two into a reconciliation. It was obviously something along these lines which caused the eventual rift between the two men a short while later. There is also a theory that Lady Ottoline showed some of Lawrence's less than flattering letters to Warlock.⁴²

In writing about him Lawrence had, at various times, referred to Warlock in phrases such as "...he seems empty, uncreated",⁴³ "...these young individualists are so disintegrated"⁴⁴ and, in a perceptively prophetic phrase, "...perhaps he is very split", though this was a reference to his love for Juliette Baillot rather than his personality. At this stage, as Mark Kinkead-Weeks points out, Warlock's

³⁹ Published 1915.

⁴⁰ Letter from D.H. Lawrence to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 13.1.1916, Zytaruk and Boulton, op. cit., pp.503-504. In an unpublished collection of ribald rhymes, *Unnatural History, Pornographic Poetry for the Private Perusal of Pure-minded Persons* (London, BL, Add MS 57796) the following poem is obviously directed at Minnie Channing:

You've heard of the promiscuous puma,
She is of a most generous humour,
She can't say no to anyone,
Or rob a stranger of his fun.
Because of this sad moral lack,
She spends her lifetime on her back;
But, as she says, what one can use
It seems so wasteful to refuse!

⁴¹ See letters from Lawrence to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 12.12.1915 and 15.2.1916, Vol.II of *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, ed. Zytaruk & Boulton, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, pp.473 and 539.

⁴² Delany, op. cit., p.204.

⁴³ Letter from Lawrence to Ottoline Morrell, 9.1.1916, ed. Zytaruk & Boulton, op. cit., pp.

⁴⁴ Letter from Lawrence to Bertrand Russell, 13.1.1916, *ibid.*, pp.505-506.

personality was "probably unformed rather than unstable as it would become...he was nervy and highly strung".⁴⁵ Lawrence used this last phrase in a letter full of typically Lawrencian jargon:

About H[eseltine] and Mlle.[Baillot] - I tell him he ought to tell her. I suppose he will. It is queer. He declares he does not like this one, the Puma, but he does really. He declares he wants her to go. But he is really attached to her in the senses, in the unconsciousness, in the blood. He is always fighting away from this. But in doing so he is a fool...His affection for Mlle. is a desire for the light because he is in the dark. If he were in the light he would want the dark. He wants Mlle. for *companionship*, not for the blood connection, the dark, sensuous relation. With Puma he has this second, dark relation, but not the first...

Perhaps he is very split, and would always have the two things separate, the real blood connection, and the real conscious or spiritual connection, always separate...⁴⁶

Even though Warlock was helping with plans to publish an unexpurgated version of *The Rainbow* privately and at the same time playing the familiar role of a hero-worshipping disciple, a general cooling off of the friendship was gradually taking place as correspondence reveals.⁴⁷ In March Warlock returned to London, disillusioned with Lawrence whom he described to Delius as acting "as a subtle and deadly poison. The affair by which I found him out is far too long to enter upon here".⁴⁸

From time to time in these letters to Taylor there appears a complete swing in emotions, from extreme depression to one of absolute elation which seems at times to carry him from one venture to the next. Note for example the excited tone and mood of the letter to Taylor from yet another London address (14 Whiteheads

⁴⁵ From discussions between Prof. Mark Kinkead-Weekes and the present author and quoted, with permission, from the draft of his forthcoming book on the life of Lawrence.

⁴⁶ Letter from Lawrence to Ottoline Morrell, 15.2.1916, ed. Zytaruk & Boulton, op. cit., pp. 538-540.

⁴⁷ See Spender, S., (editor) *D.H. Lawrence, Novelist, Poet, Prophet* Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1973, p.200 and Vols. II, III and IV of *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence* (various editors), Cambridge University Press, 1981-87.

⁴⁸ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 22.4.1916, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.117-119. Copley, op. cit., p.17, dates the letter 2.4.1916.

Grove, Chelsea) about his discovery of the "Messiah of modern musical education", Bernard van Dieren:

At the moment I am in a state of terrible elation and excitement. Miracles are not things of the past by any means. If I had come upon traces of the philosopher's stone, I could not be more enthusiastic...I regard him [van Dieren] almost as a magician...please forgive my incoherent enthusiasm.⁴⁹

Now at yet another address in London, 2 Anhalt Studios, Battersea, which he shared with Gray for a time, Warlock wrote to Taylor sympathizing with his despondency over life in the army. There are gloomy comments about the music profession, in which he expresses again, albeit obliquely, those feelings of inadequacy which haunted him throughout his life. An inferiority complex coupled with feelings of insecurity seems to have arisen from a belief that his background and lack of academic musical training ill equipped him to meet his colleagues on an equal footing. In fact this constant litany, which he had found echoed in the writings of the early English composer, Robert Jones,⁵⁰ "the first and greatest enemy of music is *the musical profession*", comes up again and again in his letters and writings. It seems as if this great obsession was part of his pathology and one of the biggest problems with which he never came to terms:

It makes me sad to hear of you being so despondent - and still more sad that I can do or say so little to relieve the gloom....

As far as music, in the abstract, is concerned, I think England is quite hopeless; and it will become more hopeless...I fear, from a lack of taste and discrimination which is fundamental, and almost ineradicable, in the British public. If all the nascent interest in music could be turned to account...!

Beecham might have achieved this: but now he has definitely abandoned the attempt. You and I, and half-a-dozen others might do it, if we had funds enough (it is all - everything is - only a matter of stinking funds). But the first and greatest enemy of music is the music profession.

What little we can do, let us do with a will at any rate. Let us not despair until we have made every effort that it is in our power to make. Gray and I are quite resolved to start a school of music, on a small scale and revolutionary lines. And of course you must join us - but one can't promise riches to anyone....

⁴⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.6.1916.

⁵⁰ "So none greater enemies to their own profession than musicians", Dedication, Robert Jones's *The First Book of Songs and Ayres*, Peter Short, London, 1600.

And of the utter, heart-rending hopelessness of the professional musician in Europe to-day (more especially where creative art is concerned) - si monumentum requiris, circumspice!⁵¹ Let us, at any rate, be thankful that we have eyes to see this, and the power to do a tiny bit towards remedying the colossal disorder.⁵²

Warlock eventually married Puma on 22.12.1916, a son, Nigel, having been born a few months before (13.7.1916). It is unfortunate that so few details about this unhappy relationship are recorded for these might have cast more light on Warlock's subsequent behaviour.⁵³

Having been attracted by the Celtic associations of Cornwall, Warlock returned in early March 1917, staying near Zennor, where the Lawrences were still living. It seems as if it was his intention to remain there for a while to rewrite the first sketches of the Delius biography. Although his return to Cornwall displeased Lawrence, the two men managed to stay on polite terms, resuming some kind of *modus vivendi* particularly when Gray moved down to Cornwall a short while later. Whatever Warlock may have felt about Lawrence the man, he continued to admire his genius as a novelist. But the possibility of conscription loomed once again and Warlock felt it safer to move to Ireland in July and never saw Lawrence again.

In an undated letter (probably written in late April 1917) Warlock expresses his anxiety in somewhat alarming terms:

Forgive me for not answering you before. I have been away for nearly two months, on the verge of utter insanity, and no letters have been forwarded. I am quite incapable of writing a coherent letter: one seems surrounded in a cloud of nightmare.⁵⁴

⁵¹ "If you require a monument, look around you"; epitaph on Sir Christopher Wren's tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

⁵² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 8.11.1916.

⁵³ Warlock himself was confused about his attitude to Puma: "What I have hitherto sought in love has proved the most ridiculous of vain illusions: love has been with me all the time and it is I, and not love, that has been blind...I have found in Puma and my babe a greater and realer love than I have ever been able to imagine...All that I have hated and cursed in Puma has been myself - my old foul self - and that is dead now once and for all...." Unpublished letter from Warlock to Robert Nichols, 17.6.1917, London, BL, Add MS 57794.

⁵⁴ Unpublished and undated letter from Warlock to Taylor, ?27.4.1917.

Unfortunately this whole brief period is shrouded in mystery. Presumably it was a combination of several events which had plunged Warlock into such cataclysmic gloom: all the traumatic happenings of the past months, the Lawrence saga, the birth of his son, his marriage, coupled with the strain of organizing the van Dieren concert, its poor reception and his general aimlessness. Where he went during those two months is unknown but it was not Cornwall for it is only in the next letter, from Trewey Downs Bungalow, Newmill, near Penzance that Taylor next heard from him with the news that he had "abandoned" Anhalt studios in Battersea. The first paragraph seems to strike an anxious and melodramatic note:

This is to warn you to write no more to Anhalt studios. I have abandoned the place. I agree with you now that it was tomb-like and nightmarish.

Having been re-examined by the military at Whitehall and again sent back, I have returned to this wonderful country [Cornwall] where one can live out of time in a sort of eternity and work in peace - and be fairly well - which it is almost impossible to be in London.⁵⁵

As has been noted earlier, Warlock was plagued throughout his life by fits of depression. It is therefore interesting to read this letter of September 1919 in which he ostensibly sets out to give advice to Taylor who had complained about similar moods. This is a very long letter and, although at times the thinking becomes somewhat confused, it needs extensive quoting as it reflects an important stage in Warlock's development. It also dates from the time when he is known to have taken an interest in the occult and dabbled in black magic.⁵⁶ In many ways it ends up more as an attack on institutionalised religion than as an aid to ward off depression. Part of his argument involves a discussion on the "letter and spirit"⁵⁷ of religion and, when reading this letter, it is very interesting to notice the sub-conscious biblical turns of phrase and references which appear from time to time. These are interspersed together with other phrases which have their origins in Shakespeare and the Classics. Warlock obviously evolved things that he had read and perhaps

⁵⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1917.

⁵⁶ Gray, op. cit., pp.163-164.

⁵⁷ cf. "Not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life". Corinthians II 3: 6; see footnote 61.

heard from other people and the problem of interpreting is often confounded by the fact that his sources are rather obscure. But, however complicated the train of thought may be, one thing emerges with great clarity: Warlock had turned his back on orthodox religion, Christianity especially, and was searching desperately for some other alternative way of self-discovery:

Your nice long letter has just arrived, and one or two words in it prompt me to reply at once with a few suggestions which I think might help you to get through the winter without being appalled by the on-stalking spectres of depression and grisliness which, tho' distant and shadowy in September, are apt to increase in size during the fall until by December, having assumed enormous proportions...but they will not do so if any little incantation I can utter can ward them off you....

You are to be counted among the already thrice-blessed⁵⁸ ones since you realize that music can only exist in relation to life - that music-for-music's sake is a doctrine that deserves as many curses as were accorded to its allegorical counterparts, the barren fig-tree.⁵⁹ But when we speak of life in relation to music, it is not the life of trivial rounds and common tasks,⁶⁰ of incidents and sensations and physical phenomena - the life of externals which, in this epoch, becomes each day more and more dismal and sickening. One of Samuel Butler's⁶¹ most brilliant notes reminds us that the most important of all undiscovered countries is the "Kingdom of God" which is within us.⁶² This is one of those remarks that seem so platitudinous that we are inclined to sniff and dismiss it, without further thought, to the limbo of churchly lore long since forgotten. But you, I know, have no such careless delusions about the profound wisdom of old saws.⁶³ And since all music, all art of any kind that is of any value, must be sought and found in that inner kingdom⁶⁴ and there alone, it is only reasonable that we should try and acquire some knowledge of its geography. But do we do so? - do we ever admit the necessity of doing so in this jag-end of an era of blasted materialism? For the majority of us, any knowledge we may have acquired of an inner or "spiritual" life has been derived from one of the so-called "Christian" churches, whose very foundation we have afterwards discovered to be rotten through and through. And in our repudiation of this rottenness, in our horror and disgust at the humbugger that has beset us - and so wilily - for so many years, we have cast overboard everything that we have ever associated with it - including things of a value unsuspected by ourselves.

⁵⁸ cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book I, line 94: "O terque quaterque beati!" "O thrice and four times blessed!"

⁵⁹ Matthew 21: 18-22; Mark 11: 12-14, 20-24.

⁶⁰ A quote from the hymn, *New every morning is the love*, by John Keble, 1792-1866: "The trivial round, the common task
Will furnish all we need to ask".

⁶¹ Samuel Butler, 1835-1902, English satirist, novelist essayist and critic.

⁶² cf. "Neither shall they say, lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you". Luke 17: 21.

⁶³ "Full of wise saws" (i.e. maxims); Shakespeare, *As You Like It* Act II, Scene vii, line 156.

⁶⁴ Possibly a subconscious reference to Luke 17: 21: "For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you".

This at any rate was my experience and to judge from the evidence of the arts, especially music (let alone the 75%, or more of plain persons who have never attempted to look over the curve of their bellies), it has been the experience of the majority of artists for several generations. The Christian churches are more remote in spirit from their Founder than the Jewish church was in his own day. The letter has prevailed over the spirit,⁶⁵ the sign over the thing signified - the very same tendency for which the Scribes and the Pharisees came in for so much censure. "Woe unto you Lawyers, for you have lost the key of the Gnosis!" runs one passage which is rather obscurely translated in the Authorized version. Amongst the Jewish priests, there was a very real Gnosis,⁶⁶ or received esoteric tradition of inner meanings lurking in the words of what were to outward eyes only simple stories. This is precisely what has happened to music. It is all surface forms and surface ceremonial, uninformed - save in rare instances - by the living spirit. We have indeed lost the key of our Gnosis⁶⁷ through our childish attitude of superiority to what we consider to be old wives' tales - which are, indeed, the tales which should begin at our mother's knee and end nowhere though we should pursue them passionately all our life long. The old wives, like mysterious châtelaines, hold all our keys!...It is difficult to make this clear in a few words: but the point of view is all-important with regard to music - and it is from this point of view alone that I can view music and give any account, or excuse for music. I hope to develop this aspect fully in an essay so I won't inflict much more on you now.

But I have realized - painfully, in myself - that no one can hope even to understand the messages of an art, much less to create anything of any value, until he is thoroughly educated - in the strict sense of the word: that is, until his real self with all its potentialities has been drawn out of its slumber into consciousness, until he begins to live as a human being and ceases merely to exist as an animal humani generis. General education is more important than specialized training. Look at the curriculum of Eton!!! I have only just survived my "education" - that is to say, I have just managed to cast out the devil implanted in me and to sweep and garnish⁶⁸ myself in the hopes if not of an angel at least of some power that is only negatively evil.⁶⁹ At this point one has to begin to educate oneself.

I think one should differentiate between education as it is and as it ought to be conducted, somewhat in this way. The only real way to educate is galvanically - stimulating as by an electrical current a latent something in the pupil into conscious life. But what is actually done is to inflict a kind of education enema on the wretched boy: it is as though, to his intense suffering and annoyance, something external to himself, foreign to himself, were forcibly shoved up his fundamental orifice - with the inevitable result -

⁶⁵ Corinthians II 3: 6; see footnote 57.

⁶⁶ Greek for *Knowledge*.

⁶⁷ Warlock is here referring to the later claim by Christian writers to a special *gnosis*, a knowledge of spiritual mysteries, especially a higher knowledge of spiritual things.

⁶⁸ cf. "Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished". Matthew 12: 44.

⁶⁹ Warlock had used a similar biblical image in a letter to Delius from Cornwall, 6.1.1916, quoted in Gray, op. cit., p.109: "Like the man out of whom Jesus cast seven devils, I feel 'swept and garnished' but empty, awaiting the arrival of the soul's new tenants (which in the case instanced were, I believe, seven more devils worse than the first! However, one can but hope for the angels!)"

complete evacuation! Then, alas, occurs the opportunity for seven other devils worse than the first!⁷⁰

But I have rambled a long way and probably bored you very much. What I really wanted to do was to try and find you some means of getting through the winter without grisliness. And since my voyages of discovery during the last six months have opened up for me such amazing and far-reaching vistas of hitherto undreamed-of possibilities, I thought that perhaps you might find a new interest in life by following a similar track - though these matters are so intensely personal that one can hardly speak of them to another with any coherence, and it is almost impossible to do more than drop stray hints that may be useful, and may be only so much gibberish - to anyone else. If one's own soul is an undiscovered country,⁷¹ the soul of another is another world.⁷²

In this and, indeed, throughout Warlock's writings there is a latent spiritual side which emerges in a constant plea for true religion as opposed to an institutionalised one. His frustrations with current attitudes of materialism, kindled by the hopelessness of war and what he perceived to be the perversion of religious values, are often characterised by outbursts of profanity in his writings. These frustrations may possibly have been one of the reasons for his rebellious attitudes towards the establishment (as symbolised by his family, Eton and Oxford) which subsequently produced his unconventional life-style. To have produced works of a religious and mystical intensity so apparent in many of his settings (for example the choral works, *Corpus Christi* [1919] and *Bethlehem Down* [1928] or the songs, *The Birds* [1926] and *The First Mercy* [1927]) there must have been somewhere deep down a real belief and understanding which Warlock found difficult to express in terms of formal religion, particularly Christianity.

In his article, "Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock): A psychological study",⁷³ Denis ApIvor (b.1916)⁷⁴ makes some interesting speculations in connection with Warlock's religious background and his subsequent behaviour, linking it to a large extent to his

⁷⁰ "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first". Matthew 12: 45.

⁷¹ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act II, Scene iii, line 79. "...death, the undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns...."

⁷² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.9.1917.

⁷³ ApIvor, D., "Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock): A Psychological Study", *Music Review*, May 1985, v.46, no.2, pp.118-132.

⁷⁴ English composer and writer.

repressive Welsh background. ApIvor points out that up until now little has been made of Warlock's obvious Welsh roots on his mother's side and the repressive nonconformist attitudes with which he would have been surrounded during the time he lived in Wales. Although Warlock displayed anti-religious feelings throughout his life ApIvor also draws attention to "one of the most noticeable characteristics of so much of Heseltine's most significant work...its 'religious' quality". He refers to Gray's description of Warlock's behaviour at a party, pointing out that Gray "does not stress the emotional *volte-face* of Heseltine"⁷⁵ though he does mention one occasion "when in the midst of a wild and riotous gathering, he suddenly rose saying, 'One has only a short time to live, and yet one spends it like this,' and walked out, not returning until the next day".⁷⁶ ApIvor also adds that Gray's memoir "does not refer to the episode in which Heseltine was seen lying on the ground in Westminster Cathedral with his arms outstretched like a crucifix".⁷⁷

But to return to Warlock's letter of September 1917. At this stage in the letter Warlock enthusiastically recommends four books for Taylor to read; works which had proved important to him in his recent studies of religion and the occult and which he felt had been of particular benefit in his personal development. Warlock succeeds in adding just a touch of mystery and intrigue with his secretive instructions in the final paragraph:

Still, it would be well worth your while to read four books which must either seem to you mad and incomprehensible, or else full of the most astounding wisdom and illumination that has as yet been granted to man. The title are not prepossessing. The first is called "Science and the Infinite"⁷⁸ by S.T. Klein⁷⁹ - a simple little book that may seem full of airy nothings: for me it contains all the old châtelaine's keys.⁸⁰ The second and third are two books by J.M. Pryse⁸¹ - "The Magical message according to Iôannes"⁸² and "The

⁷⁵ ApIvor, op. cit., p.120.

⁷⁶ Gray, op. cit., p.257.

⁷⁷ ApIvor, op. cit., p.120.

⁷⁸ Klein, S.T., *Science and the Infinite; or, Through a Window in the Blank Wall*, William Rider & Son, London, 1912.

⁷⁹ Sydney Turner Klein, 1853- ?

⁸⁰ This refers to a sentence in the same letter quoted earlier.

⁸¹ James Morgan Pryse, 1859-?.

⁸² Pryse, *The Magical Message according to Iôannes commonly called the Gospel according to St.John: a verbatim translation from the Greek done in modern English*

Apocalypse Unsealed⁸³ which consist of a literal translation, with a commentary, (but what a commentary!) of St. John's Gospel and Revelation respectively. These two are without exceptions whatever the most illuminating and altogether wonderful books I have ever read. The fourth is Eliphas Lévi's⁸⁴ *History of Transcendental Magic*⁸⁵ - a book belonging to a far lower plane than the other three but none the less remarkable. Being a history it gives one a digest of a certain line of thought through successive ages which could not be followed otherwise without recourse to a multitude of books in many different languages. Lévi is rather a synthesizer than a creator himself....

These books, which are only introductory, contain more that is of priceless value to the artist for whom art is fullness of life - real life - than any works written round their little "special subjects". The secret of art is "Know Thyself"⁸⁶ - and through thyself the Universe of which thou art but an epitome - this is the secret message of one of the most despised of all the old wives!

Does this seem very foolish and meaningless to you? It is so very hard to compress into a page or two - so very real and important to oneself. If you can read the first three of those books, we shall have more of a firm common ground which we can take for granted, without explanations or apologies, as a foundation or basis of all art - that is, if they appeal to you with anything like the intensity with which they did to me. Plato's theory that knowledge is to a great extent remembrance of a very dim, very remote past is by no means to be discredited.⁸⁷ I wonder if you feel, as I do often, that the very greatest manifestations of truth - whether in music or in literature - seem much rather to awaken a responsive memory that was asleep within us than to put anything new in us?...Please do not mention the books I have told you of to anyone else: this is important. When you have read them you will see that this kind of book must not on any account fall into unfit hands: this sounds queer but you will see that it is true. There are far more dangerous books than obscene novels, in existence!! - dangerous even to the scoffers themselves.

Dangerous indeed they were. A study of Eliphas Lévi's *Transcendental Magic* reveals the alarming things it contains in sections such as "The Sabbath of the Sorcerers" and "Infernal Evocations" with its detailed descriptions of how to invoke demoniac powers. Little wonder that Gray could write the following:

with introductory essays and notes, The Theosophical Publishing Company, New York, 1909.

⁸³ Pryse, *The Apocalypse Unsealed: being an esoteric interpretation of the Initiation of Iôannes*, with a new translation. J M. Pryse, New York, 1910.

⁸⁴ Eliphas Lévi, pseudonym for Alphonse-Lois Constant, 1810-75, French writer on the occult.

⁸⁵ Lévi, Eliphas *Histoire de la magie: avec une exposition de ses procédés, de ses rites et de ses mystères*, Paris, 1860. English version: *Transcendental Magic: its Doctrine and Ritual*, Rider & Company, London, 1896.

⁸⁶ Inscription at the Delphic Oracle attributed to the Seven Sages (c.650-c.590 B.C.).

⁸⁷ Plato, c.428-348 B.C., Greek philosopher. Warlock here refers to Plato's Doctrine of Recollection expounded in the *Dialogues* (*Meno*, *Phaedo* and *Phaedrus*).

His other chief preoccupation apart from music at this time was the study of the occult, and a large number of his notebooks belonging to this period are filled with extracts from and comments upon works dealing with every aspect of the subject, from the most highly scientific and elaborately technical aspects of astrology to the method of divination by means of the tarot, and from the purely philosophical and theoretical side of magic, as found in the writings of Eliphas Levi, down to its actual practice according to the formulas, rituals, and incantations....

From these activities Philip undoubtedly suffered certain psychological injuries⁸⁸ from which, in my opinion, he never entirely recovered....⁸⁹

Jack Lindsay also relates a story of how, at a Ouija-board seance in Dublin, Warlock was ordered out of the room by the medium because he was pursued by "evil influences".⁹⁰

Taylor must evidently have made some effort to read these books, for Warlock asks the following question a short while later:

How are you getting on with the books? George Russell (A.E.)⁹¹ told me the other day that Pryse, besides being a great mystic and scholar, is also a practical magician, having been initiated into the traditional secrets of the Aztecs in Mexico! He certainly does stand far above most of his contemporaries, if one may judge from his books alone, which, to my mind, contain more real wisdom than the sum total of all the other religious books of this century.⁹²

Warlock went on to expand further on these ideas for, in a letter written from Dublin a little earlier, he included four essays for Taylor to read and criticize:

Here are the first four essays - one I think you have already seen in a curtailed form in "The New Age",⁹³ the others are quite new. They are quite sketchy and undeveloped, and verbally rather poor and clumsy: but I

⁸⁸ "I wrote you an idiotic letter some four months ago - or more...I was suffering from the reaction that inevitably overtakes those who tamper prematurely with the science vulgarly known as Black Magic...If you have my Eliphas Levi still, you might send it over to me. A great book, isn't it?" Unpublished letter from Warlock to Robert Nichols, 4.12.1917, London, BL, Add MS 57795.

⁸⁹ Gray, op. cit., p.163.

⁹⁰ Lindsay, op. cit., p.89. There is another account of the incident in Goldring, op. cit., p.182: "At one of Mrs. Dowden's séances, which Heseltine and his wife attended, the 'control', as he entered the room, rapidly spelt out the message: 'That man who has just come in is dogged by evil influences. Send him away.'"

⁹¹ 1867-1935, Irish poet and mystic, a leading figure in the Irish literary revival.

⁹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.11.1917.

⁹³ Probably the article, "Pastiches: Predicaments concerning Music", which appeared in *The New Age*, 10.5.1917, no.1287, v.21, no.2, p.46. See unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.9.1917: "I will send you, as soon as they are typed, four very brief essays upon 'The Function of Music'...."

think you will be able to grasp the main ideas and it is these I want you to criticize before we go any further. Our foundations must be submitted to the most rigorous tests before we begin to build upon them. When they are proven secure, we can go ahead as fast as we like with our school!⁹⁴

Taylor obviously made some observations about these four essays, for Warlock reacted in his reply. He voices some interesting theories about the relationship between music and life:

Re essays: two essential points ought to be made clearer. First my whole point of view is based upon the assumption that music, that all art that is of any real value, must be the overflow, and not merely the fullness, of life. Music is the voice of God in man: there is no room, no excuse even for music in the gospel of materialism - and no amount of study of the merely material side of music will be of any real avail, without the inner light. This must be sought first - and then the purely material accomplishments will be added. The inner developments of the soul are alone of real importance. There is no need to study how these may "apply to" music: they will apply themselves, automatically, by a seeming miracle. One should not live for art: but art, if one really lives with one's whole self (and to find out what is one's whole self is no small matter for us Europeans), will be added unto one.⁹⁵ All this may seem strange to you, coming from me: but I will not pretend to conceal the fact that I have been on a hopelessly wrong track for years, completely fuddled, groping blindly in the dark for something of whose nature I was quite ignorant. I am only now beginning to see a glimmer of light, and this, to the best of my poor ability, I must try to show to others.

I recommended you some of the books that helped me most: I am sure that they have a more direct bearing upon music than any professedly musical treatise in the world.

It is always well to study the Genus before the Species: and music is only a sub-species of Art whose genus is the soul of Man - and that we can only study within ourselves - potentially, each is all, throughout the universe - the extent to which we actualize our potentialities depends entirely upon our own efforts.⁹⁶

It has already been noted that Warlock spent over two months on a remote island early in 1918 and, for one who felt psychologically and spiritually isolated in so many ways, this bleak physical isolation made a great impression. On his return to Dublin he wrote a long letter to Taylor telling him of his experiences there, at the same time giving yet another glimpse of the characteristically swiftly alternating moods:

⁹⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.10.1917.

⁹⁵ Possibly another unconscious Biblical reference: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you". Matthew 6: 33.

⁹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.10.1917.

I have been a great pig to have neglected writing to you for so long...However, you have lost nothing, I assure you, for if I had written...I should only have inflicted on you the reflexion of a very grisly and stagnant mood, and Heaven knows, you have enough to put up with without that! But now that the Spring has re-awakened old desires and brought new life and energy in its train, I feel more confident - and I have at least something to say, beyond mere personal musings which are apt - when they are wintry - to be very trying....

For over two months, I was away upon an inconceivably desolate island in the West...I have never known such barrenness, such utter desolation: it reflects into one's very soul till one becomes chill and numb - such desolate lives in such a desolate region - black wintry weather and the full force of the Atlantic beating, always beating, almost at one's very door.⁹⁷

In a letter written from Dublin in June 1918 he once again describes clearly the typical and fearful symptoms of one of his more acute bouts of depression. Here he seems still racked with self-doubt about his composing abilities, the words "dark brooding thoughts" being presumably a veiled reference to suicide.⁹⁸ The postscript confirms the fact that Warlock was still influenced by his study of the occult, believing certain predictions from a medium friend that van Dieren was about to die at any moment:

I am grieved to hear you have been ill, and labouring again in the toils of the fiend dejection - for this fiend is really more deadly than real physical illness - how well I know him too! He has treated me lately to a much longer spell of his society than I had any wish for. I think there are few influences more wearing than his - the inactivity, the consciousness of being void and sterile that he inflicts upon one, these things and the dark brooding thoughts they engender are more dangerous than many diseases - more tormenting, even...I cannot write a note of music - I am utterly dessicated [sic]: I shall have to shut up entirely for a good while in that department, though I have a good deal to do in others....⁹⁹

When Warlock wrote again to Taylor the following month he added an important postscript, which has since been widely quoted as evidence of his decision to create a new image by the growing of a beard, the "fungus", as he called it. For him this

⁹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.4.1918.

⁹⁸ Thoughts and premonitions of death (suicide?) seem to have passed frequently through Warlock's mind. Two years later he wrote to his mother: "On the whole my life is a burden which I should be glad for any night to relieve me of...." Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, ?28.8.1920, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

⁹⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.6.1918.

beard had an almost magical significance, symbolizing as it did the emergence of a new, positive identity so different from the unsure young man of the past:

The fungus is cultivated for a purely talismanic purpose: as such it works, and this is more important to me than mere appearance...it does have a certain psychological effect on me: and seeing that now for ten years all my best strength and energy has been used up negatively in keeping out the tide of the world which wants to sweep me and prevent me from doing the only kind of work I can do with any success (and just now, more than ever, everything is against me and more than ever I want my whole time and strength for my work) - in view of this fact, it is necessary for me to make use of any little magical energy-saving devices that suggest themselves - and this is one of them.¹⁰⁰

When Warlock wrote the immensely long letter to Taylor in August 1918 (reacting to the so-called "infamous" letter from Winthrop Rogers), he made one comment which needs to be isolated in this section: this sentence containing the rather chilling remark about death which, with hindsight, seems to carry rather prophetic overtones:

But look around the world today - what is there but sensationalism, a frantic beating of the bars of a cage in silly disregard of the open door that lies behind. From finance and imperialism to sadism and buggery¹⁰¹ - all is sensation, a frenzied effort of despair in the darkness. The inevitable outcome is universal death - for death is the last and greatest of all possible sensations.¹⁰²

This same letter also contains some very positive sections, very much in keeping with the new-look, bearded Warlock. There is a hint of some new self-discovery, of a new self-awareness which seems to be the result of his experience with the occult. In this letter there is the expectant determination of one who is in the process of finding a new self-confidence and is on the brink of a burst of sudden creativity.

¹⁰⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.7.1918.

¹⁰¹ Warlock seems to have shown a certain aversion to homosexuality. Gray, op. cit., p.222, quotes from an undated letter from Warlock to his solicitor about Lawrence's *Women in Love*: "Apart from the chapters containing the libels...if ever a book afforded grounds for prosecution on a charge of morbid obscenity...and the glorification of homosexuality...this one does". According to Goldring, op. cit., p.183, Warlock on one occasion showed this aversion in public: "He detested, also, the young Oxonian homo-sexuals [sic], and when one of these came and spoke to us at the Café [Royal] I thought he was going to brain him with a water bottle. 'Go away, you dirty little joy boy!' he snarled".

¹⁰² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.8.1918.

Here once again is the typical swing from a mood of deep depression, to one of excited exaltation.

I have travelled in the dark, often ignorant of the end of my journey, often ignorant of the very fact that I was travelling at all. During the last few months the light has begun to break: I have had experiences which have brought me to the realization of things which seemed before incredible. I cannot write to you of these things now, but when we meet I shall tell you of experiences which will astonish you, which you will not be able to believe at first. But you will, whether you believe or not, at least be able to understand the surety and confidence which they have implanted in me. It is not for no purpose that I have been drawn to the study of the things that lie beyond the confines of our narrow sensuous world: and I will tell you, in strict confidence, that I have already received very definite and detailed communications concerning music from sources which the ignorant and unheeding world call supernatural: and that there is unlimited power behind these sources.¹⁰³

In a subsequent letter, written two weeks later, there is a rather tantalizing reference to "a psychological problem" about which there is, sadly, no further information. The spirit of this section quoted below is still one of elation at his newly-discovered creative powers and the attendant "liberation of spirit", as he so aptly describes it:

The present is a most critical and eventful period for me. During the last few weeks the solution of a psychological problem that has obsessed and baulked me and stifled me now for nearly three years has been revealed and I am sensible of a tremendous liberation of spirit. One is prone to effervescence in the celebration of such occasions, and I have written ten songs¹⁰⁴ in the last fortnight...such activity has hitherto been a thing unknown with me - and it is a great relief.¹⁰⁵

Sometime during August 1918 Warlock seems to have become depressed again and, tiring of the stultifying effect of Ireland, returned to London, anxious too about van Dieren's health. On his return he wrote to Taylor from Maida Vale. It is one of the typical manifestations of depression that he should have locked himself away in this fashion, seeing no-one and working obsessively:

I have neglected you horribly these last weeks. Again, as you see, I am settled in London for a while, with my own things around me which is

¹⁰³ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ These songs are discussed later in chapter 7.

¹⁰⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 22.8.1918.

pleasant...I left Dublin for several reasons. I had been getting very tired of the dead, stagnant atmosphere of Ireland and for the last months of my stay practically immured myself in my room, saw no one and worked steadily.¹⁰⁶

A distressed letter to his mother written a few years later confirms the severity of these growing bouts of depression:

I fear you entirely misunderstand me when I don't write frequent letters to you. It is not that I have become cold or indifferent towards you - very much the opposite, and it hurts me that you should suppose that to be the reason. It is simply that the depression and gloom that nowadays seem to hang perpetually over me like dark clouds reach such a pitch that I feel like going into a corner to hide myself. It is not that circumstances are against me as that some essential part of myself seems to be dead. Whenever good fortune comes my way and an opportunity presents itself, I am unable to grasp it. All my faculties seem to have deserted me....¹⁰⁷

During this period (1919-1921) there is a gap in the correspondence with Taylor on account of the latter's extensive overseas examining tour and his subsequent departure for South Africa. In the few letters to Taylor which survive from this period Warlock has little to say about himself, writing mostly the kind of musical news which he felt Taylor would like to hear about. In successive letters there is much about the English music scene, the rising generation of new composers together with news about Warlock's own work, his compositions and his writings. In a letter from 35 Warrington Crescent in London to Taylor (examining in Australia) he apologizes for not having written more regularly during Taylor's long time abroad, at the same time lamenting the "blankness" of his existence:

I am proving the most disappointing correspondent and my conscience often smites me sorely for not being able to write and cheer you up on your lonely travels. I sometimes feel that I ought to invent occurrences with which to regale you! But as for writing and telling you what actually is happening to me - whichever way I look, into the past present or future - there is an utter blankness - which is not very interesting or inspiring to write about!!¹⁰⁸

By the time of Warlock's next letter to Taylor, the latter had settled permanently in Cape Town and Warlock had returned to Cefn Bryntalch still smarting from *The*

¹⁰⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 29.10.1918.

¹⁰⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 15.2.1921, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

¹⁰⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 23.8.1919.

Sackbut affair. In the tranquil beauty of his beloved Welsh countryside he was able slowly to regain his peace of mind and could write of "a growing feeling of returning health and sanity". The following months were to be marked by a spate of renewed creativity in the form of a number of compositions and transcriptions, as well as the completion of his book on Delius:

I must beg your forgiveness for my long and most reprehensible silence...I don't believe I have written to you since the day before I left for Algiers in the Spring¹⁰⁹ - but it would be a weary and dismal recital were I to catalogue even briefly all that has happened to me since then. Suffice it to say that an overlong period of extreme grisliness has definitely come to a full close in a minor key and, with a sense of great relief and a growing feeling of returning to health and sanity....¹¹⁰

The letter is not, however, without its touch of humour. In it he shows his obvious delight at the discovery that another Peter Warlock had been fortuitously created, though, in his opinion, of a very different type from his own alter-ego. The brief comment quoted below is significant in that it shows that he himself saw the Peter Warlock of his creation as the "bad boy", a definite contrast to the typical Eton-Oxford figure that the establishment would have him be:

A serial is at present running in *The Daily Mail* of which the hero is called Peter Warlock, curiously enough - but as he is - as all heroes should be - a Peter paragon of virtue he has not, it seems, been modelled on his namesake.¹¹¹

During his time in what he described as "these lovely wilds", he had plenty of time to look back over his turbulent past and so parts of a letter written from Wales make significant reading. There seems to be no note of regret in his reference to the "bitter" past rather a stoical, almost resigned acceptance of what life had dealt him:

It is very good to know that you are feeling happier and settling down to a tranquil, as well as - apparently - a very nicely profitable existence. I think one's capacity for happiness depends so much on widely contrasted states that one would not wish the past undone however bitter it may have been.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ March and April 1921.

¹¹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*

¹¹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

Taylor had by this time obviously become aware of the pattern of Warlock's changing moods and frequent fits of black depression. He had also noticed a general improvement in Warlock's spirits and attitude once he had moved from London back to the country. It is moving to read in one of the few surviving Taylor letters an astute observation about the effect of city life on Warlock. Writing from the S.A. College of Music in Cape Town he shows concern for his former pupil, imploring him as follows:

Don't stay in London too long, there's a good fellow, it doesn't suit you I'm certain.¹¹³

Back in Wales Warlock continued to apply himself to his work, transcribing a vast number of early songs as well as arranging for performances of his song-cycle, *The Curlew*.¹¹⁴ From another letter of this period it seems as if this hard work was part of his desperate antidote to depression, a way of warding off the spectre of "grisliness" never far from his shoulder:

...I've so little news. The only way to escape intolerable boredom is to work from morning till night - so you must excuse me for being rather absorbed. I don't write like this out of any illusions about the value of the work. I wish I had more - but it's the only thing to do to stave off the incursions of grisliness.¹¹⁵

Taylor saw Warlock for the last time in the summer of 1924 when he was on honeymoon in England when he took the opportunity of visiting his elderly mother. After her death a few months later Warlock wrote to Taylor sympathizing. His letter reveals a hint of sadness that he himself had never had a close or happy relationship with his own mother:

I have just received your letter with its strange mixture of news. I am very sorry to hear of your mother's death - I remember so well meeting her at Eton years ago - and you must feel it all the more keenly, being so far away, unable to be with her at the end. I always thought of you as being singularly fortunate in having a mother who remained so sympathetic and understanding and alive to the changes in the world in her old age....¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Unpublished letter from Taylor to Warlock, 30.11.1922.

¹¹⁴ November 23rd 1922 and January 31st 1923.

¹¹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.12.1922.

¹¹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 18.1.1925.

In his last letters to Taylor Warlock says very little about himself, the correspondence largely being concerned with matter of fact things, the correcting of proofs or news of recent musical developments in England. A sense of emptiness and negativity slowly descends on him and a noticeable impersonality begins to permeate the correspondence with his life-long friend.¹¹⁷ The opening sentence from this letter written from 78 Denbigh Street in London has a detached, almost business-like quality:

I am an execrable correspondent - if one may call a correspondent one who does not correspond at all - but in extenuation I can only plead that, as far as my own activities are concerned, there is less and less of any interest to correspond about, as time goes on. So the best thing is to go through your letter and answer all your questions *seriatim*.¹¹⁸

The very last letter which Warlock wrote to Taylor from London tells mostly about the forthcoming Delius festival and his current work. The postscript to this letter, the last words he ever wrote to Taylor, is, however, a strange and uncanny *envoi* to their friendship. In a way Peter Warlock has the last word:

I am now officially Peter Warlock for all public communications - it saves trouble and confusion and keeps one's name in people's minds: they cannot remember two at a time.¹¹⁹

Having considered all the above extracts is it possible to come to any definite conclusions about the exact nature of Warlock's personality? The answer must probably be no, though in the Taylor correspondence it is possible to observe recurring, discernible patterns of behaviour. However, it must also be remembered that the picture revealed here is assembled from but a small part of the surviving

¹¹⁷ This can be observed in other correspondence of that time. "I do very much appreciate your friendly solicitude, but I am afraid you are making the same mistake about me as I have made about myself for some years, in considering me a potential artist. I am not by nature an artist at all. I have no real desire to create anything whatsoever, and my present difficulty is entirely due to my having drifted, more or less by chance, into a milieu where I do not belong and can never really belong...." Unpublished letter from Warlock to Nichols, 7.10.1928, London, BL, Add MS, 57795.

¹¹⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

¹¹⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1929.

Warlock correspondence. The layman is only qualified to make a few observations, inadequate though they may be. The danger is to accept without questioning the exaggerated picture drawn by Gray.

In the final summing up a few conclusions can be drawn from what has been revealed. Here is a man given to hero-worship of men such as Delius, van Dieren, Lawrence and, to a lesser degree, Taylor himself. Here is someone looking perhaps for a father-figure, a rôle model, while at the same time trying to establish his own identity and independence, a struggle which entailed fighting off the influence of a dominating, manipulative mother and of his establishment background. Here is a man given to dramatically alternating moods of depression and elation, a man so unsure of his abilities that he speaks constantly of his insecurities (particularly in relation to his formally trained colleagues in the music profession), his lack of belief in his own abilities and his poor opinion of his achievements as a composer and writer.

All this seems to have been the cause of his often eccentric and at times abrasive anti-social behaviour and may have been the cause of his premature death, a state which he had once described in typical terms as "the last and greatest of all possible sensations".¹²⁰

Perhaps some of the most moving and astute comments about the real Peter Warlock came from the nurse, Winifred Baker, who had loved Warlock for many years. She wrote the following in a letter of condolence to Warlock's mother a fortnight after his death:

Philip was a very difficult person to help; he was so elusive and intangible and so highly sensitive. If he did not feel a sympathetic and understanding response in any particular subject, at once, he would retire into himself and when that happened it was very difficult to get near to him. We must remember too, that anyone who is touched with genius, feels things with much more intensity than most of us and perhaps we do not make

¹²⁰ See unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.8.1918, quoted above.

allowances sometimes, for a consequent lack of moderation in certain directions....¹²¹

The opening quotation on Warlock at the beginning of this chapter came from the writings of Sir Thomas Beecham.¹²² Peter Pirie¹²³ was critical of Beecham's attitude towards Warlock when he wrote of Warlock's place in English musical history:

Among those who obviously did not like Warlock was Sir Thomas Beecham, who in his biography of Delius portrays Warlock as a callow and opinionated young puppy. In fact Warlock was far ahead of his time in musical sensibility, not only in his recognition and appreciation of major European composers who were at that time considered by the English to be either bogus or insane - Bartók, Berg, Schoenberg and the rest - but in his discovery of ancient music, which is now such a cult...It has taken us forty years to catch up with him. His temperament was insecure, and he was in some ways a social menace, but musically Beecham was wrong and Warlock right.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Unpublished letter from Winifred Baker to Edith Buckley Jones, 31.12.1930, London, BL, Add MS 57964.

¹²² Sir Thomas Beecham, 1879-1961, English conductor and impresario.

¹²³ Peter John Pirie, b. 1916, English musicologist and writer.

¹²⁴ Pirie, *The English Musical Renaissance*, Victor Gollancz, London, 1979, p.137.



9. Colin Taylor (c.1914)
(Colin Taylor Collection, UCT Library. B76 D4.1)

CHAPTER 3

COLIN TAYLOR'S BIOGRAPHY

I am going to learn music with Mr. Colin Taylor, who plays the organ in lower Chapel where I go every morning at 9.15....¹

After the almost bizarre quality of the chapters on Warlock's biography and personality any attempt to write about Colin Taylor must needs seem rather mundane. After all what was so exceptional about a musician who was very much the product of his Victorian-Edwardian background, the son of an Oxford church musician who moved through the establishment from the Royal College of Music to teach at Eton, ending his days at the University of Cape Town in colonial South Africa?

His father, Dr. James Taylor (1833-1900), the son of a schoolmaster, was born in Gloucester and was organist of New College, Oxford for thirty-seven years. Besides being organist to the University he was also a conductor and a notable solo pianist. Colin Taylor described him as being of "a very retiring disposition otherwise he would have been famous in his last-named capacity".² He was obviously highly thought of by his contemporaries. One of the leading Victorian church-musicians, Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876),³ thought highly enough of him to have written from Winchester asking if he could possibly assist him in finding some pupils at Oxford.⁴ During his time at New College he acted as tutor to Sir Hubert Parry who was later director of the Royal College of Music (1894-1918) during Colin Taylor's student days. He married Eliza Anne Stone (1840-1925).

¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 21.9.1908, London, BL, Add MS 57959.

² Notes for broadcast scripts, Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection.

³ English composer; organist of Winchester Cathedral, 1849-65.

⁴ Unpublished letter from S.S. Wesley to James Taylor, c.1863, Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection, BC76 A4.133.

Colin Moncrieff Campbell Taylor was born in Oxford on 21st February 1881, being the youngest of eight children. The first child, Ernest, had been stillborn and the second, Percy, had died of jaundice at the age of seven. Two of his older brothers, Stuart and Reginald were later killed in the 1914-1918 and South African Wars respectively. Of the remaining children there were two daughters, Leila and May, both spinsters, and a son, Leonard, a fine painter who later achieved distinction as a member of the Royal Academy of Art. The family had a long history of longevity and not only Colin but also Leila and Leonard lived well into their nineties.

Taylor had vivid memories of some of the characters associated with those early Oxford years. The warden of New College was the famous Rev. William Spooner (1844-1930),⁵ immortalized in the English language by his constant accidental transposition of sounds while speaking (e.g. a "votey heart" and "occupewing a pie" instead of a "hearty vote" and "occupying a pew"). The Rev. Charles Dodgson (1832-1898)⁶ was also a frequent visitor to the Taylor household, the young Leila Taylor, together with Alice Liddell (the original "Alice" of *Alice in Wonderland*⁷), being one of his favourites among the little girls in the University community.

Taylor's mother must have shown a strong streak of independence in those Victorian times for in 1887 she took the young Colin and her two daughters to Leipzig where they stayed for four years. Taylor recounts that during this time, besides beginning his music studies, he played with Mendelssohn's grandchildren, heard the famous Clara Schumann (1819-1896)⁸ play and often went to St. Thomas Church where the great Johann Sebastian Bach had presided over the music.

⁵ Warden of New College, Oxford, 1903-24.

⁶ Lewis Carroll; mathematician and author of children's books, notably *Alice in Wonderland*.

⁷ 1866.

⁸ German pianist and composer, wife of Robert Schumann.

On his return to Oxford Taylor carried on his musical studies, learning the organ for a time with Basil Harwood (1859-1902)⁹ whom he later described as having a "mouse-like exterior" belying "a very Etna of creative fire within".¹⁰ He also had memories of playing piano duets with the young Adrian Boult (1889-1983),¹¹ an undergraduate at Christ Church during the years 1908-1911. In 1900 he enrolled at the Royal College of Music in London where for four years he studied the piano with Marmaduke Barton (1865-1938)¹² and the organ with Sir Walter Parratt (1841-1924).¹³

In 1904, at the age of twenty-three, he was appointed to an important post on the staff of Eton College, that of assistant music master to Dr. Charles Harford Lloyd, the Precentor. Here he remained for what he described as "ten happy years" during which time he made some important musical contacts and taught a number of distinguished pupils including the author, Aldous Huxley and, of course, Philip Heseltine.

At the outbreak of the Great War, Taylor, like so many other young men of his generation, joined up and saw active service with the Third Royal Sussex Regiment. His wartime diaries as well as those of his early examining tours make fascinating reading.¹⁴ In 1919, when the War had ended, he was appointed as an examiner to the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music¹⁵ on the recommendation of Sir Walter Parratt and sent on an extended overseas examining tour to the West Indies, Canada and Australia. The following year saw a similar tour, this time to South Africa, where he fell in love with Cape Town and where he eventually decided to

⁹ English composer; organist of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, 1892-1907.

¹⁰ Notes for broadcast script, Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection.

¹¹ English conductor.

¹² English pianist and teacher at the Royal College of Music, 1889-1911; he undertook a recital tour of South Africa in 1911.

¹³ Organist at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, 1882-1924, and professor of organ at the Royal College of Music, 1883-1923.

¹⁴ These diaries form part of the Colin Taylor Collection in the UCT Library in Cape Town, BC 76.

¹⁵ Then the Royal College and Royal Academy of Music.

settle. In 1921 he joined the staff of the South African College of Music where he was appointed vice-principal by Prof. W.H. Bell (1873-1946),¹⁶ the director. There he remained for some twenty years until his retirement in 1941. In 1923 he married a Capetonian, Doris Constance Miller, and had two children, a son, Hugh Colin (born 1925) and a daughter, Constance-Ann (Kit), (born 1931). Colin Taylor and his wife were later divorced.

During his days at the College of Music he gave numerous solo piano recitals both on the radio and in public and became a much-loved and respected member of the musical life of Cape Town. On retiring he devoted much of his time to examining and judging at music festivals throughout South Africa, a career which had begun as far back as 1921 when he was appointed by the Joint Matriculation Board as a practical and theoretical examiner. He continued with this work well into his retirement with a number of subsequent overseas and local tours for the Associated Board and the University of South Africa. He died in Stellenbosch on 21st June 1973.

Teaching and examining were, however, only a part of his musical activities. Of all composers working in South Africa Taylor produced one of the most formidable list of published compositions¹⁷ (some 180 titles), sixty of which were works for piano solo. These were largely of an educational nature providing excellent teaching material, from the earliest to the more advanced grades. Chris Venter¹⁸ writing in the *S.A. Music Encyclopedia* describes his piano music as:

...ranging from the introspective and dreamy to all that is sunshine and joy of life. His work has a standard beauty that is hard to define, achieved as it is by the use of very simple melodies, rhythms and harmonies. Much as an artist with a subtle line draws a whole new meaning to a picture, Taylor

¹⁶ British-born composer, organist and violinist, head and first professor of the S. A. College of Music, Cape Town, 1912-36.

¹⁷ See Appendix D for a complete list of Taylor's works.

¹⁸ Christiaan Lodewyk Venter, b.1934, university academic.

often surprises with a new aspect to a simple melody - the result of a simple chord or change in rhythmic effect introduced at an auspicious moment.¹⁹

His compositions were not only restricted to works for the piano. There are a number of very beautiful solo songs and a host of shorter pieces for unison class singing. It is a great pity that more of these have not found their way into the general repertoire for there is a wealth of first-rate material waiting to be rediscovered. Warlock's comments in his letters about many of his teacher's compositions point to the fact that amongst these neglected works are many little musical gems.²⁰

It may hopefully be that a later generation will rediscover his worth as a composer, but it is probably as a much-loved teacher and friend that he is best remembered. His numerous letters to countless friends, colleagues, ex-pupils, and even strangers bear eloquent testimony to his sensitive, warm and caring personality:

I do hope that you will forgive a complete stranger writing to say "thank-you" for your charming ballet show at Stellenbosch last Saturday. You will be amused to know that it was the very first public entertainment I have been to since coming to St'bosch 5 years ago. Now that I am an ancient old Codger I seldom go to such things-

It is astonishing how you & your team managed, throughout the whole programme, to discipline that large crowd of small people so that not a sound came from the wings-

Apart from the actual dancing, the delightful costumes, set against plain curtains, were an artistic treat....

P.S. Many years ago I wrote the music for a Dulcie Howes²¹ ballet that was done at the Little Theatre & in the City Hall.²²

(Colin Taylor to Carole Wild, 2.11.1968)

¹⁹ Malan, Jacques, (editor), *South African Music Encyclopedia*, O.U.P., Cape Town, 1986, Vol IV, p.29.

²⁰ For example Warlock wrote to Taylor on 5.5.1918: "...the little child's song [Slumber Town] is quite charming - especially the last page - something really fresh for 'school-music'".

²¹ b.1909, South African ballerina and teacher, founder of U.C.T. Ballet School in 1934, later director of CAPAB ballet.

²² *A Chinese Idyll* (1936).

I wonder if you have heard of a now rather ancient creature called Colin Taylor?

Well- he is now writing this note to you to say that your choral work...is of a very high artistic order...musical team-work of every kind has been one of my talking-points for more years than I care to remember - an antidote to our ghastly exam fetish. I think I am right in saying that I had dealings with you as a very young person - exams? eisteddfod? College of Music? and that your father was one of the stalwarts who helped to keep the Municipal orchestra from lapsing into a mere brass band?

(Colin Taylor to Ruth Dosé, 4.6.1969)

Just a wee line to let you know how much my thoughts are with you...Your dad and I had a friendship extending over many years. We met on a train when I first came to this country in 1920!...I'm his senior by a few years I fancy, for it is my 89th birthday v. shortly. How lucky the autobiography was completed...I found a wee piano piece of mine published.....? & dedicated to "Nan".

(Colin Taylor to Nan Parnell [daughter of Percival Kirby, 1887-1970²³], 10.2.1970)

...this little line comes to wish you a prosperous & happy 1973 and beyond. What with your multifarious duties & interests, & my now rather reclusive habits, we do not meet as often as I should like. Nevertheless I want you to know that I follow your career with much interest & greatly admire the choral broadcasts for which you are responsible. I've never forgotten the debt of gratitude that I owe to you, Charles Oxtoby²⁴ & Neville Cohn²⁵ for the tribute you three arranged for my 88th birthday. On that, & other occasions, you have given the finest rendering of the Three Ships carol.²⁶...So, dear Barry, let all the good things that you wish come to you.

(Colin Taylor to Barry Smith, 2.1.1973)

Abiding memories of Colin Taylor, shared by all those who had the privilege of knowing him, are ones of an old-world charm and courtesy, a politeness and cultured sensitivity which belonged to a past era. His pupils held him in high regard and still speak of him with warmth and affection. He had a particularly good rapport with young people, his interests and knowledge were far-reaching and his mind and wit razor-sharp:

²³ Scottish born historian, composer and authority on African music.

²⁴ 1912-78, British-born South African composer and music organizer for the SABC in Cape Town, 1965-68.

²⁵ Official accompanist at the SABC Cape Town studios in the 1960s.

²⁶ Novello, 1909; composed for the Eton College Musical Society, Christmas 1909. Warlock would, no doubt, have sung on this occasion as he was a member of the society.

...Taylor was a quiet, kindly man, who one automatically respected...a thorough gentleman and a person with a deep sadness...he was special and kindly.

(Stella Jones²⁷)

Colin Taylor was a tall, dignified, and very kindly friend of my Father's...[he] was always very good to us, and often appeared at the same time as other musicians such as Wendt²⁸ and Bell...they were all wonderfully amusing and hilarious...Colin was usually dressed in grey with a bow tie, and was particularly fond of children, so won our affection easily, whereas Bell and Wendt were far more wrapped up in matters musical and adult!

...Colin Taylor [wrote] to say that he was sorry to hear that Anthea was having to play his rather dry piece "Barren Leaves"²⁹ and that he would send her something better to play...isn't it also so typical of his interest in young people that he went to such trouble even when he was in his nineties?...I have only the warmest recollections of him.

(Nan Parnell³⁰)

In the chapters that follow there is ample opportunity to see all of Taylor's virtues at first hand. Right from their first meetings during the piano lessons at Eton he struck up an excellent rapport with the young Warlock. There was a mutual understanding and respect which, during the next twenty-two years, gradually grew from admiration to real affection. In these letters it is constantly apparent how Taylor's sensitivity and empathy were constantly to uphold and support Warlock during his journey along many tortured paths. Whatever the situation or occasion, be it one of anguish or elation, Taylor was always there, ever dependable and loyal. Warlock's life was not a particularly easy or happy one. He had much to learn and much pain to bear in his brief thirty-six years. Without Colin Taylor that journey might have even been harder and possibly not as fruitful.

²⁷ Letter from Stella Jones to the present writer, 2.2.1990.

²⁸ Theo Wendt, 1874-1951, British-born conductor, first conductor of the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra 1914-24, later conductor of the SABC orchestra 1938-44.

²⁹ Actually *Barren Woods*, Augener, 1932.

³⁰ Daughter of Percival Kirby, mother of Anthea; letter to the present writer, 6.2.1990.

Simonshof
Stellenbosch Jan 2-73

As it seems pretty hopeless trying to get you on the phone, my dear Barry, this little line comes to wish you a prosperous & happy 1973, and beyond - What with your multifarious duties & interests, & my now rather reduced habits, we do not meet as often as I should like. Nevertheless, I want you to know that I follow your career with much interest & greatly admire the

choral broadcasts for which you are responsible. I've never forgotten the debt of gratitude that I owe you, Charles Oxtoby & Neville Cohn for the tribute you three arranged & executed for my 88th birthday. On that, & other occasions, you have given the finest rendering of the Three Ships carol. (I cannot recollect the name of your pianist in that item, but greatly admire his artistry.) So, dear Barry, let all the good things that you wish come to you. Your grateful & sincere admirer

Colin Taylor -

Nileo - The Old Fuddy-Duddy of 92
(Just on!)

CHAPTER 4

WARLOCK AND TAYLOR'S FRIENDSHIP

I don't know what I should do without your encouragement and sympathy: I value your understanding and your belief in me far more than you might imagine.¹

During his lifetime Warlock had many friends from many different walks of life: musicians, painters, critics, poets, sculptors, journalists, novelists and models. In a study of his life and letters there are names which keep on recurring: Delius whom he met when he was only sixteen, Robert Nichols from his Oxford year, Cecil Gray, D.H. Lawrence, Augustus John, Jacob Epstein, Bernard van Dieren, E.J. Moeran, Philip Wilson, John Goss, Bruce Blunt and many more. All these were close to him for varying periods in his life as well as being important in his development both as man and as musician.

A study of his life and friendships reveals one particular friendship which lasted longest of all: Colin Taylor. There were the inevitable fluctuations in many of the other friendships, but what comes out most clearly when reading the Warlock/Taylor correspondence is the continuing warmth, affection and regard that the former pupil had for his one-time teacher. In the light of the anguish, the many disappointments and tensions of Warlock's life it is particularly moving to see how he always looked to Taylor as a firm friend, a rock in an often turbulent sea. Time and time again he turned to Taylor as a friend, father-figure, advisor, confidant or merely as a sounding board for his enthusiasms or anger. Although they corresponded less frequently once Taylor had emigrated to Cape Town, Warlock's great affection and admiration for Taylor remained unchanged and he continued to value Taylor's comments on and criticisms of his compositions and writings right until the end of his life.

¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.5.1918.

This chapter attempts to show the many sides of this friendship: how Warlock, especially in the early years, turned constantly to Taylor for advice, particularly about a career in music during the difficult period just after school and at Oxford; how he wrote about a wide range of topics: war, religion, sex, composers and their music, writers and their books, poets and their poetry; and how he was, in his own way, able to help and encourage Taylor. He did this, not only by his generous and positive comments on Taylor's compositions but also in comparatively small things such as sending MSS to publishers and, when Taylor had settled in Cape Town, seeing many of Taylor's works through the tedious stages of proofs and publication. Here then is a miscellany of Warlock's writings: an incredible spectrum of infinite variety ranging from the exalted to the everyday, from the philosophical to the prurient. In the pages that follow Warlock has been allowed to speak for himself in generous quotes from the letters themselves which will, hopefully, convey to the reader the very essence of their friendship.

In the first letter he ever wrote to Taylor it is apparent that the young boy, just about to leave school, realized that in him he had not only had a very special teacher but someone who would remain a friend as well. Here is the sixteen year old school-leaver writing from Eton College:

Just a few lines to say good-bye and a few inadequate words to thank you for all your kindness to me during my time here.² I cannot possibly tell you how grateful I am to you for all that you have done for me, and for your influence in making me know and love modern music, which has become the greatest joy of my life, and I hope you will accept the enclosed scores as a little token of my gratitude.

I have not been photographed for two years, and the old ones are too appalling for words, but I am going to be taken again soon, and I will inflict one upon you, also the MS which you asked me for.³

² In several unpublished letters to his mother from Eton, Warlock makes reference to Taylor's kindness: "Colin Taylor very kindly gave me a ticket for another string quartet concert in Windsor last Tuesday afternoon. This time it was the Grimson quartet". Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 7.3.1909, London, BL, Add MS 57959. Also in an unpublished letter of 23.2.1911, London, BL, Add MS 57960: "I heard some music after my heart this afternoon. I went to tea with Colin Taylor, & he played a lot of Debussy, most magnificently, and such lovely things".

³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1911.

The comment on "modern music" is a particularly significant one for it was the pursuit and championing of what he thought best in twentieth century music that possessed Warlock over the next nineteen years, both in his writings and in his own compositions. In asking for a photograph Taylor showed that he obviously had a special regard and affection for Warlock. In a prominent position over his piano in Stellenbosch where Colin Taylor lived during his last years there hung a signed photograph of Warlock taken in the mid-twenties.⁴

Right from this earliest correspondence Taylor was supportive and encouraging about the young boy's efforts at composing, suggesting that he show them to Cecil Forsyth (1870-1941)⁵ and even trying to arrange for them to be sung by a Miss Spencer. While Warlock was spending a few months in Germany after finishing school he wrote the following to Taylor:

Ever so many thanks for your very nice letter of last month...and also for looking at my scores. It was kind of you to suggest that I should take them to Mr. Forsyth...It would be very kind of you to show my songs to Miss Spencer, though I am sure they would be absolutely ineffective if sung!...I have lately written three more songs, one to words by my friend,⁶ Nigel Bannerman!⁷

The next week he wrote again, enclosing a Christmas gift:

I have discovered here a very original Calendar, which claims to give the life of Wagner in 365 pictures! Although you probably share my aversion to the hackneyed calendars, which are sent round the country at this time of year to no purpose except that of overburdening the poor postman, I cannot restrain myself from sending you this one, as I think it is quite out of the ordinary! I hope you will forgive me.⁸

In the same letter he writes at length with perception and humour about a book on music he was reading:

⁴ Now in the Colin Taylor Collection, Cape Town, UCT Library, B76 C4.6.

⁵ English violist, conductor, composer and musicologist.

⁶ Nigel Bannerman, 1892-?, one of Warlock's boyhood friends; as early as 1903 Warlock and he spent holidays together. Bannerman went to Malvern College (1906-1909) from where he was expelled. After studying at Heidelberg University he went to Ceylon as a tea-planter. Tomlinson, *A Peter Warlock Handbook, Vol. 1*, Triad, London, 1974, p.31.

⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.12.1911.

I am at present reading an extraordinary book by J. Alfred Johnstone:⁹ "Modern Tendencies and Old Standards"¹⁰ in music, which is one of the funniest things I have seen for a long time! With immense seriousness and quite abnormal conceit he relegates "programme music" to the nethermost Hell (somewhat belated creature that he is!), also all "modern" music, even Schumann, of whom he says:- "I cannot find it in my heart to accord him a place among the kings of art" (!!!!), and then in another chapter he quotes Pepys'¹¹ diary on the subject of Pepys' own musical playing and composition and abuses poor Pepys for being pleased with himself about it, and saying so! Among the other grotesque statements the worthy Johnstone puts forward are, that there must be no individuality in piano or other instrumental playing, since it may blind the composer's intentions, there are only five "kings of art", Bach, Händel, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, the latter of whom was not one of the "mightiest of the earth" because he was not master of the emotions he expressed in music, as Bach was; at least that is the point, as far as I can see a point at all, in this rather unintelligible gibberish! Mendelssohn is placed no.1 of the composers, who just miss being first-class (!!!!) in J.A.J.'s opinion, and he quotes and approves an opinion that Mendelssohn wrote the best Violin Concerto¹² since Beethoven, the best organ music since Bach, the best oratorios since Händel! Then it is the turn of the critics: after quoting a long list of excellent literary critics, he points out that musical critics are a far inferior lot...as for the modern critic - ! the "horrible example" held up is William Wallace,¹³ because he abused Mozart in one of his books (Loud cheers for Wallace!), and then follows a torrent of abuse about all readers of refinement and taste being "repelled by the insipidity of the reflections and the crudeness of the style" etc, etc, wherein he becomes unconsciously humorous!! For his own book is but two years old!...On the whole, it is the funniest thing I have read....

Warlock was also discovering new poetry and in one of these early letters he wrote about the works of Fiona Macleod.¹⁴ Although Warlock himself never set any of Macleod's poetry, he sent Delius a copy of "her" poetry at Christmas 1912. A month later Delius had set the poem, *I-Brasil*.¹⁵

⁹ 1861-1941, English Shakespearean scholar and writer on music.

¹⁰ Johnstone, J.A., *Modern Tendencies and Old Standards in Musical Art*, William Reeves, London, 1911.

¹¹ Samuel Pepys, 1633-1703, English man of letters, naval administrator and celebrated diarist.

¹² In e, Op.64 (1844).

¹³ 1860-1940, Scottish composer and writer on music.

¹⁴ A nom de plume for the Scottish poet, William Sharp, 1855-1905.

¹⁵ *I-Brasil* was the name given to the Celtic Isles of the blessed whose haven was attained, not by death, but through the ultimate victory of spirit over flesh. In a letter to Phyl Crocker from Cornwall, 19.4.1917, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.148-149, Warlock writes of the Scilly Isles as being "like a mysterious gateway leading to a mysterious, unknown fairyland of impossible dreams come true - like Hy-Brasil the old Celts used to see shining far out in the western sea at sunset".

I have lately been reading Fiona Macleod for the first time, and am quite enchanted with "her".¹⁶

In February 1913 he wrote from Didbrook telling Taylor about Delius' reaction to this book of poetry which he had sent him:

Delius was very pleased with the poems of Fiona Macleod which I sent him at Christmas, and has already set one of them as a song....¹⁷

Taylor was also anxious to encourage Warlock to develop a wide range of tastes and there are several instances of his sending him books, not only about music but also about literature in general. In this way he helped kindle an interest which lasted throughout Warlock's life. This letter written by Warlock from Cologne illustrates Taylor's generosity in such matters:

I received your card yesterday: thank you very much indeed for your kind promise of Forsyth's book,¹⁸ which I shall read with very great pleasure. It is very kind of you to give it me.¹⁹

During these early years the two men obviously saw something of each other as extracts from several letters of this period indicate:

If you could manage it, I should be awfully pleased if you would pay us a visit in Wales: I am sure you would like the country, and it always looks well in August and September.²⁰

It was very kind of you to ask me to spend a night with you...I am going up to Oxford the beginning of next year. If you will allow me, I should love to come and see you during the summer half, and I hope you may perhaps spare a little time in the summer holidays to pay us a visit here: you could work here, unmolested, all day, if you wanted peace and quiet!²¹

¹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911. There are further references to Fiona Macleod's poetry in letters from Warlock to Taylor dated 29.12.1913 and 4.1.1914. Taylor had sent him a volume of "her" poetry as a Christmas gift which he acknowledged thus: "'The Hills of Dream' is a wonderful book: thank you again ever so much for it". Macleod, *From the Hills of Dream: Mountain Songs and Island Runes*, Geddes & Co., Edinburgh, 1897.

¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1913.

¹⁸ This book was almost certainly Forsyth's first important literary work, *Music and Nationalism: A Study of English Opera*, Macmillan, London, 1911.

¹⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.12.1911.

²⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

²¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.1.1912.

I hope we may perhaps meet sometime soon in Oxford, since I could easily motor-bike from Ch[adlington].²²

It is very good of you to suggest that I should spend a week-end with you: I should love to do so, and as I shall probably be at Watford during July, it will make it much easier to come over to Eton from there, since it is only 20 miles from Watford to Eton.²³

I hope you will be able to come to Wales in September: do try and arrange to if you possibly can. Delius and his wife are coming sometime in September, though exactly when I do not know yet.²⁴

The time you suggest for your visit will do splendidly: I am so glad you can definitely come...May I come over and see you some afternoon? Eton is only 25 miles from here by road, and I could ride over in little more than an hour.²⁵

By 1912 Warlock had made a number of piano arrangements of Delius's orchestral works, initially at the suggestion of the composer himself. Taylor must have requested Warlock to make a similar arrangement of one of own his pieces for in October 1912 Warlock writes from Birmingham as follows:

I'm afraid I have not yet done your 5/4 movement for piano duet, but I will do so as soon as I can.²⁶

The task was completed a few weeks later and Warlock wrote rather uncertainly from Newbold Pacey vicarage about his efforts. This passage gives us some idea of the problems he had to deal with when making these transcriptions:

I am sending back your MS song, with many thanks, also a piano duet arrangement of your 5/4 piece. I have managed to get all the notes in, but I am afraid I have not made it very playable: there is a great deal of crossing of hands, but I have preferred to keep the parts and tunes distinct by giving them to one hand, even if it has to jump round too much, rather than split up the themes over the four hands. I don't know whether this is the right way: I should be very grateful if you would point out the chief mistakes in my arrangements. The point I can't quite settle in my mind is, whether to get all the notes in at the expense of the playableness on the piano, or whether to sacrifice some of the music for the sake of making the arrangement pianistic.²⁷

²² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.2.1912.

²³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.5.1912.

²⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.5.1912.

²⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.6.1912.

²⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 2.10.1912.

²⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 28.10.1912.

The work which Warlock arranged was evidently the first of *Three Small Pieces* for full orchestra which Taylor had composed some time earlier but which were never published, the movement in question being *Prelude a la Russe*. Attached to the copy of Warlock's transcription of the slow movement of Bernard van Dieren's Fourth Quartet²⁸ is a sad little note in Taylor's handwriting: "Out of dozens - this is the only score in 'Warlock's' hand that I still possess. Where are all the rest, including a four-hand arrangement of my Prelude Russe that he made?"²⁹

Colin Taylor was not only a fine musician, he was also extremely well read and from time to time in their correspondence the two men recommend or talk enthusiastically about books or poems they had been reading. Here is Warlock acknowledging the receipt of a parcel of books by G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936).³⁰ The book, *Heretics*,³¹ is one of social criticism and is given a particular focus by Chesterton's strong pro-Boer feelings during the recent South African war:

I am more than usually wicked in writing only at this late hour to thank you for the delightful parcel of G.K.C. which I found awaiting me on my return from Birmingham last Friday. I have begun "Heretics" and like it immensely.³²

He wrote again about these same Chesterton books in October 1912 from Newbold Pacey vicarage where he was busy preparing for the Oxford entrance examination. It is interesting to read the eighteen-year-old's highly perceptive comments:

I am getting through the Chesterton books slowly, though I have not overmuch time for reading, with so much to do in the way of music. I enjoy them immensely, though I do not agree with all that he says: he seems rather inclined to say startling and clever-sounding things, which, upon closer examination, contain only a smattering of truth. I think he is rather unfair to poor old G.B.S.!³³ But he is a splendid person to read: a chapter

²⁸ For two violins, viola and double-bass, 1923.

²⁹ Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection.

³⁰ English novelist and author.

³¹ Chesterton, *Heretics*, John Lane, London, 1905.

³² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.10.1912. Another unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.11.1912, gives further details of one of the Chesterton novels included in this parcel: "I am reading 'The Napoleon of Notting Hill' with immense delight!"; (John Lane, London, 1904.)

³³ George Bernard Shaw, 1856-1950, Irish-born dramatist and critic.

of him bucks one up for the day! I am so very grateful to you for introducing me to his works.³⁴

He still relied heavily on Taylor for musical advice and assistance as a further extract from this letter illustrates:

I am practising some piano pieces - Balfour Gardiner's "Noel"³⁵ which I like hugely, and MacDowell's³⁶ "New England Idylls".³⁷ Can you recommend me some really good modern pieces that would be within my reach? I should very much like to learn some Debussy, but I have no idea as to which of his p.f. pieces are easy enough.³⁸

It was in this same letter that a rather anxious Warlock enlisted Taylor's aid in collecting together enough material and facts to reply to a correspondent who had questioned aspects of Warlock's first musical article, "Arnold Schönberg", which had appeared in *The Musical Standard* of 21.9.1912. This incident is discussed more fully in chapter 10. Needless to say, Taylor immediately came to his rescue:

Thousands of thanks for your letter and definitions of Key, etc: I feel so guilty for having given you the trouble of copying out so much: it was most helpful to me.³⁹

In the meantime they continued to see each other when time permitted, meeting in London for concerts⁴⁰ when Warlock could manage to get away:

Thank you so much for your splendid letter of last week, and also for your invitation for December 7th and 8th: I shall love to come. We must meet at Queen's Hall in the afternoon, and if the Windsor and Eton Madrigal Co finally screws up their courage to sing the "Midsummer Song",⁴¹ we must get Delius to come down to Eton on the Monday (9th).⁴²

³⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 28.10.1912.

³⁵ "A slightly jaunty work chiefly in 6/8 time concluding with a richly harmonised statement of 'Good King Wenceslas'". Lloyd, S., *Balfour Gardiner*, Forsyth Brothers, London, 1908.

³⁶ Edward MacDowell, 1861-1908, American composer and pianist.

³⁷ Op.62 (1902).

³⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 28.10.1912.

³⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.11.1912.

⁴⁰ For example Warlock wrote to Viva Smith: "On Friday 14 I am going to a big concert of the works of Josef Holbrooke with Colin Taylor and spending the week-end with him at Eton". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 2.3.1913, London, BL, ADD MS 57960.

⁴¹ Unaccompanied part-song by Delius, 1908.

⁴² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.11.1912.

The concert which they intended to hear together, was a performance of Delius' *Mass of Life*,⁴³ which, in fact, never materialized. There is also no further reference to the proposed performance of Delius's *Midsummer Song* in Windsor.

More about Warlock's tastes in literature are revealed when he writes from Didbrook about some of the books he had recently been reading:

I was immensely impressed by reading Thomas Hardy⁴⁴ for the first time last month - "Jude, the obscure"⁴⁵ - quite a wonderful book, most beautifully written. I have also discovered for the first time what to my mind is an almost perfect book - Gissing's⁴⁶ "Ryecroft Papers"⁴⁷ - a kind of diary, autobiographical and reflective. It is perfectly charming.⁴⁸

From time to time these letters give us some insight into Warlock's views on religion and on Christianity in particular. Here is a quotation from a letter from Didbrook written in response to a comment Taylor made about the Rev. H.B. Allen,⁴⁹ the clergyman with whom he was studying at that time. Particularly astute is his likening of the teaching of religious doctrines to the teaching of the rules of harmony and counterpoint :

The P[riest] is most certainly not a hypocrite as you suppose: I must have given you a totally wrong impression.

He does all that he is paid to do, and does it well: after all, to be a parson is a profession - a means of earning one's living - tho' it would be to you and me so repugnant a method that we would doubtless, sooner starve!

It is certainly no worse for an enlightened man to preach Christianity to people incapable of thinking for themselves - for anyone who thinks can see through it - than for an enlightened and inspired composer to earn his bread by teaching obsolete and useless laws of so-called "Harmony and Counterpoint" to people who have no other musical ideas! Besides which, the P. believes that some sort of religion [sic], no matter how stupid and preposterous it's [sic] dogmas, is necessary for some of the lower classes and

⁴³ 1904-5.

⁴⁴ 1840-1928, English novelist and poet.

⁴⁵ Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., London, 1895.

⁴⁶ George Robert Gissing, 1857-1903, English novelist.

⁴⁷ Gissing, *The Private Papers of Henry Rycroft*, Archibald Constable & Co., Westminster, 1903.

⁴⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1913.

⁴⁹ Warlock described Allen as "very exceptional: he wears a soft collar and tie, a green coat, riding breeches and brown gaiters on weekdays...and apparently has no beliefs or dogmas whatever! - is most amusing, and hates all forms of athleticism". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1913.

criminals: Christianity represses people's will and instincts: if they have weak minds, it terrorises them into accepting it's [sic] tenets: it denies Life and this prevents certain low and desirable types from living their lives to the full. This view the Priest shares with Nietzsche,⁵⁰ and it seems to be fairly sound, though personally I could not bring myself to such a degradation as to pretend - even for a moment - to ally myself with "Jaggers Chruggers"⁵¹ - though, if one holds the P's views, to do so repulsive an action is undoubtedly a piece of supreme self-sacrifice - which carries in it's [sic] train a convenient emolument - verily a Christian equation!⁵²

A few months later Warlock was writing warmly again about this same clergyman telling Taylor that he had written to his former housemaster at Eton, Hubert Brinton,⁵³ recommending Allen as a tutor:

I have also corresponded with Brinton lately, about my beloved Priest, to whom Br. is going to send a pupil.

I wrote a most tremendous "puff" letter about this place (in which the Priest collaborated!!), which I hope will have the desired effect. However, it would be impossible to exaggerate any detail: I have had the time of my life here, and am extremely sorry to be going away: it is, to my mind, the most perfect place of its kind that could be found, in every respect. If you come across anyone at Eton on the look out for a coach for any exam whatever, do recommend the Priest: and you will assuredly be blessed by the anyone.⁵⁴

As Warlock's thoughts moved more and more towards a career in music he wrote to Taylor for guidance, in this case about the advisability of taking a musical degree at Oxford:

Delius advises me to work for a musical degree at Oxford; he thinks it would be a great help.

Is it frightfully difficult? How long do you think it would take me to mug up all the stuff one has to do? I should like to begin on Harmony, Counterpoint, etc. at once. Can you recommend me the best book to begin with by myself? I could get through quite a good deal here before going up to Oxford, and when once there I could, of course, work with a master. If I work for a musical degree, I shall only take pass mods, so that I shall be able to devote most of my time to musical work. I think this is a good idea.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche, 1844-1900, German philosopher.

⁵¹ Eton schoolboy slang for Jesus Christ.

⁵² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.2.1913.

⁵³ ? -1940, M.A. (New College, Oxford), a classics master at Eton, 1887-1924, housemaster of Warre House, 1904-24.

⁵⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1913.

⁵⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.4.1913.

Taylor pencilled on the envelope of this next letter a note to the effect that this was the first time Warlock had addressed him as "Dear Colin" rather than what, up to now, had been the more formal "Dear Mr. Taylor". This letter well illustrates the warm and understanding friendship which had developed between the two men:

While out for a long ramble over the Cotswolds last week, I came upon a perfectly delightful little place which struck me as being exactly what you were looking for some time ago - namely, a quiet and absolutely remote retreat where you could come during holidays and work unmolested to your heart's content.

...the name of the place is Pinnock, and it is situated high up on the Cotswolds...the surrounding country is glorious, with quite wonderful views all round, over the Malvern hills, Western Cotswolds and, in the far distance, the mountains of South Wales...There is a piano in the village - not a very brilliant thing, but quite the equivalent to many in the music-schools at Eton - which you could hire at a low rate, and have carted up without very much difficulty, if you would be wanting a piano.

However, you would not find a quieter or more reposeful spot, and I am sure you would love the country.

Let me know if you think this would suit your requirements at any time, and I will find out further particulars....⁵⁶

At this point Warlock begins writing about a new passion which has come into his life: a motor-cycle, "Racing Indian":

...I have been frightfully lazy over music lately! Little or no harmony or counterpoint has been done - but just at present I am fearfully excited over getting a new and much more powerful motor bike, and side car: I have sold the old one, and hope to have the new machine next week.

I shall certainly avail myself of your kind invitation for a week-end at Eton - sometime in June or July, if convenient to you - motor-biking down this time.

Owing to problems with the motor bike this particular visit had to be postponed. Here is Warlock telling of the saga with just the slightest touch of humorous, tongue-in-cheek, self-pity, from Didbrook:

Weep for the miserable motorist, whose beast is grievously sick! My wretched machine has, after giving incessant trouble, broken down so completely this time that I fear it will not be possible for me to come down to Eton (or anywhere else, for that matter) this month. I am horribly

⁵⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 11.5.1913.

enraged at this, in addition to my other grievances against the Premier Motor Co. but I fear there is nothing to be done but to "wait and see" what they can do for me in the way of repairs.

The trouble is with the gears: first of all, I have had the gear box examined by a garage in Cheltenham: I am deprived of the machine for ten days, and when at last I am informed that repairs have been effected, I find the last state of the machine worse than the first, after a mile or so! Then another sentence is passed - fourteen days this time: I am done out of "Boris Godounov" by false promises from the garage; after much delay I set out for London, with a passenger,⁵⁷ and just succeed in getting there: the return journey, however, is impossible, and the aid of the G.W.R.⁵⁸ has, ignominiously enough, to be invoked, the machine remaining at the Premier works in London. After ten days, I am informed that the repairs have been done satisfactorily: I travel to London purposely to fetch this horrible machine, and am made to pay cash for the repairs before being allowed to remove it from the works: it runs 50 miles, and then promptly lets me down (at Bicester) with the same old trouble.

I take it to a garage, where a mechanic calmly informs me that I have a quite rotten machine (which is really a lie, except as regards the gears), but patches up matters well enough for me just to be able to struggle home. Now, it won't go a yard! I can do nothing, and seemingly, the makers of the beast can no more: things are at a deadlock, though as you may imagine, an animated correspondence [sic] is on hand between me and the Premier Co....

...I return home (if I can pay my train-fare!) in about ten days: you must come in September if you possibly can: the bike will be alright then. I am frightfully disappointed at being done out of my week-end with you, but there is nothing to be done, I fear.⁵⁹

In Warlock's next letter from Didbrook there is a reference to two of Taylor's own compositions, a setting for four-part unaccompanied male-voice choir of Ben Jonson's poem, *So sweet is shee*, and *Valse Caprice*, a work which had evidently just been "cut" for the pianola but which does not appear to have survived among Taylor's works:

I am sorry the pot is not boiling so successfully lately, but I am most anxious to see your new part song: I loved it when you played it to me. It's splendid getting your *Valse Caprice* "cut" so soon: I will certainly buy a roll - when the motorbike is safely put away for the winter! Till then, I can't promise to buy anything whatever!⁶⁰

The "new part song" referred to above (*So sweet is shee*) was published by Curwen in 1913 and, in fact, has the dedication "For Philip Heseltine" printed at the top of the

⁵⁷ Viva Smith.

⁵⁸ Great Western Railway.

⁵⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1913.

⁶⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1913.

Nº 50527.

CURWEN'S EDITION

For Philip Heseltine.

SO SWEET IS SHEE.

Part-Song for Male Voices.

BEN JONSON.

COLIN TAYLOR.

Moderato. $\text{♩} = \text{about } 60. (\text{Rubato}).$

TENORS.

I Have you seen but a whyte lil - lie

II Have you seen but a whyte lil - lie

***BASSES.**

I Have you seen but a whyte lil - lie

II Have you seen but a whyte lil - lie

PIANO
(for practice only.)

Moderato. $\text{♩} = \text{about } 60. (\text{Rubato}).$

pp grow Before rude hands had touched it? Have you

pp grow Before rude hands had touched it? Have you

pp grow Before rude hands had touched it? Have you

pp grow Before rude hands had touched it? Have you

pp grow Before rude hands had touched it? Have you

CURWEN

Copyright, 1913, by J. Curwen & Sons Ltd.
London: J. Curwen & Sons Ltd., 24 Berners St., W.

11. Colin Taylor's part-song, *So Sweet is Shee*, (1913)
with its dedication to Philip Heseltine

first page.⁶¹ This was something which delighted Warlock immensely when he received a copy a short while later:

Thank you a thousand times for your song and the dedication thereof: I think it is quite delightful, and would certainly be most effective with the proper voice colour. I will send a copy to Delius: I am sure it would please him greatly.⁶²

Because so little of Taylor's side of the correspondence has survived it is difficult to comment on any interaction of ideas between the two men. Mostly it is necessary to reconstruct or guess what Taylor had written. There is, however, a reply from Taylor to Warlock's letter of 25.7.1913 which gives some small idea of the sensitive and understanding way in which the older man responded to his former pupil's views. Warlock had written about some of his very personal, often seemingly unaccountable, reactions to certain pieces of music:

I more than share your enthusiasm for Stravinsky, though I have not been lucky enough to hear any of his work except "L'Oiseau de Feu", which, to my mind, is one of the three or four most perfect musical works I have ever heard. It is one of those things that stand out far and away above everything else: it is, as you may say, the real thing, which I seldom feel about any music.

It is interesting, to me, to consider, on looking back, how often I have felt this: sometimes it has been in quite small things, like Quilter's "O mistress mine",⁶³ which, for me, is one of the most perfect lyrics in the world, or Chopin's G flat Etude (Op. 25, No 9)...It is curious how certain works do make this marvellous appeal to one, every now and then: the Stravinsky ballet certainly did, to me, very strongly indeed.⁶⁴

Taylor replied from Eton apropos these remarks in late July 1913 agreeing with and amplifying, in a most articulate way, what Warlock had been trying to express:

I know exactly what you mean about the very strong (& sometimes unexpected) appeal certain compositions make on one - I feel it also.

Mood, to my mind, must have a good deal to do with it in many cases - it is in the same sort of frame of mind that produces an unexpected thrill of pleasure from quite small things in nature - a fine & grand view under beautiful atmospheric conditions usually "gets one" but I have felt even

⁶¹ Curwen Edition no.50527.

⁶² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1913.

⁶³ 1905.

⁶⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1913.

stronger & more spontaneous emotions from a shadow on the grass. It is as if a veil was drawn from the eye. & the real beauty of a thing was shown for the first time - the unseeing eye suddenly sees -⁶⁵

One of Warlock's more scathing outbursts against Christianity appears in a letter written to Taylor from Wales at the end of July 1913. He is here writing about the Russian composer, Mily Balakirev (1837-1910),⁶⁶ in what seems to be very like an over-reaction to too much schoolboy religion:

It was a thousand pities that he became religious [sic] in his old age, and gave up composing for Christian mysticism - nay, more than a thousand pities: the author of Christianity deserves to be re-crucified for being responsible for such a thing. Is there anything evil in the world that cannot be traced back to a Christian origin [sic] - or rather, to the things that were themselves the origins [sic] of the Christian attitude and outlook on life? I seriously doubt it. Nietzsche has a good deal to say on the subject of the effect of Christianity on Art. One might derive a good deal of interest by investigating cases like, that of poor Balakirev, of artists' creative faculties becoming destroyed by Christian influences.

I heard of a similar case the other day, in connection with an artist who used to illustrate books a great deal - F.L. Griggs:⁶⁷ I am told that religious [sic] mania has absolutely ruined his art. Instances could doubtless be multiplied.⁶⁸

In the letter of 25.7.1913 mentioned above Warlock had referred to Taylor's *Valse Caprice* being produced as a pianola roll. From the following reference in another letter from Didbrook it would appear that the roll had not yet been cut and that Taylor had asked Warlock to produce some kind of arrangement. There is also an ominous reference to a row with his mother, one of many which were to ensue during the following year:

By all means send me your "Valse Caprice": it will amuse me to arrange it for 65-note Pianola. By the way, can you look up in Grove, or otherwise discover exactly what is the 1st and what the 65th note of the apparatus, as I have forgotten, and it might be as well to be certain before beginning the job! I have just finished a piano duet arrangement of the "Dance Rhapsody"⁶⁹ ...I am very anxious to play with you à quatre mains, the "Dance Rhapsody" and "In a Summer Garden":⁷⁰ do let me know if you ever

⁶⁵ Unpublished letter from Taylor to Warlock, 27.7.1913, London, BL, Add. MS 57964.

⁶⁶ Russian composer.

⁶⁷ Frederick Landseer Maur Griggs, 1876-1938, English artist.

⁶⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1913.

⁶⁹ Delius.

⁷⁰ Delius.

come to Oxford nowadays, and let us arrange a meeting. I go up to Ch.[rist] Ch.[urch] on Friday next: during term I fear a week-end would be imposs, but I should love to come and see you in December, if I may: but I trust we shall meet ere then.

I hope you have been having a jolly time all this lovely September: I have scarcely been home at all, owing to an immense and final row with my mamma, and have had a splendid time - as a result, I may say! Some time I shall inflict upon you details of this exceedingly funny storm in the family teacup, but the tale is too long for a letter....

...More anon: send along the "Valse Caprice" and I shall be delighted to make the arrangement of it.⁷¹

As early as December, 1911 Warlock had written to Taylor expressing his apprehensions about one of the annual family Christmas house-parties with his Uncle Evelyn at his home, The Goldings, in Great Warley in Essex:

I shall only be in London two days before Christmas, when I shall be more than fully occupied in buying Christmas presents for all my herds of relations! I have, unfortunately, to spend Christmas with an uncle who always has an enormous house party of relations, which I am sorry to say I quite fail to appreciate, especially when I can only spend a short time in England at all. However, I shall be able to go home after four days of it, but it is a nuisance.⁷²

At Christmas 1913 Warlock managed somehow to escape this dreaded annual get-together. Perhaps this was partly the result of the "immense" row with his mother which now seemed to be taking on significant proportions in her retaliation by hiding the pianola from him. Here is what he wrote to Taylor who had obviously offered him accommodation during this period. The work, *Your heart*, although not listed amongst Taylor's compositions, was almost certainly composed by him. The song, *Love's Ecstasy*, humorously referred to at the end of the letter, is one of Taylor's "pot-boilers" which appeared under the pseudonym, Cecil Trent. A copy of this song in Warlock's handwriting exists in the British Library.⁷³ Even at this early stage Warlock's typical generosity was manifesting itself in his efforts to interest Chappell's in publishing Taylor's music:

⁷¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.10.1913.

⁷² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

⁷³ London, BL, Add. MS 57966.



12. *The Goldings*, Evelyn Heseltine's home in Essex
(photographed by the author)

You are more than kind and generous to me - far more than my puny self deserves: it was good of you to think of letting me come to your rooms in Eton: I thank you a thousand times for your kind thought. Also for "The Hills of Dream",⁷⁴ which arrived this morning. I have had a peaceful, if somewhat solitary week, since my people have been away in Essex, and though I had to spend Christmas day with an aunt in Herefordshire,⁷⁵ I have had quite a quiet, restful time....

...When I arrived here the week before last, I found that the pianola had vanished!! I have asked no questions, since it was quite obviously sold in order to spite me; it is a great loss to me, since, without either that or a mo-bike, there is absolutely nothing whatever to do here in the winter....

...I made a copy of "Your heart" etc, and sent it to Chappell, but I have received no answer as yet. By the way, there is a song called "Love's Ecstasy" by Felix Swinstead:⁷⁶ you will have to think of some other glorious motto for it: how about "Love's increasing ecstasy"!!!

Good bye now for the present, and thank you again and again for your kindness and sympathy which has helped me more than I can say.⁷⁷

Warlock's mother had not, in fact, sold the pianola. The following year he wrote to Viva Smith explaining what had actually happened:

How many times have I not longed for the old pianola...Picture, then, the extremity of my rage and disgust, when I discovered, yesterday, that it has been here for the last twelve months, covered with sacking and stowed away in the attic!!!! Not a word had ever been spoken on the subject, and the whereabouts of the thing leaked out quite by chance: my mother seemed to think it a great joke that I had never discovered it before!! Of course, the universal silence on the subject only supports my original supposition that it was removed as the result of the row of last August: hence my policy of asking no questions and avoiding the sickening excuses which I knew would be forthcoming! I told my mother fairly forcibly what I thought of her little scheme, whereat she became very angry, saying that my "warped mind" was always on the look out for sinister motives, that I was unjust to her, that there had been no deception or concealment (!!), that the pianola had been removed because it was spoiling the piano (!!!!) (an easily-proved lie, this!), took up too much room, made too much noise, etc. etc. ad nauseam!

My next move, of course, will be to endeavour to secure the thing for my own use in London: but they'll make a fuss even about that, dogs in the manger that they are! Unmusical beasts....⁷⁸

⁷⁴ A book of poems by Fiona Macleod. See footnote 15.

⁷⁵ Whitney-on-Wye.

⁷⁶ 1880-1959, English pianist, teacher and composer.

⁷⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 29.12.1913.

⁷⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 24.8.1914, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

Work. Ann.

Love Ecstasy

Slow.

with great tenderness

When your hand lies in
my hand, when your eyes look to mine —
differ — you are in I understand the

very sensitive

lover

all life — is in mine — when your hand lies in my hand, when

more sensitively

all life — is in mine — when your hand lies in my hand, when

more sensitively

more sensitively

13. MS of Colin Taylor's song, *Love Ecstasy*, in Peter Warlock's handwriting.
(British Library, London, Add MS 57966)

The motor-cycle saga continued into 1914 and, as Warlock's writings about it add such a down-to-earth quality to the letters, here are his further comments in another letter from the family home in Wales:

I have heard from a man in Essex, who wants to buy my motor bike, but I...don't know whether my machine is in order yet! By the way, I left the tools belonging to the machine in sundry pockets of various garments which are still encumbering your front hall! I have told Edgar to come round to you for them. The bike is to be sent away on appro, as soon as possible. There is a kind of cape which I left at your place, - it doesn't belong to me, and the owner is clamouring for its return...I am sorry to trouble you like this: it is a great shame that your pegs have been suffering under my motor garments for so long, but do you mind if they wait somewhere a little longer, since I can come over for them sometime, from Oxford? I don't mind, even if you have to store them in the coalhole....⁷⁹

Warlock's first letter written to Taylor from Oxford is particularly interesting for a number of reasons: it shows first how anxious he had become at the prospect of remaining there and, secondly, how his relations with his mother had deteriorated even further. Finally it provides us with the details of a number of books that he had read, or wanted to read, dealing with various aspects of sex, a subject in which he suddenly began to show an enormous amount of interest.⁸⁰ As Nichols wrote in his contribution to Gray's memoir:

He had read Havelock Ellis,⁸¹ Carpenter⁸² and Otto Weininger⁸³ - of whom he had then a considerable opinion, later abandoned - and we discussed 'sex' now common...but in those days rare. Carpenter received more consideration than I thought (and still think) he deserved. From Carpenter we turned to Walt Whitman,⁸⁴ whose rhapsodies upon sexual love and nature delighted us.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.1.1914.

⁸⁰ Sometime late in 1913 Warlock must have written a frank letter to Delius on the subject of his relationship with Viva Smith. Amongst other things in his long reply, 2.1.1914, quoted in Carley, *op. cit.*, pp.117-120, Delius gave his views about birth-control and Karezza (an Arabian method of prolonging the act of sexual intercourse) adding this comment on other aspects of sex: "There are many books on the subject...Kraft Ebing [sic] & Havelock Ellis...." This letter may have resulted in Warlock's recommending various books on sex to Taylor when he wrote to him later that same month, 23.1.1914.

⁸¹ 1859-1939, English physician, essayist, writer on human sexual behaviour.

⁸² Edward Carpenter, 1844-1929, English social reformer.

⁸³ 1880-1903, Austrian writer.

⁸⁴ 1819-92, American poet.

⁸⁵ Gray, *op. cit.*, p.67.

Warlock wrote to Taylor thus:

I was more than grateful for your kind, sympathetic letter: forgive me for not writing to you before. I am still in a hopelessly unsatisfactory state, and can scarcely explain things clearly and logically to myself, much less put them on paper. I have tried to write you an explanation, but I cannot write it, because I am so fearfully confused myself.

I thought that I was not coming back here at all, and practically determined to go straight away and look for a job of some sort, after this last row with my mother: however, at the last moment, a temporary lull occurred, though I do not intend to remain after this term, if I can help it. I will explain things more clearly when I see you, but I simply can't write them down....

...Do you know, you were absolutely right when you told me never to go back to her on any condition whatever⁸⁶...she wrote to me about a fortnight ago, and though nothing has happened, it's worse than ever with me....the whole thing becomes more and more complex..but details will only weary you, and I don't think I could possibly write them down.. Thank you so much for sending the clothes: the sale of the bike was disastrous.

About the books, try

Love's Coming of Age by Edward Carpenter⁸⁷ 3/6

The Intermediate Sex⁸⁸ by Edward Carpenter 3/6

Man and Woman by Havelock Ellis⁸⁹ 4/6

(There is also a larger work in 3 vols. "Studies in the Psychology of Sex" (30/s) but it is out of print and I believe very hard to get).

Karezza⁹⁰ by A.B. Stockham⁹¹

An American book (obtainable, I think, from the Times library) contains a remarkable theory, but it is so badly written so the thing becomes ludicrous

Sex and Character by Otto Weininger⁹²
(10/s) English German 6/6

I have not read this, but it is considered a very good work. Weininger committed suicide at the age of 23, about 6 years ago.

Love and Lovers by Orme Balfour (3/6)

⁸⁶ A reference to Viva Smith. See letter from Delius to Warlock (2.1.1914) quoted in chapter 5.

⁸⁷ Carpenter, *Love's Coming-of-Age: A Series of Papers on the Relation of the Sexes*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1896.

⁸⁸ Carpenter, *The Intermediate Sex: A Study of Some Transitional Types of Men and Women*, Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1908.

⁸⁹ Ellis, Havelock, *Man and Woman: A Study of Human Secondary Sexual Characteristics*, Walter Scott Publishing Co., London, 1904.

⁹⁰ Stockham, A.B., *Karezza: Ethics of Marriage*, Alice B. Stockham & Co., Chicago, 1896.

⁹¹ Alice Bunker Stockham, 1833-1912, American writer.

⁹² Weininger, *Sex and Character*: Authorised translation from the Sixth German Edition, Heinemann, London, no date.

(not scientific, but contains several remarkable character studies from the sexual point of view, and is wonderfully sanely written)

The great authority on Sexual Inversion is Krafft-Ebbing:⁹³ his work is not yet translated into English, I believe.

Of course, the subject is an immense one. and I know very little about it, but all the above books are intensely interesting. Forgive this incoherent letter, but I simply cannot write any more at present.⁹⁴

At the beginning of February 1914 Warlock wrote once again to Taylor on a wide variety of subjects. First of all about one of Taylor's own compositions, presumably *Your heart*, referred to in the letter above (29.12.1913). He then discusses some of Bartók's piano music, recommending possible teaching material, asks Taylor's advice about some suitable modern choral works to suggest to Balfour Gardiner and finally tells of his latest plans for the future. The letter ends with the now almost obligatory reference to the ailing motor-cycle:

I hope your MS arrived in time: I sent it off as soon as I received your card. Chappell's acknowledged the copy of it which I sent them six weeks ago, but I have heard nothing further from them on the subject...

...I notice from the list of his [Bartók] piano works two sets of easy pieces, without octaves, which might be useful to you for teaching purposes: the first set is merely called "10 leichte Klavierstücke"...the second is "Gyermekeknek".

Gardiner wants some works for chorus and orchestra for the Oriana concerts next year: he cannot think of any good modern works...I can think of nothing: it is surprising how few choral works one has heard, when one comes to think about it, though, offhand, one would say there were hundreds to choose from. Can you suggest anything?

With regard to my own affairs, things have, during the last week, so happened as to exceed my wildest hopes, - I am perfectly happy - more happy, in every way...I shall probably leave here this term, and go into an office in London, where there seem great possibilities of making money - though this is not quite settled yet, but my step-father highly approves and is doing all he can for me in this direction. Meanwhile I hope to get odd jobs in the music line: Gardiner has promised me a letter of introduction to Ernest Newman, who he thinks will be able to help me a great deal, and, in any case, will give me very sound advice....

With any luck I shall have my new mo-bike in about ten days, so I hope I shall be able to come over and see you sometime this term.⁹⁵

⁹³ Richard Krafft-Ebing, 1840-1902, German neuropsychiatrist, best known for his work on psychopathology.

⁹⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 23.1.1914.

⁹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1914.

Warlock eventually managed to borrow a motor-cycle and duly visited Taylor. He wrote to Viva Smith about the visit:

No mo-bike of my own as yet - but I borrowed the Indian on Sunday for a very necessary visit to Colin, at Eton...I spent a very pleasant hour with CT, and played him my new songs, which pleased him and which he has promised to hawk round to singers and other musicians...He was in a very genial mood and was also most encouraging about the songs - this pleased me greatly, being unexpected, since his views on song-writers and mine are widely divergent! He and Delius and I are all going to Wales together in July - either on mo-bikes or push bikes.⁹⁶

It is rather ironic that Warlock should have expressed a desire to be introduced to the music critic, Ernest Newman, for the two men were to clash in later years. Copley quotes part of a letter which Newman wrote to Warlock after the latter had attacked him in the columns of the *Observer* for not listening to the works of modern unknown composers, van Dieren and Sorabji⁹⁷ in particular:

The truth is, my dear Heseltine, that you are getting very egoistic, very intolerant, and very unreasonable.⁹⁸

In January 1914 Warlock had written to Taylor about a number of books on the topic of sex. The following month he wrote from Oxford in greater detail about the works of Havelock Ellis:

I have made enquiries about Havelock Ellis' big work, "Studies in the Psychology of Sex"⁹⁹ - forbidden fruit in the British Museum Library! and have discovered that it is published in America, in 6 volumes at 2 dollars each, under the following titles:

- (1) The Evolution of Modesty, etc.
- (2) Sexual Inversion
- (3) Analysis of the Sexual Impulse
- (4) Sexual Selection in Man
- (5) Erotic Symbolism
- (6) Sex in relation to Society

⁹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 20.5.1914, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

⁹⁷ The Newman-Sorabji controversy is discussed in an unsigned article, "Ille Reporter", in *The Sackbut*, June 1920, v.1, no.2, pp.53-56.

⁹⁸ Copley, *The Music of Peter Warlock: A Critical Survey*, Dobson, London, 1979, p.16.

⁹⁹ Ellis, Havelock, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, F.A. Davis, Philadelphia, 1910.

The first edition came out between 1897 and 1906: vols 3 and 6 have been enlarged and reissued in 1910 and 1913 respectively. I have asked Blackwells to advertise, both in England and America, for second hand copies, but if these are not to be had, I think I shall get the lot new, since I understand that this is the most authoritative and exhaustive work that has ever been written on this most fascinating subject.¹⁰⁰

Referring to these volumes Taylor has written the following comments at the bottom of page 2 of the typescript copy of this letter in the Colin Taylor Collection:

"I tried to get him a copy in New York some 5 years later, but they would only sell to the medical profession!"¹⁰¹

In the same letter Warlock ends with two paragraphs about poetry: first of all he discusses some new poetry by Lascelles Abercrombie (1881-1938),¹⁰² which had appeared in a volume of 1912 entitled, *Emblems of Love*.¹⁰³ He then gently jokes about the sentimental song, *Love's Ecstasy*, for which Taylor himself had written the words. This would explain Warlock's humorous comment "who are we to shout for at the end?":

I came across some quite wonderful poetry last week - by Lascelles Abercrombie, "Emblems of Love" (published by John Lane): some of it is perfectly beautiful, in a very striking and individual way.

I'm afraid I don't know any good potboiling words, but surely the poetic genius that rose to the heights of "Love's Ecstasy" can inspire itself again, with its own music! Mind you let me know when "Love's Ecstasy" is performed in public - (by the way, that reads very oddly, doesn't it?!): who are we to shout for at the end?

During his unhappy year at Oxford Warlock wrote in desperation to a number of his friends, including Delius, Balfour Gardiner and Taylor, asking them for advice as to what he should do with his life. Here is an extract from his letter to Taylor from Grez-sur-Loing where he was staying with Delius:

I am just writing you a few lines to ask you if you approve of my plans, and how you would suggest entering upon them. I am certain that unless I myself make some decided move, nothing will ever be done: I believe the real reason why my people want me to stay at Oxford is because it saves

¹⁰⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 11.2.1914.

¹⁰¹ Cape Town, UCT Library, BC 76 C1.2.32.

¹⁰² English poet and critic.

¹⁰³ Abercrombie, *Emblems of Love*, John Lane, London, 1912.

them the trouble of thinking out anything further for me to do. For myself, as you know, I simply cannot stand Oxford: it has an enervating, depressing influence on me and I am quite sure that I shall never do anything whatever until I can get away from the place....¹⁰⁴

Warlock then outlines a few alternatives: Forsyth felt that "an Oxford degree was of great use for a critic or anyone bent upon journalism of any kind: do you really think this is so? " Delius and Balfour Gardiner had evidently come out very strongly against Oxford, regarding it as "complete stagnation". Delius had even suggested that Warlock might study accompanying with a view to being able to coach opera singers. Warlock goes on to say:

Now what I propose to do is simply to tell my people that I am not going back to Oxford...I shall then propose that I go to London and seriously study music - not merely theoretically, but practically also, (i.e. so that I have time to go to concerts and study all kinds of music by myself, at the piano, so as to become thoroughly acquainted with all sorts of music, ancient and modern, which, as Newman says, is the only real equipment for a critic.[)] As regards the details of this scheme, I should be immensely grateful if you would tell me, more or less, how to set about doing so - i.e. whom to go to, in London, etc. I should like, if possible, to go to someone like Vaughan Williams, rather than any of the real academics - though he is academic enough, in his compositions at any rate - but as I know nothing whatever about this part of the business, it would be of the greatest possible help if you would tell me some of the details of it - what to study and where to study it... Please forgive all this tedious stuff about myself: I dislike inflicting it upon you, but as I am due back at Oxford on April 19th, I want to find out these things soon, so that when I see my mother, as I propose to do about four days before Oxford begins again, I can lay the matter quite plainly before her.

There are no recorded details of this confrontation between mother and son but Warlock managed to delay his return to Oxford after Easter by misleading his mother as to the exact date of the start of the new term.¹⁰⁵ He was thus able to spend a few extra days at Didbrook presumably with Viva Smith.

In August that year Warlock was alone and lonely at the family home in Wales and tried to persuade Taylor to come and spend a few days with him later that month:

¹⁰⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.4.1914.

¹⁰⁵ "I have not returned to Oxford after all!...the reason is simple and consists solely of the fact that I made a mistake as regards dates...." Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 21.4.1914, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

Is there any chance of your coming here for a few days this month? I should be so overjoyed if you could spare the time to come - if you don't think you'd be bored quite stiff.

I have been wandering about the country on a motor-bike, staying a few days at Didbrook, and a short while on the Herefordshire border of Wales - a glorious district. But it is lonely by oneself....¹⁰⁶

But Taylor was unable to join him for war broke out a short while later and Taylor enlisted in the Army. On hearing the news, Warlock immediately wrote to him from Cefn Bryntalch. It is interesting to note that in this letter Warlock shows none of the pacifist views which seem to have manifested themselves a short while later.¹⁰⁷ He even states that if it had not been for his medical unfitness he too might have followed Taylor's example, asking if he could perhaps suggest any non-combatant work:

I received your post-card yesterday: it filled me with surprise, but also with admiration, since you will feel the "bloodiness" of it all more than most! It is splendid of you!...I should doubtless have followed your example, but, I fear, I should have done so from far baser motives than those which have prompted you to join!...I wish I could find some means (of a non-military kind) of doing what little I am capable of to relieve the appalling distress and suffering of all kinds that this frightful war will entail.¹⁰⁸ Do you know of any position one could get? I would gladly do anything in my power, in this direction.¹⁰⁹

Taylor's War diaries form part of the Colin Taylor Collection at the University of Cape Town and in Vol. IIA there is one brief reference to a war-time meeting with Warlock. Under the date, 12.6.1915, the following entry appears:

The 28 days leave, pending my commission, were so delightful, that they all too swiftly came to an end. Instead of getting an extension, as I fully expected, I was made to go back to Woldingham and once again get into uniform. Lord, how depressed I was! Having drunk deep of the joys of the old life during my ripping fortnight with Heseltine in London, it was a bit of

¹⁰⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.8.1914.

¹⁰⁷ Warlock's friend, Douglas Goldring, cynically questioned these pacifist views: "He was no pacifist. His attitude, like that of D.H. Lawrence, from whom it probably derived, was 'to Hell with the bloody war. They can blow themselves to bits for all I care, as long as they don't touch me.'" Goldring, op. cit., p.183.

¹⁰⁸ Warlock was soon to change his attitude: "I have no desire to be a 'bloody martyr', but I am quite prepared to face prison rather than submit to serve a system which I regard as, perhaps, the most pernicious and dastardly criminal thing that has survived the dark ages...." Unpublished letter to Viva Smith, 16.2.1916, London, BL, Add MS, 58127.

¹⁰⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.9.1914.

a jar (especially as it was unexpected) to have to exchange my mufti for khaki & the atmosphere of Bohemia for that of camp life....

With Heseltine I did some concerts, & we played a good many duets together. The Thursday¹¹⁰ before I left London, I got my uniform from the tailor's, & left my mufti with him. Met Mother, Kate & Len, & took them to Petite Savoyard¹¹¹ to lunch. Then I went to Beresford to have my photo taken...Then back to Maida Vale,¹¹² & after writing a few letters Heseltine & I went to dine with Hugh¹¹³ at "The Ship" Haymarket.

Here we had a slight debauch, & followed it by more revelry at the Cafe Royal - With the good food and many excellent drinks I felt exceedingly happy. [Here the Army censor has deleted the final three and a half lines of the entry!]¹¹⁴

When Warlock wrote again towards the end of 1915, he had moved to new lodgings in Chelsea. To begin with the tone of this letter is apologetic; but now his attitudes seem to have changed dramatically. He proceeds to deliver a tirade against what he considers responsible for the horrors of the futile war now raging:

...the fearful gloom of the war makes the whole of one's life black, and often one simply cannot take one's mind away from it...and every day - (it is after all no good pretending to think and feel what one sincerely does not) - I feel more and more out of sympathy with the general temper of the country. The agglomeration of horrors of all kinds that this war has brought against the barbarous conditions of human life in this the 20th century of the Christian era that I have absolutely no room and no use for any sentiments about patriotism, or nationality or national honour, or anything of the kind - which, indeed, I have never, in the pre-war days felt at all. I only know that if there were no such thing as patriotism and no such thing as national pride or honour, the world would have been spared this unspeakable and soul-shattering devastation. And the self-righteous hypocrisy of England that muzzles every plain-speaking truth-teller and is ready to sacrifice not only the lives of all its inhabitants but also every conceivable tenet of a morality higher than that of brute beasts to these more than thrice damnable fetishes makes me green with envy. One cannot even raise one's voice in protest - And, such is the temper of one's own countrymen, if one does, it only hardens their hearts in their own conceptions. Well did not Blake say that unacted desires breed pestilence.¹¹⁵ For impotence is always a pestilential thing....

Do come up soon - quite soon - especially since - as you may surmise from the forgoing - unless my innate moral cowardice gets the better of me

¹¹⁰ Thursday, 10.6.1915

¹¹¹ In Gray, op. cit., facing p.94, there is a photograph of Warlock outside the Petite Savoyard Restaurant together with Jacob Epstein and Lord Tredegar (Evan Morgan, 1893-1949).

¹¹² Warlock was at this time living at 34 Southwold Mansions, Maida Vale, London.

¹¹³ Hugh Sidgwick, friend and colleague of Taylor at Eton; killed in the War in 1917.

¹¹⁴ Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection, BC 76; see diary entry under 12.6.1915.

¹¹⁵ Blake's words are: "He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence". Blake, W, *Marriage of Heaven and Hell: The Proverbs of Hell*, line 5.

altogether, I may soon be languishing in H.M.Jail for an "offence" under the Defence of the Realm Act!!¹¹⁶

By the end of November 1915 Warlock was writing from a new address, 13 Rossetti Mansions in Chelsea, begging Taylor to visit him soon and also referring to the three piano pieces, *The Crescent Moon*, which Taylor had recently composed:

Please note my new address - and not only the letters and figures which denote it, but also the actuality of it, by personal exploration, and that right quickly....

The MS of the "Crescent Moon" was sent to Moon Hall, with various other articles of your property. I very much doubt whether it could be published now.¹¹⁷ Chester might consider it, but Schott is Augener, and Herr Strecker, the only intelligent person on the staff of the latter firm, is unfortunately interned.

Do please come up to London soon.¹¹⁸

In his article on Warlock, Taylor wrote of him as being:

noted for his...generosity - for the manner he gave lavishly and selflessly to all in distress or need. Many of his colleagues¹¹⁹ in particular have cause to remember this.¹²⁰

This may well have been a trait he learned from Taylor, also ever generous to his friends. Warlock's letter of March 1916 reveals that Taylor had obviously sent a donation to assist Warlock who, encouraged by Beecham, had undertaken a new venture. This was the first attempt at publishing a music journal called *The Sackbut* (not to be confused with the later periodical of the same name). Unfortunately this

¹¹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.11.1915.

¹¹⁷ *The Crescent Moon* was, in fact, published by Lengnick in 1916.

¹¹⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.11.1915.

¹¹⁹ Warlock's composer friend, C.W. Orr wrote of his generosity: "...I was surprised to get a letter from Philip expressing great interest in the MSS of three songs which I had had the temerity to send to Delius, and which Philip had come across while staying at Grez...his letter encouraged me to continue writing, and later on I sent him the MSS of some more songs in 1922. While recommending me to scrap two...he not only copied the others out in his own exquisite hand, but went to the trouble of arranging them to be printed in Austria at a ridiculously low price...and induced a London firm of publishers to take them over". Orr, "Recollections of Philip Heseltine ('Peter Warlock')", Attachment to *Peter Warlock Society Journal*, January 1970, no.4, p.2.

¹²⁰ Taylor, op. cit., pp.9-10.

project did not get off the ground for which Warlock blamed Beecham.¹²¹ This extract clearly illustrates that the fighting spirit which characterised so much of Warlock's life was already beginning to emerge:

A brief line to thank you for your cheque - or rather for the spirit that prompted it, which is more important. I fear, though, it will come back to you, not in music but in its original form! Though I might make Beecham pay a couple of hundred towards publishing some music by threatening legal proceedings on the strength of my three years' "Sackbut" agreement!¹²²

Writing to Taylor again the next month Warlock tells of some of his experiments at scoring for military band as well as giving a full description of his latest lodgings. In this extract he cannot resist a snide dig at the Royal College of Music and at the commercialization of Easter by the large London department store, Selfridge's of Oxford Street:

The other day, thinking of military bands, I scored a charming piece of Paul Ladmirault's for the combination detailed in Grove's Dictionary - which is probably quite wrong. But the experiment was quite interesting; the military band might be made quite a good means for the propagation of modern music, but its composition varies so much that it is almost impossible to know what to score for. However, I enclose my MS; perhaps you can glean some hints from your regimental bandmaster and I will send some pieces for him to play to you at dinner (I refuse to say mess!!)

N.B. my new address. An attic studio, with bedroom, kitchen and bathroom, (the latter under the floor of the studio!) in an old and quite un-English house between Kings Road and Fulham Road. It is very light and cheerful, the windows commanding unique and extensive views over the roofs of South Kensington to the towers of those architectural glories, the Natural History Museum and the Imp. Institute (the R.C.M. is happily invisible!) in which we Britishers take so just and proper a pride!

It is all very simple and bare - I have had to furnish myself on about £17 - but infinitely more pleasant than any "furnished flat" or "apartments".¹²³ Do

¹²¹ Warlock remained suspicious of Beecham. A short while later he wrote about his plans to launch a new independent musical journal: "There is great enthusiasm for this everywhere but it must not be openly discussed until all the plans are mature, otherwise Sir T.B. will initiate intrigue against it". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.6.1916.

¹²² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.3.1916.

¹²³ Warlock gave a similar description in a letter to Delius written two days later: "I have at last...settled down in a tiny studio attic from which I can gaze, over the roofs of South Kensington, at the sun setting behind those architectural glories of which we sturdy Britishers are so proud, to wit, the Natural History Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the ultra-phallic Imperial Institute (the Royal College of Music, though adjacent, is happily invisible!!)...My furniture is scanty but sufficient; for decoration two Allinsons, a Tibetan devil, a West African carving, and rows of

come and visit me - it is centuries since I have seen you, and I long for a reunion. For Heaven's sake don't go to France just yet.

Love and best wishes for "this charming festival" - (the phrase is good Christian Selfridge's - but how right an adjective for Christ's resurrection in the minds of most Christians!!)¹²⁴

Warlock seems to have had more than just a passing interest in the musical possibilities of brass and military bands. In later years,¹²⁵ whilst living in Eynsford, he arranged some music by the late sixteenth century composer, John Dowland, as well as Delius' *On hearing the first cuckoo in spring* for this rather unlikely combination.¹²⁶

Having just met Cecil Gray, Warlock's letter to Taylor in early June 1916 is full of excitement about their future plans to reorganize and revive musical life in England. This section is discussed in detail in chapter 6. Warlock begins the letter with a reference to the cheque which Taylor had sent him a while back and then asks when he is to receive a copy of *The Crescent Moon*. He ends with an enquiry as to the feasibility of writing a concise history of music:

First your pardon must be asked for the unconscionable time this cheque has lingered with me. Then two questions concerning the time when (1) you and (2) "The Crescent Moon" will come....

Music - at least, writing about music - needs simplification. The essentials can be said ever so rapidly and tersely, thanks to modern developments. What think you of a complete history of music in 250 small pages - a book similar in size to the Home University Library - a most excellent series ? I have a plan for one.¹²⁷

Taylor answered promptly returning the cheque, no doubt with the suggestion that Warlock should use it for the new, enthusiastic plans outlined in his letter. It is also interesting to note that here, for the first time, Warlock offers advice and help to his

books". Letter from Warlock to Delius, 22.4.1916, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.117-119. The reference to the carving is significant. In *Women in Love* D.H. Lawrence described Halliday's flat as "an ordinary London sitting-room...rather common and ugly...there were several negro statues, wood-carvings from West Africa, strange and disturbing...." Lawrence, *Women in Love*, Collins, London, 1988, p.63.

¹²⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 20.4.1916.

¹²⁵ c.1928.

¹²⁶ Copley, "Warlock and the brass band", *Musical Times*, 1968, pp.1115-1116.

¹²⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.6.1916.

former teacher; not only about the musical content of the MS song which Taylor had sent to him, but also in his generous offer to help find a publisher. Here is an extract from Warlock's reply, a letter in which he also wrote ecstatically about his discovery of Bernard van Dieren:

Ever so many thanks for your letter and the return of the cheque: also for the MS which arrived yesterday evening. I am not sanguine about getting money for any of the schemes at present, but all contributions, however small, will be most gratefully received....

I am eagerly awaiting "The Crescent Moon". Have you offered the song to any publisher - if not, would you like me to do so? I think it would probably sell. The opening bars have a very pleasant fresh coolness in them, but the last page, from the Tacet bar, wants, to my thinking, more varied harmony. It is, of course, entirely a personal matter but this



sounds "funny" somehow - I don't know why! But my criticism is really worthless, and I am sure I have no right to offer it at all.

Do come up soon if only for a night. You don't know how much I am longing for a good talk with you. I can always put you up.¹²⁸

By the end of 1916 life in the army was having an obviously depressing effect on Taylor. Warlock was anxious to do what he could to cheer him up when he wrote from his new lodgings in Battersea which he was now sharing with Gray:

It makes me sad to hear of you being so despondent - and still more sad that I can do or say so little to relieve the gloom. Of course you must get your discharge - or, at any rate, some work like censoring (as Balfour Gardiner¹²⁹ has) which leaves you time for music as well....

Do come up again soon: I can always put you up here.¹³⁰

There are two references in Warlock's letters about a prize that Taylor had won for a part-song entered in a competition:

¹²⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.6.1916.

¹²⁹ Balfour Gardiner enlisted in 1916 and became a deputy assistant censor in Calais and Boulogne in May that year.

¹³⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 8.11.1916.

Forgive this delay in replying to your nice New Year letter. I was so pleased when I saw the paragraph in the D. T. about your prize.¹³¹

In February 1917 Warlock wrote in a somewhat patronizing manner about this prize-winning work. The abbreviation C.B. means "confined to barracks" though here it is used as a play on the word "contra-fagotto", the double bassoon, an instrument transposing an octave lower than written:

Many thanks for letter and part song. I think the latter is surprisingly good for a "prize-work"! I would not have imagined they would pass anything but tonic-and-dominant; though I picked up a "Musical Times" a few days ago and discovered to my amazement a part-song which appeared to end with this chord



Actually Warlock was incorrect in saying that this particular "part-song appeared to end with this chord". The piece is *There is a lady sweet and kind*, by Harold Darke (1888-1976)¹³³ which appeared as a supplement to the *Musical Times* of February 1917. Warlock cannot have studied the work very closely for this chord is, in fact, the penultimate chord and resolves quite conventionally:



The letter ends as follows:

Shall I write some tunes for your nest of singing birds?? You must, of course, come up for the van Dieren concert, even if they give you 10 days C-B (transposing an octave lower than written) for absenting yourself without leave! You can stay here as long as you like...Come up on Monday and stay Tuesday: that is the best plan.

Throughout their correspondence Warlock continued his interest in Taylor's compositions as illustrated in this letter when he recommends Rogers as a publisher:

¹³¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.1.1917.

¹³² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 16.2.1917.

¹³³ English organist, conductor and composer.

Let me hear from you soon - how you are and what you are doing: if possible, send me some recent MSS. I have seen nothing of yours for ages. Try Winthrop Rogers, of Berners Street, W. as a publisher.¹³⁴

There is more about Taylor's compositions in a letter from Ireland the next month. Warlock's comments are particularly interesting as they refer to certain features of Taylor's style which he admired. Unfortunately it is impossible to identify the compositions here referred to. Moreover there is no evidence as to whether any of these MSS were published or even survived. *The Green Lady*¹³⁵ was the only setting of a Fiona Macleod song by Taylor that was ever published:

Forgive me for not writing before. Your MSS arrived the day before I left Cornwall and I had just time to read them through and send them off to the publisher's reader. I have not heard from him yet because, for reasons that would make a long story, I have had to come over to this country for a while and, as I move about from place to place, letters pursue me but take time to arrive....

I like the Fiona Macleod songs very much - the declamation is so free and natural and the simple harmonic background always so appropriate. I envy you your rhythmic freedom: I am always tied by so-many beats to a bar! I think they ought to become quite popular - in a good sense - as Quilter is popular in a circle that is, I think, largely increasing in numbers. Your kind and appreciative letter cheered me very much. I am glad you like the arrangements. I was just afraid they were too purely personal. There will be a lot more sooner or later - rather later, I fear, than sooner since for me some while yet, whether here or in England, I shall be very much otherwise occupied.¹³⁶

In typical fashion Warlock continued to promote Taylor's works whenever possible, sending them on to various publishers:

Did you ever hear from Bernard, the publisher's reader to whom I sent your MSS?

You might be kind and send him the enclosed MS when you have done with it, as he has the other 5. His address is 23 Glebe Place, Chelsea S.W.¹³⁷

In this letter there is also an excellent example of Warlock's puckish sense of humour; obviously in great spirits he continues writing in a somewhat exuberant vein:

¹³⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1917.

¹³⁵ Stainer & Bell, 1926.

¹³⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.8.1917.

¹³⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.9.1917.

It occurred to me the other day what a wonderful theme for a set of piano variations would be provided by the old tune of "Walsingham" - Bull¹³⁸ and Byrd¹³⁹ between them pissed around it a great deal but by no means in their best manner.

Piano figures are entirely beyond me so I send you the little tune hoping you may set to work at it. It is, incidentally, superb to "rag", not only in the simple syncopations suggested immediately by bars 5 and 6, but also in complex figures like this:-



I bethought me of this grisly variant as the climax of a stupendous version of "De Camptown Races"¹⁴⁰ for vast orchestra with dozens of banjos which I am contemplating: the irrelevance of its entry is a great joy!....

P.S. Grand suggestion for bouillon! Why not make a waltz out of Liszt's "Liebestraum"?!!¹⁴¹ Also a ragtime chorus to be sung to a lamp post by a "drunk": (to the tune of Hymn no. 266)



The hymn tune referred to is *Lux benigna* by the Rev. J.B. Dykes (1823-1876),¹⁴² usually associated with the words of the hymn, *Lead, kindly light*,¹⁴³ by Cardinal J.H. Newman (1801-1890), hence the appropriate reference to a drunk singing to a lamp post.

Writing from Dublin in September 1917 Warlock begins by apologizing over a misunderstanding about Anthony Bernard's position vis-a-vis the publisher, Rogers. The rest of the letter is devoted to a highly interesting and sympathetic discussion about Taylor's compositions including some of Warlock's ideas as to what determines a "good" song:

¹³⁸ John Bull, c.1562-1628, English composer and virginalist.

¹³⁹ William Byrd, 1543-1623, English composer.

¹⁴⁰ A song (1850) by Stephen Foster, American composer, 1826-64.

¹⁴¹ *Liebestraum*, G.541 (1850).

¹⁴² Victorian hymn-tune composer.

¹⁴³ No.266 in *Hymns Ancient & Modern*.

I am astounded at what you tell me of the relation - or rather the non-relation - between Bernard and Rogers: and I must ask your pardon for being the unwitting cause of delaying your MSS so long in hands that could not help them...Bernard distinctly led me to believe that he was actually the reader for Rogers' firm, and on this understanding I gave him not only your MSS but also some of van Dieren's and George Whitaker's,¹⁴⁴ as well as a few of my own. I sincerely trust he has returned your songs to you safely. Had I known that he was not a responsible representative of Rogers' firm, I should not have dreamed of entrusting him with the MSS. I have written to him myself - some while ago - but he has not replied.

You must not get into such states of grisliness over your compositions: nor draw such hard-and-fast lines between "potboilers" and works of art. The one may be as good, and even as true, as the other. One *feels* potboilerish - if you can understand what I mean - often and often. Potboilers - the best of them - are full of genuine emotion - not perhaps the highest we are capable of feeling but genuine for all that. You know what I think about the priggish and artificial distinction between popular music and "art" music. There are moments when I am overwhelmed by such songs as "Until",¹⁴⁵ or Denza's¹⁴⁶ "May Morning" - your "Love's Ecstasy", which I can never forget, is as good as any of them. This kind of emotion is nothing to be ashamed of: it is very difficult to analyse, to get to the heart of, and very easy to dismiss with a cheap sneer. I am thrilled also at times by memories of Stainer's¹⁴⁷ and Dykes' hymn-tunes which are masterpieces of their particular kind, of soft harmony and insidious, ambushed emotion which takes one by surprise, by the throat!¹⁴⁸

One cannot fail to note the confidence with which Warlock then writes about two songs which Taylor had sent him to look at. The first was *The Downs*,¹⁴⁹ a setting of a poem by John Galsworthy (1867-1933).¹⁵⁰ In the margin of the typescript copy of this letter Taylor has written next to the paragraph discussing this song:

Curwen's published it 1919. They also made a version for John Goss (?) with string quartet and harp - but never printed as far as I know. C.T.

¹⁴⁴ It has been impossible to find any details about Whitaker. Warlock wrote the following: "...Quilter and George Whitaker are two unpretentious but gifted song-writers. The latter's setting of Yeats' 'Innisfree' is a remarkable example of the true re-creation of a poem in terms of music". Heseltine, "The Condition of Music in England", *The New Age*, June 1917, no.1292, v.21, no.7, p.156. Warlock also copied out Whitaker's unaccompanied part-song, *Thou wilt not goe*, which appeared in *The Sackbut*, August 1920, v.1, no.4, pp.173-176.

¹⁴⁵ A song by Wilfred Sanderson, 1878-1935, English composer.

¹⁴⁶ Luigi Denza, 1846-1922, Italian composer of a series of successful drawing-room ballads, later resident in London and a teacher of singing at the Royal Academy of Music.

¹⁴⁷ Sir John Stainer, 1840-1901, English academic, composer, organist and church musician.

¹⁴⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.9.1917.

¹⁴⁹ Curwen, 1919.

¹⁵⁰ English novelist and poet.

The second song mentioned, of which Warlock was rather critical, is almost certainly a setting of Shelley's poem, *Love's Philosophy*. In the margin of the typescript copy of this letter Taylor has written next to the words "other song": "can't remember - Henley's 'Nightingale has a lyre of gold'?" The clue to identifying the song lies in Warlock's words: "Delius and Quilter have both made settings of it without success". The only poem that both these composers set was Shelley's *Love's Philosophy*, Delius having composed a setting in 1891 and Quilter in 1905. The evidence is further strengthened by the fact that it is a poem which certainly "cries out for full-blooded...treatment". The fate of Taylor's setting must, however, remain a mystery for it does not appear in the list of his published works. Possibly because of Warlock's criticisms he might have decided to destroy it.

Of the two songs you sent me and which I am now returning, I think "The Downs" is excellent - it has a splendid line and sweep, like the downs themselves and is keyed at just the right emotional pitch. A good singer could make a great effect with it, and except for the slight difficulty of the piano part, there is nothing to hinder its publication by any good firm. Try Otto Kling¹⁵¹ of Chester's...

The other song seems to me unsatisfactory and, if I may say so, slightly watery. The poem surely cries out for full-blooded, pot-boiler treatment, on broad lines without any rhythmic subtleties - 6/8 and a plain tune! Delius and Quilter have both made settings of it without much success. But this is only my private and personal view, plainly stated, since you asked for it: I don't know why you should ask for it since, as a matter of plain fact, you know a great deal more about composition than I do. Except in moments of conceit, I don't regard myself as a composer at all - as yet. Perhaps, at the age of 35...!¹⁵²

The last part of the letter is given over to a discussion of one of Warlock's theories on harmony and the promise of four brief essays he hoped to send on to Taylor:

...When we ever get an opportunity of meeting often, you and I must experiment with each other in new methods: we might perhaps discover something.

I will send you, as soon as they are typed, four very brief sketches of essays upon "The Function of Music" - "Critic and Creation" - "The Scope of Opera" and "Intuition and Instruction". They are only rough sketches, but I want you to tell me exactly what you think of the ideas in them - which are

¹⁵¹ Otto (Marius) Kling, ? - 1924, manager of the English branch of Breitkopf and Härtel then proprietor of J. & W. Chester, 1915-24.

¹⁵² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.9.1917.

suggested only, not as yet elaborated. If they are sound, I want to develop them at length and build up a really practical system on them. So please criticize as fully, even carpingly, as you can - since all possible objections should be answered by ourselves before by anyone else.

As for your "being no harmonist", as you say - that is the easiest department of all music to master. The great thing to remember is that our system is not based merely upon 1-3-5 but upon 1-3-5-7-9-11-13. (There was once, I believe, a certain Dr. Day¹⁵³ who vainly tried to establish this elementary fact in the musical world). In any key, these two chords - major and minor - explain everything - with their inversions.



Diatonic harmony exercises in major 7th and 9th in 4 parts are very useful. In the former there are 4 real parts all the time without any doublings - in the latter you have to select all the while 4 notes out of a 5 note chord - most exciting!

Much of the next letter written at the end of September 1917 has already been extensively quoted in chapter 2. In a postscript to this letter there is a further, brief and rather cryptic reference to Taylor's song, *Love's Ecstasy*. It would appear that Taylor had asked Warlock if he still had the MS in his possession:

(P.S. The MS of "Love's Ecstasy" I sent to Carmen Hill¹⁵⁴ a long while ago at your request).¹⁵⁵

Few letters from Warlock to Taylor better illustrate the quality of their friendship than the one written in October 1917 after the death of Taylor's close friend and colleague at Eton, Hugh Sidgwick. The sensitivity of the expression is matched only by Warlock's thoughtful gesture of dedicating his song, *Heracleitus*,¹⁵⁶ to Taylor in memory of Sidgwick:

I am dreadfully grieved to hear of Hugh Sidgwick's death: it is terrible - and I know how deeply you must feel it. There are so very few friends who can

¹⁵³ Alfred Day, 1810-49, English physician and writer on music.

¹⁵⁴ 1883- ? , Scottish-born mezzo-soprano; studied at the Royal Academy of Music with Frederick King: soloist at the London Chappell and Promenade Concerts. There is a reference to her in a letter to Taylor from his friend, Hugh Sidgwick: "I see from the Draconian that George Drinkwater is married to Miss Carmen Hill. The singer, I presume. I dare say it is all for the best". Unpublished letter from Sidgwick to Taylor, 19.4.1914, in the possession of Hugh Taylor.

¹⁵⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.9.1917.

¹⁵⁶ Warlock used the original Greek spelling when referring to this song.

stand the test of even a few years, but each one of those few is like a part of oneself. I remember well two delightful evenings spent with you and Sidgwick - one at his club, the other at "The Ship" in Whitehall.¹⁵⁷

That you found a little sympathy in my tunes pleases me more than anything that could be said about them. Yesterday brought back to my mind the lovely little Greek poem on the death of a friend...and immediately it seemed to fit itself to music, so I am sending you the outcome which I hope you may like.¹⁵⁸

Whilst in Dublin Warlock still continued to seek Taylor's advice on matters musical. For example he sent, together with this letter, four essays (the first of a projected series of nine) asking Taylor for his criticisms:

Here are the first four essays - one I think you have already seen in a curtailed form in "The New Age",¹⁵⁹ the others are quite new. They are quite sketchy and undeveloped, and verbally rather poor and clumsy: but I think you will be able to criticize before we go any further. Our foundation must be submitted to the most rigorous tests before we can build upon them...Please do me the kindness of picking all the holes you can find in those that I send. No more now - but I will write again very shortly. Meanwhile, you must not be so self-depreciatory [sic] - that alone is enough to block your path completely. 35 is really the best age to begin at - at any rate I have no hopes of being ripe for any great achievements before that age.¹⁶⁰

The last sentence has a poignant irony considering how much Warlock had, in fact, achieved by the age of 35. It is not every composer who can boast that at that age all his compositions have been accepted by publishers.

Warlock's next letter to Taylor begins with a touch of humour (his irreverent references to the Associated Board for which Taylor had been invited to examine) and then continues in a more serious, almost philosophical vein:

Of course accept the colonial tour offer - think what a lot of good you will be able to do by insinuation and wily extra-curriculum suggestion!

The miserable institutions represented by the "associated bawd", impervious though they be to external attacks, can be easily undermined from within.

¹⁵⁷ Taylor refers to this meeting in Vol.IIA of his war diaries; he records it as having taken place on 10.6.1915 at *The Ship*, Haymarket (not Whitehall). Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection, BC 76.

¹⁵⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.10.1917.

¹⁵⁹ Heseltine, "Pastiche: Predicaments concerning music", *The New Age*, 10 May 1917, no.1287, v.21, no.2, p.46.

¹⁶⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.10.1917.

Do your duty by the bawd swiftly and effectively - and use the spare ten minutes explaining what music is!

Re essays: two essential points ought to be made clearer. first, my whole point of view is based upon the assumption that music, that all art that is of any real value, must be the overflow, and not merely the fullness, of life. Music is the voice of the God in man: there is no room, no excuse even for music in the gospel of materialism - and no amount of study of the merely material side of music will be of any real avail, without the inner light. This must be sought first - and then the purely material accomplishments will be added. The inner developments of the soul are alone of real importance. There is no need to study how these may "apply to" music: they will apply themselves, automatically, by a seeming miracle. One should not live for art: but art, if one really lives with one's whole self (and to find out what is one's whole self is no small matter for us Europeans), will be added unto one....

2. Destructiveness has a real value of its own. Butler¹⁶¹ inveighed against those who held that you must always put something in the place of what you destroy by asking whether fresh obstacles should be invented to take the place of the old turnpike gates which formerly hindered rapid progress along the high roads! Appolonius of Tyana¹⁶² records the case of a first-rate flute player of his day who used to send his pupils to much worse artists that they might learn how not to pipe!¹⁶³

There is a great deal to be said for negative instruction. but I think the dogmas in the first essay contain sufficient positive matter for a foundation - and when laying a foundation one is compelled to be dogmatic!¹⁶⁴

In the postscript to this letter there is an amusing, if somewhat unkind, reference to Anthony Bernard not having returned various MSS:

Has that misbegotten baboon Bernard returned your MSS? In response to three letters of mine, increasing in vehemence by geometrical progression, I received a post-card promising the return of mine a month ago. But hitherto, no sign of MSS!

Taylor was still continuing to promote his former pupil's work as illustrated in the grateful letter Warlock wrote from Dublin at the end of 1917:

¹⁶¹ Samuel Butler, 1835-1902, English satirist, novelist, essayist and critic.

¹⁶² Fl. 1st century A.D., a neo-Pythagorean who became a mythical hero during the time of the Roman Empire.

¹⁶³ The writings of Appolonius were obviously fresh in Warlock's mind. Goldring, op. cit., pp.181-182, records that: "Of the Englishmen I met in Dublin by far the most interesting was Philip Heseltine...I called at his rooms soon after his arrival. He was suffering from an appalling cold and was passing the time by reading aloud the works of Appolonius of Tyana, in the Loeb translation, to his extremely beautiful wife".

¹⁶⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.10.1917.

Thanks ever so much for playing my tunes¹⁶⁵ to Schott's. It was very good of you - though I should have been very much surprised had they accepted them. It will do no harm to keep them back for a more auspicious period: in spite of my previous remarks, there will be a second set of seven or so for piano, as well as those for small orchestra of which you have the first.¹⁶⁶

And again in a later letter also from Dublin:

It is very kind of you to be always wanting to play my little works to people and I am most grateful that you should like them sufficiently to think it worth while. But you mustn't waste precious time, if you have an appointment with Elwes,¹⁶⁷ playing him my stuff which he will certainly dislike...Elwes is a great artist: I wanted to get him for the performance¹⁶⁸ of van Dieren's Diaphony, but I was assured by a friend of his that he would never touch it, so reluctantly desisted.¹⁶⁹

Warlock, after writing about the books which he had recommended to Taylor in September, continues at some length with his views on the political situation in Ireland at that time:

How are you getting on with the books?...I never got your wire of last Monday! The post office is thoroughly disorganized by the loathsome system of secret censorship that has been instituted between Ireland and England. The military authorities are in a state of hysterical panic over Sinn Fein¹⁷⁰ and every other person is "suspect" of some imaginary crime or criminal propensity. It is very amusing to observe how the Sinn Feiners themselves interpret this hysteria and its effects - [daily arrests of dozens of men on fake charges] (such as singing "The Soldier's Song"!!¹⁷¹ - a fact!) - as a policy of provocation, and are resolutely determined not to rise - thank God! But provocation - even if unintentional - can sometimes go too far - especially where a hot-tempered and not too rational populace is concerned. There is a peculiar irony about the grand military funeral of the "tank" mahout whose beast had proved unruly on the road from the harbour! The presence of these monstrous engines on the outskirts of the city is not welcomed even by those to whom Sinn Fein is anathema. If there is another rising the blood shed will be as much from the heads of the authorities as of the so-called "rebels"...But I mustn't tell you any more of these state secrets that everyone knows, or this letter will never reach you!! Early Spring will put an end to the whole monstrous upheaval, everywhere.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁵ *Folk Song Preludes* for piano, 1917-18, Augener, 1923.

¹⁶⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.11.1917.

¹⁶⁷ Gervase Elwes, 1866-1921, English tenor.

¹⁶⁸ Wigmore Hall, 20th February, 1917.

¹⁶⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.12.1917.

¹⁷⁰ An Irish party founded in 1905 by Arthur Griffith, 1872-1922, Irish revolutionary leader.

¹⁷¹ *The Soldier's Song* (*Amhrán na bhFiann*), Irish National anthem. Words and music by Paedár Kearney (1883-1942).

¹⁷² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.11.1917.

At the beginning of January the following year Warlock wrote a short, typically warm note to Taylor after hearing that he had undergone an operation. At the same time he tells of his imminent departure to an island off the coast of Ireland:

I was sorry to hear you were in hospital again: I hope the operation was successful and inexpensive of pain - the rump is a ticklish quarter.

I wish I could get you over here for a holiday: I'd gladly fork out the fare if I had it but alas, it's impossible at the moment. I am going away myself to an Irish-speaking district for some weeks, partly for the sake of studying the language and partly also for economy's sake....¹⁷³

After his two month sojourn on this "inconceivably desolate island" Warlock wrote to Taylor telling him something of his experiences there. This letter continued with typical, bubbling enthusiasm for a new scheme which he had just thought up: a series of lecture recitals on music in which he and Taylor would combine their talents. Nothing was to come of these proposed joint efforts but, as will be seen later and in greater detail,¹⁷⁴ Warlock gave an intriguing public lecture on May 12th in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin on the subject *What Music Is*. This afforded him the valuable experience of expressing his views before an audience and to gain in self-confidence. There is also a rather irrational outburst over the fact that Eugene Goossens was more prepared to pioneer the works of Stravinsky than van Dieren. He concludes with a rather crude reference to Taylor's recent operation (for boils or haemorrhoids?):

Forgive this outburst - I fear I have bored you very much but I feel electric. I hope you are well and flourishing and that the fundamental orifice has quite recovered! Do let me hear from you, although I am a pig and don't deserve to. (Perhaps you're sorry I've broken the silence after all - only to inflict all this froth upon you!)¹⁷⁵

The postscript of the following Dublin letter refers briefly but in highly complimentary terms to some of Taylor's recent compositions:

¹⁷³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.1.1918.

¹⁷⁴ Appendix A.

¹⁷⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.4.1918.

The Trent¹⁷⁶ songs are stupendous - bravo! - and the little child's song¹⁷⁷ is quite charming - especially the last page - something really fresh for "school-music".¹⁷⁸

It is no doubt the imaginative piano accompaniment in the last seven bars of *Slumber Town* which Warlock refers to in this paragraph. Throughout his life Taylor was always fascinated by the sound of bells and the resulting harmonics.¹⁷⁹ These three bars are one of his early experiments with such bell effects:



The following quotation is a most important one in the context of this particular study. Here Warlock writes a most moving appreciation of Taylor's unfailing interest and support in his musical activities. However much in later life Taylor played down his influence on Warlock's compositions, this letter stands as testimony to the important contribution he made in encouraging the fledgling composer's latent talent. It should not be forgotten that this was written a short while before Warlock's tremendous burst of creativity when he produced some of his early masterpieces. If it had not been for Taylor's positive encouragement at this stage Warlock might not have gained the necessary self-confidence he so badly needed. This excerpt comes from one of the Dublin letters telling about the success of the recent lecture:

It was so good to get your nice cheering letter the other day. I don't know what I should do without your encouragement and sympathy: I value your understanding and your belief in me far more than you might imagine from my poor words. In music I feel so much alone - and although I know that at least my critical work is of value, it is hard sometimes to persevere in the face of so much indifference and heedlessness around one: opposition would be more stimulating. I feel as if I were on the threshold of new discoveries of far reaching importance - and it is such a comfort to know that your interest and sympathy will go forward with me into the darkness....

¹⁷⁶ Cecil Trent, Colin Taylor's pseudonym for his "potboilers".

¹⁷⁷ *Slumber Town*, Novello, 1918.

¹⁷⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.5.1918.

¹⁷⁹ From discussions with the present writer.

...A kind friend¹⁸⁰ has given me the use of her lovely Steinway grand every morning, and I am practising the piano with assiduity. I look forward to the time when you will be able to give me some more lessons. It is strange that, after a long period of not touching the piano, I have seemed to have acquired a new facility - even of technique - which still further corroborates my view that everything - even the externals - depends upon the expansion of the understanding. Last year I never hoped to be able to perform the Bartok bagatelles,¹⁸¹...now I am well on the way to their mastery....

Well, it is time to end this very first-personal letter. I do hope your affairs will soon brighten up, and that you will gain release from the trivial round the common task, and burst out into new and profitable paths.¹⁸²

Taylor continued sending his MSS to Warlock throughout the latter's time in Ireland as the opening paragraph of yet another letter from Dublin:

Many thanks for your letter and the MS which I now return: it is certainly worth printing and should sound very beautiful played by a good violinist. The tune I am told is in reality of nigger origin. This is not a proper reply to your letter. I am exceptionally busy at present with matters for whose accomplishment the time is short....

Alas the prospect of those three months here with you seems fated not to be realized - how much we might have done together! It would have been the accomplishment of one of my dearest dreams.¹⁸³

There is also an entertaining and picturesque reference to a Dublin performance of one of Taylor's "potboiling" Trent songs which Warlock had been responsible for:

I recommended the works of Trent to a female macaw who shrieks in one of the city cafes, and I believe "Love for us to-day"¹⁸⁴ is this week being used to aid the digestion of that establishment's habitués! What happened to "When your hand lies in mine love and my hand"¹⁸⁵ etc, etc? I always used to get the most marvellous ecstatic quivers up my spine over that work, and should very much like to re-make its acquaintance if it is yet published - as it ought to be....¹⁸⁶

¶

¹⁸⁰ Mrs. Hester Dowden. See Tomlinson, *Warlock and van Dieren*, Thames, London, 1978, p.17. Goldring, op. cit., p.182, mentions Mrs. Dowden in connection with Warlock's interest in the occult: "Mrs. Dowden was a fine musician...she conducted Ouija board experiments which had become famous outside Dublin...she and Heseltine became great friends and some of his most famous songs were composed in her house and at her piano".

¹⁸¹ 14 *Bagatelles*, Op.6 (1908).

¹⁸² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.5.1918.

¹⁸³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 2.7.1918.

¹⁸⁴ A song by Taylor written under the pseudonym, Cecil Trent.

¹⁸⁵ *Love's Ecstasy*, another song by Taylor written under the pseudonym, Cecil Trent. Warlock, however, misquotes the first line: "When your hand lies in my hand, when your eyes look to mine".

¹⁸⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.7.1918.

In chapter 7 there is a full account of the incident with Winthrop Rogers after he had dismissed some of van Dieren's piano pieces in rather derogatory terms. Warlock's reaction is seen in his angry reply: a lengthy letter which embraces a multitude of subjects and then draws its thoughts together in a mighty final summing-up. Even in the midst of this diatribe against Rogers he makes a generous acknowledgment of Taylor's composing abilities and lasting influence:

...I feel that, if you will, you can be of tremendous help as a collaborator in the struggle: we are so few against so many. And there seems an inevitability and a fitness in our collaboration, since it is to you more than anyone else that I am indebted for the awakening and development of such abilities as I have: what you have given to me you can give also to others. You are too inclined to mistrust yourself, which is not surprising after your last four years of more or less enforced musical inactivity: but all such periods - though they seem utterly sterile - are really times of secret growing and strength and storage of energy...remember the work that has to be done, and above all don't mistrust your own powers.¹⁸⁷

In his reply to this letter, Taylor must once again have written about his lack of self-confidence for Warlock chides him in his reply. The impression on reading this moving first paragraph, is that it would be difficult to find a finer tribute from a pupil to a teacher anywhere. Just as Taylor had so often written supportively to Warlock, now it is Warlock's turn to write similar words of encouragement to Taylor:

I shall not try to refute in mere words your absurd diffidence as to your own capabilities. I believe in you, if you do not believe in yourself - and I know I do not pin my faith to nothing. Besides I am always aware of how greatly I myself am indebted to you - ungrateful pupil as I was at the time - and what you have given me cannot have sprung from nothingness. But I won't begin a long discourse since I very much hope we shall be able to meet quite soon and talk it all out: there are great things for us to do together in the near future.¹⁸⁸

In this same letter he proceeds to ask Taylor's advice about some of his recent compositions. The relevant extracts are quoted in chapters 6 and 7 which deal with van Dieren's influence and Warlock's writings about his own music. In the

¹⁸⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.8.1918.

¹⁸⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 22.8.1918.

postscript to this letter there is yet another reference to Taylor's song, *Love's Ecstasy*, which he was obviously still trying to locate:

P.S. The MS of your "Love's Ecstasy" is not in my possession: I distinctly remember sending it, at your request, to Miss Carmen Hill - some years ago now.

The final paragraph of Warlock's next letter, written a short while after his return to London from Ireland, refers to two of Taylor's compositions sent to Warlock at some stage or another. This is an excerpt from the letter in which he tells how he successfully submitted seven of his songs to Rogers under the pseudonym of Peter Warlock:

I have neglected you horribly these last weeks. Again, as you see, I am settled in London for a while, with my own things around me which is pleasant. I hope we may meet before very much more time elapses. I am longing to see you, so do seize the first opportunity of coming to town that presents itself....

...I found this morning in a pile of papers two songs of yours - "In fountain court" and "Down by the Salley Gardens" - so they are safe here; whenever you want them, let me know.

Do come up and see me soon - there's such a lot to tell you.¹⁸⁹

In the list of Taylor's compositions there is no mention of either of these two songs. They must therefore be presumed either lost or destroyed.

The two men must have met fairly soon after this letter was written for Warlock wrote in December 1918 from his Warrington Crescent lodgings of such a meeting as well as discussing some more of Taylor's MSS:

It was so very good to see you again and I wish ever so much that you could have stayed longer: but the visit will not be long deferred I hope.

Your dark hint as to a melodramatic predicament intrigues me hugely - I suppose it couldn't be developed in writing? I have been in so many peculiar and sometimes nightmarish situations myself during the last few years that I am naturally excited over your news. If I could possibly be of the slightest use to you in any capacity, pleasant or otherwise, please command me!

¹⁸⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 29.11.1918.

I am sending you one of the photographs you liked: also your MSS - these will be registered and posted tomorrow. The string quartet looks interesting: you must finish it and write the other movements.¹⁹⁰

It seems, however, that Taylor did not complete this string quartet for there is no mention of it in his list of compositions drawn up in February 1972.

After his discharge from the Army Taylor went on an eleven-month overseas examining tour for the Associated Board in 1919. In August 1919, after a long silence necessitated by Taylor's travels, Warlock wrote to him in Sydney, Australia. He had, in the meantime, been looking after Taylor's interests at the publishers, proof-reading a work entitled *Coming Years*:

Proofs of "Coming Years", on the most evil-smelling paper I have yet encountered, arrived yesterday and were duly corrected: it is in two keys - A flat and F. "The Downs"¹⁹¹ is out already: Curwens sent you half a dozen copies to this address, so I forwarded them to Irene at Westward Ho - not being quite certain of your movements. It was not, after all, printed on green paper! That appears to be only a method of taking proofs, inking the block and leaving the notes blank....

Well, I hope things are not going too badly with you: I feel sure that all will be well when you return. You have earned the reward of tranquillity and happiness if anyone ever did - after all these years of inner and outer unrest.¹⁹²

Next to this last paragraph of the copy of this letter preserved in the Colin Taylor Collection Taylor wrote the following terse comment: "A pious hope! CT Oct. 1968"

At this point there is a long gap in their correspondence, almost two years in fact. During that time Taylor had completed yet another long examining tour and had emigrated to South Africa and Warlock had weathered the storm of *The Sackbut* debacle. When he next wrote to Taylor he was once again back at the family home at Cefn Bryntalch about to embark on one of the most fruitful and creative periods of his life. Hoping once again to resume regular correspondence, he makes his apologies to Taylor:

¹⁹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.12.1918.

¹⁹¹ Published by Curwen in 1919, words by John Galsworthy, 1867-1931.

¹⁹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 23.8.1919.

I must beg your forgiveness for my long and most reprehensible silence; I am guiltily conscious of many letters unanswered - and it is just those letters one would like to write that remain longest unwritten I fear....

My life, though very busy with all sorts of work, is a very uneventful one. But if you still care to hear from me at intervals I can promise you more regular correspondence now that I have settled down to a time of orderly quietness and tranquillity. So do write and tell me your news and I promise you a quite early reply. I do hope you are happy, settled and prosperous....

P.S....my efforts at getting in with Messrs. Chappell & others have been far less successful than yours.¹⁹³

This postscript proves puzzling for in the list of Taylor's published works there are no works published by Chappell before 1921. Only in 1962 did Chappell publish anything by Taylor: a work entitled *Francesca's Piano Book*.

Warlock's next letter from Wales is of particular interest for it reveals how there was a remote and intriguing possibility that Warlock might have joined the staff of the S.A. College of Music in Cape Town. Here are the relevant extracts:

I was so pleased to get your letter the day before yesterday. It came very quickly - 17 days from the postmark - which makes you seem very pleasantly nearer and less inaccessible.

I am immensely intrigued by your saying you nearly cabled for me two months ago - but don't quite understand what you exactly meant. I could hardly imagine that you would recommend me to the director of a Conservatorium as a competent teacher or that, even on your own recommendation, the said director would engage anyone who has never taught anything in his life before: and of course you know I could not afford to take a trip to the Cape on the chance of picking up enough pupils to make a living when I got there. But if by some extraordinary chance it was a question of a definite job at a definite salary - which I can scarcely believe - I am sorry you didn't cable or at any rate write me details. I am always open to offers - which I never get! - and it would be very nice to join you in your work for a couple of years or so.¹⁹⁴

It is interesting to speculate what direction Warlock's career might have taken if he had indeed come to Cape Town. Taylor evidently thought it would not have been a good idea. Amongst the Colin Taylor Collection are numerous pages of scripts and notes amongst which is written the following:

¹⁹³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

¹⁹⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

It may come as a surprise to many in our music circle, to learn that Professor Bell...at one time toyed with the idea of getting Peter Warlock to join the U.C.T. College of Music staff, for Bell had considerable admiration for Warlock's research activities, his compositions and his wide erudition.

Personally I'm extremely glad that this idea never bore fruit, for I am quite sure that Warlock would have been sadly out of place in our somewhat restricted and perhaps rather prim community.

Considering his life-style and varied interests it is highly unlikely that Warlock would have survived for very long in the oppressive colonial provincialism of Cape Town in the early 20s. Not only would he have found musical opportunities lacking, to say the least, but he would have been unable to pursue his considerable interests in musical scholarship. Of course, he might have concentrated more on original composition but what, indeed, would that "rather prim community" have made of him and his way of life?

Warlock ends this letter by saying how pleased he is that Taylor had settled down so happily in his new environment:

It is very good to know that you are feeling happier and settling down to a tranquil, as well as - apparently - a very nicely profitable existence. I think one's capacity for happiness depends so much on widely contrasted states that one would not wish the past undone however bitter it may have been.

As so often happens when people move to distant places, the correspondence between the two men became less frequent over the remaining years of Warlock's life. The last letters often find Warlock apologizing profusely for not having written more regularly as in this letter from 20 Bury Street, Bloomsbury, London written later that same year. As most of the letter is about his latest activities (editing early music and finishing his biography of Delius) he ends the letter on a somewhat contrite note:

This all sounds very egotistic I'm afraid, but I have very little other news to tell you, as I have been so busy, as you may imagine, with these things during the last few months that I have had little time to devote to anything else.

Do let me hear from you sometimes, what you are doing and what you are writing. It seems ages since I had more than a few lines from you - though I

am such a miserably bad correspondent myself that I have no right to grumble.¹⁹⁵

Taylor's reply to this letter is in the British Library¹⁹⁶ and, as it is brief, is worth quoting in full. It shows very clearly the easy, friendly relationship between the two men and Taylor's real, almost fatherly, concern for Warlock (especially illustrated in the third paragraph). Unfortunately it has proved impossible to discover more about Dorothy Lunt, a pupil at the S.A. College of Music during the 1920s. She died in George in the Cape Province a few years ago and all her papers and press-cuttings were destroyed by her family. She is, however, immortalized in this one letter and in the College of Music Library at the University of Cape Town there is a copy of Warlock's song, *As Ever I Saw*,¹⁹⁷ which had once belonged to her: on the right hand top corner is written "Dorothy A. Lunt S.A.C.M. December 1921":

S.A.C.M.
Cape Town
Nov. 30 22

Phil my dear

This is not an answer to your letter telling me of your interesting activities - It is just a line of Xmas & New Year greetings, bringing you my every good wish & love.

Of course I will get as many of your new publications done as possible. You have not sent me anything lately, except the part-song & drinking songs - Let me see anything else you have. I am thrilled to hear that the Delius book will soon be out - Do send me an inscribed copy.

Don't stay in London too long, there's a good fellow, it doesn't suit you I'm certain.

The enclosed is from a weekly. See how famous you are! The Dorothy Lunt mentioned is a piano pupil of mine who is also an excellent singer, who has done many of your songs.

Bless you old boy.

Affectionately,
Colin

As was often the case, Warlock's 1922 Christmas greetings to Taylor took the form of a gift of his latest publications, "some more *Little Peterisms* " as he called them. In this letter he also wrote of James Joyce's¹⁹⁸ controversial book, *Ulysses*:¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.10.1925.

¹⁹⁶ Unpublished letter from Taylor to Warlock, London, BL, Add. MS 57964.

¹⁹⁷ Cape Town, UCT Library, TP 780.3 WAR 70/618.

¹⁹⁸ 1882-1941, Irish writer and novelist.

I hope you are keeping well and doing well. It seems ages since I heard anything of you....

I wonder if any copies of that astounding book "Ulysses" by James Joyce have reached Cape Town. It is a work of quite stupendous genius, a real masterpiece that may justly take its place besides the masterpieces of Rabelais²⁰⁰ and Petronius.²⁰¹ Having read some of his earlier work and been much bored by it, I approached this book thoroughly prejudiced against it - but I was very quickly converted. It is, of course, almost unprocurable already. I believe you set some very early poems of Joyce to music, didn't you - "O cool is the valley"²⁰² etc?²⁰³

In his next letter Warlock wrote in some detail about some of the poetry and books he had been reading by men such as Edgell Rickword (1898-1982),²⁰⁴ William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)²⁰⁵ and Michael Arlen (1895-1956).²⁰⁶ Arlen was an Armenian (his real name was Dikran Kouyoumdjian) with whom Warlock had first come into contact during the brief association with the D.H. Lawrence set in 1915. He was described by Lady Ottoline Morrell as "a fat dark-blooded tight-skinned Armenian Jew...[with] a certain vulgar sexual force...very coarse-grained and conceited".²⁰⁷ Warlock's rather cool and bitter reference to Lawrence's habit of using autobiographical techniques in his writings is no doubt the result of his having had to threaten Lawrence with legal action in 1921 on account of his malicious portrayal of him as the unattractive Halliday in *Women in Love*:²⁰⁸

I suppose you get a good supply of new books in Cape Town. I can't pretend to keep pace with the flood of novels and poetry that streams from the English press. When I was in London I stayed with a bookseller and came across a few good things. I told you, I think, about "Ulysses" - a most stupendous creation. And there's a very remarkable little volume of poems

¹⁹⁹ Joyce, *Ulysses*, Shakespeare & Co., Paris, 1922; first published in England, Egoist Press, London, 1922. A work which gained notoriety by being banned for a time in most countries.

²⁰⁰ François Rabelais, c.1494-1553, French writer.

²⁰¹ Petronius Arbiter, d. A.D. 66, Roman poet and reputed author of the *Satyricon*.

²⁰² Joyce, *Chamber Music*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1907. There are no settings of Joyce's poetry listed among Colin Taylor's extant works.

²⁰³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.12.1922.

²⁰⁴ English poet.

²⁰⁵ Irish poet, dramatist and critic.

²⁰⁶ Bulgarian-born, Armenian author; naturalized Englishman, educated at Malvern College.

²⁰⁷ Writing on 3.12.1915. (ed. Gaythorne-Hardy, R. *Ottoline at Garsington: Memoirs of Lady Ottoline Morrell*, 1915-17 Faber, London, 1974, p.77).

²⁰⁸ Begun in 1913 but not published until seven years later.

called "Behind the Eyes"²⁰⁹ by Edgell Rickword²¹⁰ (published by Sidgwick and Jackson) - quite the best I've seen by any young and unknown writer. Yeats has published his autobiography which is finely written and anecdotically interesting - but it's only in an expensive and limited edition.²¹¹ A very brilliant, if somewhat superficial novel called "Piracy"²¹² by Michael Arlen (an Armenian educated in England) which is having a great success, contains an amusing account of Nigel Bannerman's little escapade which got him the sack from Malvern.²¹³ It seems that novel-writing is the way to make money. This is only the third book Arlen has published and he tells me he has over £1200 for royalties and other rights in England and America. And it's nearly all autobiography into the bargain - just as it is with D.H. Lawrence and many another so-called novelist.²¹⁴

The last time that Warlock and Taylor met was in the summer of 1924 when the latter paid a honeymoon visit to England. Warlock wrote Taylor a few lines from Chelsea (6A Bury Street) responding to a note from Taylor saying how much he too had enjoyed their reunion and hoping that they would meet again:

I, if anyone, ought to apologize for my egotistical conversation the other night. But it was so delightful seeing you again after so long a while - and one is tempted on such occasions to gibber away regardless. I look forward to our next meeting....²¹⁵

There are no other details as to their subsequent meetings in England during that summer, only one typically mysterious note written by Warlock to Taylor from the *Lord Nelson Hotel* in Poole, Dorset inviting him to come down to stay. There is even the suggestion that they should meet at Southampton from where Taylor would have sailed back to Cape Town. Alas, the letter did not reach Taylor in time and was eventually forwarded to him in Cape Town after having been re-addressed twice:

As I have shut up my house and no letters are being forwarded for the present, I hasten to let you know my whereabouts (which please keep strictly to yourself) lest you should write or call in vain.

²⁰⁹ Rickword, E., *Behind the Eyes*, Sidgwick & Jackson, London, 1921.

²¹⁰ b.1898, English writer and poet.

²¹¹ Yeats, W.B., *The Trembling of the Veil*, privately printed (1000 copies), T. Werner Laurie, London, 1922.

²¹² Arlen, *Piracy*, Collins, London, 1922.

²¹³ An English public school for boys in Worcestershire founded in 1862. In his novel, *Piracy* (1922), Michael Arlen incorporated this escapade which led to Bannerman's expulsion from Malvern.

²¹⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.12.1922.

²¹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.6.1924.

I have had a very strange experience, resulting in an experience of an incredibly romantic kind and I feel rejuvenated in mind and body, and full of new life and vigour - perhaps your genial influence had something to do with it!

Anyway if you feel inclined to spend a few days at this perfectly delightful little seaport town, which is absolutely unknown to the tripper, let me know. It is not far from Southampton, so you could take it on the way.

Or if you can't manage that, we might perhaps meet in Southampton.

Much love.

Always affectionately yours

Phil²¹⁶

Early in January 1925 Taylor's mother died and Warlock wrote promptly from Eynsford to offer his condolences. Knowing of the unhappy and at times torrid relationship he had had with his own mother it is interesting and moving to read Warlock's comments about Mrs. Taylor. There is perhaps just a note of sadness detectable in his writing, a sadness in the awareness of something that had been lacking in his own life:

I am very sorry to hear of your mother's death - I remember so well meeting her at Eton years ago - and you must feel it all the more keenly, being so far away, unable to be with her at the end. I always thought of you as being singularly fortunate in having a mother who remained so sympathetic and understanding and alive to the changes in the world in her old age; but it's a comfort to you, in a way, that the other event came when it did to soften the blow of her loss - though in another way her death must have robbed you of some of the joy you would have felt in the other had it come unaccompanied.²¹⁷

The "other event" referred to in this surprisingly impersonal way was the birth of Taylor's son, Hugh, on 20.1.1925. Especially after the warm expressions of sympathy on the death of his mother, it seems odd that Warlock should have chosen these particular words to refer to the birth of Taylor's first child. At least some short phrase of congratulation or Warlockian witticism might have been expected though, to be fair, the letter does end with a message of "love and best of good wishes to you all". Is it perhaps that he felt some slight tinge of remorse about his own ex-wife and nine-year-old son, Nigel, about whom we hear so little, and did not wish to write

²¹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.7.1924.

²¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1925.

more fully about something which would remind him about his own unhappy experiences and guilt? It is also perhaps worth noting that nowhere in the surviving letters to Taylor does he make specific reference to his own marriage, his son or to Taylor's marriage. These were personal things that he seemed to prefer to keep to himself and which do not feature in any of his correspondence.

When Warlock moved to Eynsford in Kent he still continued to look after Taylor's interests at various London music publishers. Here is the relevant extract from a letter of 1925, the same one in which he sympathized with Taylor on the death of his mother.

I corrected proofs of "Holiday Hearts" some weeks ago, and I shall always be pleased to do anything I can for you here, in the way of placing MSS and reading proofs. I handed over all your books to an agent before I left London, with instructions that they should be carefully packed and sent off to you. Doubtless they will have reached you before you receive this letter....

Did you take away all the works of mine you wanted? If not, let me know and I will send you any you haven't got.²¹⁸

And again a few months later with more news of publishers:

I am only too pleased to do anything I can for your work at any time, so please don't hesitate to send me any MSS or proofs you want dealt with. I had not heard that the pieces had been accepted, nor have I heard about the songs which I also handed to Foss of the Oxford Press. The firm of Winthrop Rogers has been acquired by Hawkes of Denman Street, Piccadilly Circus; the manager is an American, E.R. Voigt, a very intelligent and progressive person who is keen on getting good things to publish. He might be useful to you....²¹⁹

In the same letter Warlock briefly mentions a clash with one of the London music establishment, the music critic, Percy Scholes (1877-1958).²²⁰ The reference to "a certain article of fireside use" is the private joke between Taylor and Warlock about the use of a pair of bellows in a somewhat unorthodox and rather basic fashion. Taylor wrote briefly about this in the original typescript for his article for the

²¹⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1925.

²¹⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.6.1925.

²²⁰ English music critic, organist, teacher and lexicographer. His magnum opus is the *Oxford Companion to Music*, O.U.P., London, 1938.

Composer magazine but it did not, for some reason or other, appear in the published article. Jack Lindsay also had something to say about the role of the bellows in Warlock's campaigns:

At a concert hall he heard a critic say what a pity to spend a summer afternoon in a stuffy hall instead of open-airing at Lord's; he proceeded to harass the man with a series of postcards and even sent him a pair of bellows with instructions as how to get a maximum of fresh air.²²¹

Warlock also writes about the author, Aldous Huxley (1894-1963),²²² (another one of Taylor's former pupils at Eton) and his reaction to finding himself portrayed as the character Coleman in Huxley's novel, *Antic Hay* (1923):

I'm also renewing my campaign against the newspaper-men who criticize music without having any qualification for doing so. Amongst several amusing episodes, I may mention that Mr. Percy A. Scholes is at present threatening to run me in for telling him to do what the M.F.H.²²³ told the cockney who rode over the hounds to do to himself with a certain article of fireside use. It will be great fun if he can be induced to do this (this is ambiguous, but I meant - to run me in; however, may he also do the other thing if he can!)

Aldous Huxley is a very clever and amusing writer. The last time I met him we had a conversation which I was amused to discover, very much touched up, in a book called "Antic Hay". You should read it and see if you recognize me! I've not read the book you mention, but there is another excellently funny novel of his called "Crome Yellow".²²⁴

In the British Library amongst the Cecil Gray Papers there is a letter from Warlock to Robert Nichols giving fuller details of the clash with Percy Scholes:

And yet things like that stinking bag of putrescent tripe, Percy A. Scholes who is permitted to gull the readers of "The Observer" week by week are accustomed to dismiss his [Liszt's] entire life's work, together with that of Berlioz, as unworthy of serious consideration, while columns are devoted to the latest mess puked up by Gustav Holst and his miserable like. On one occasion when he had dismissed Liszt en bloc in a contemptuous line, I asked Scholes, in the presence of numerous witnesses in the interval at a concert, whether he knew any of the great works of Liszt, mentioning ten or a dozen by name - and he confessed that he did not: whereupon I informed him that he was a most impudent charlatan, obtaining money by false pretences by posing as an authority on a subject of which he was grossly

²²¹ Lindsay, op. cit., p.87.

²²² English author; a contemporary of Warlock at Eton.

²²³ Master of the Foxhounds.

²²⁴ 1921.

ignorant - and that in no other branch of journalism, even, would such gross incompetence be tolerated.²²⁵

In the same letter to Taylor (July 1925) he writes warmly about another important figure in his musical life, one of his most loyal friends and admirers, the singer John Goss (1894-1953),²²⁶ who did much to promote both his music and that of van Dieren:

John Goss and his male-voice quartet have recently made some splendid gramophone records (HMV) which you should try and hear.²²⁷ Their concerts of these so-called "sociable songs" - folk-songs, shanties, hymns, army songs etc., arranged for solo voice, men's voice chorus and piano - are some of the most enjoyable we have in London at present. And for serious work also, Goss is becoming one of our best singers. He is a very good musician and one of the advisors, for songs, to the Oxford Press.

Details of these four ten-inch 78 rpm records, together with a lengthy review, appeared in the *Gramophone* magazine, June 1925:

Songs from the Week-end Book [Nonesuch Press]

John Goss (baritone) with male quartet and pianoforte accompaniment played by Hubert J. Foss. 10in., 3s each.

B.1999 *Shenandoah* with (a) *Rio Grande* and (b) *Billy Boy*. Sea shanties arranged by R.R. Terry

B.2016 (a) *Hey Ho, to the Greenwood* (William Byrd), (b) *Lillibulero* (Old English song arranged Reginald Paul), with *Aye Waukin' Oh* (Scottish song), arranged W. Augustus Barrett.

B.2017 (a) *O good ale, thou art my darling* (Old English song), arranged Peter Warlock; (b) *Sinner, please doan let this harves' pass* (Negro Spiritual), arranged H.T. Burleigh,²²⁸ with *O sweet fa's the eve* (Norwegian folk tune), arranged E.J. Moeran.

B.2018 (a) *And when I die*; (b) *The last long mile* (Army marching songs), arranged Hubert J. Foss, with (a) *Can't you dance the polka?* (sea shanty), arranged E.J. Moeran; (b) *A-Roving* (sea shanty), arranged Cecil J. Sharp.

The reviewer, N.P., wrote most enthusiastically about these recordings, paying a fine tribute to John Goss, his singers and the accompanist in the final paragraph:

²²⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Robert Nichols, 24.2.1925, London, BL, Add MS 53775.

²²⁶ English baritone.

²²⁷ These were recorded in London, March 1925.

²²⁸ Henry Thacker Burleigh, 1866-1949, American negro singer and composer.

Mr. Goss, with a male quartet drawn, I believe, from Westminster Cathedral choir, performs his very varied task in a wholly admirable manner, with unflagging zest and artistry. His voice, as I had suspected, records very well, but it is his sense of rhythm and phrasing, in a word, his musicianship, which distinguishes these delightful discs. Musicianly, too, is the adjective for the part played by the male quartet and the accompaniment.

Perhaps it was this particular partnership between Goss and Foss which inspired one of Warlock's more outrageous limericks:

That scandalous pair Goss and Foss
Once attempted to put it across
A girl on a train
But their efforts proved vain,
So Foss tossed off Goss at King's Cross

Whilst on the subject of limericks, there is an account by Lindsay worth quoting especially as it refers to the now notorious toilet-roll thought to have been in the possession of the composer and friend of Warlock, Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987).²²⁹ At present (1990) her estate is being wound up so information on the subject is still uncertain:

...he had responded with scholarly seriousness, as if to some important questionnaire on Elizabethan madrigals, when I suggested he might aid Douglas who was compiling a book of obscene limericks for the American market...Heseltine typed out a vast number, some by himself, others anonymous, on a toilet-roll, which he unwound on to a typewriter and then rewound like an ancient book-roll.²³⁰

In August 1925 he wrote from Eynsford with news of a recent Taylor work which he had just seen through its final stages of printing:

I don't know whether you like to preserve your MSS - some people do - so I send you back "Capricietto"²³¹ with one copy of the proofs. I have corrected

²²⁹ English composer and pianist. She wrote to his mother after his death: "I knew Philip very well, though not for a great many years...I always thought that he had the greatest capacity for Beauty which any man could possibly possess...He was so fine and generous and great-hearted...His restlessness, and the dissatisfaction of the artist in him seemed part of his life's seeking after loveliness. He was so touchingly humble about his music..." Unpublished letter from Elizabeth Poston to Edith Buckley Jones, 13.1.1931, London, BL, Add MS 57964.

²³⁰ Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p.166.

²³¹ O.U.P., 1925.

the other set and returned to press; as there are so few mistakes there will be no second proof and the piece should be out in a few weeks.²³²

Later that same month Warlock wrote to Taylor about one of the latter's songs, *The Windmill*, having just received the proofs from O.U.P. Whilst praising the composition, he tactfully suggested a small way in which he thinks the song could be improved:

Herewith MS and spare proof of "The Windmill" - which I like very much indeed. The words are quite delicious and the music fits them. The song ought to have a big sale - and as there is sure to be a second edition before long, will you forgive me if I make one criticism - the only one I could make of such a delightful thing - and that is you might consider the question of knocking out the four accidentals (without any alteration of notes)? It seems to me that they just detract a tiny scrap from the charming simplicity of the song; the tune is pure Phrygian mode - a rare thing in itself - and a perfectly-made accompaniment without the use of a single black note is still rarer, and, in this case, I think, would be more appropriate and beautiful.²³³

Taylor's reply to this letter is another of the few that have been preserved. In it he reveals his gratitude and the extent to which he relied on Warlock to look after his interests in London:

It was nice of you to trouble to send me proof and MS of "The Windmill" - I was awfully bucked that you liked the little song, for your opinion is the only one that I really care to have. And of course your criticism was just right. I will certainly take your suggestion should another edition be wanted.

By this mail I am sending to the University Press four little tunes for piano and string orchestra which I hope they will take, but doubt if they will, as it means a very limited sale and a considerable cost to print. But should luck be with me I will ask them to send the proofs to you, thus once again encroaching on your good-nature and your time. Should they turn the things down, I will still bother you and request them to send the MSS to you, and ask you then to try Novello.

In this, I will enclose a note to Brooks of Novello in case it is needed. You could then post the MSS and note to Novello without your troubling to write at all. I do hope this is not bothering you too much, but it does save weeks and weeks to have you help me.

I hope your work prospers. Write again soon and let me have some of your things....²³⁴

²³² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1925.

²³³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 28.8.1925.

²³⁴ Unpublished letter from Taylor to Warlock, 30.9.1925.

When he wrote in early December 1925 Warlock again had some constructive comments to make about a new song by Taylor, *The Hill*,²³⁵ which he had just seen through the proof stage. Examples of some of the uncommon Italian words which Warlock refers to in this song are *con grande energia di sentimento* and *stentito*:

There is one point about your songs which occurred to me when reading the proofs of "The Hill". Would it not be better to give all the stage directions in English instead of Italian? It is not as though it were instrumental music, which is international. As the text is English, the song is clearly only for English-speaking people, who may not understand some of the rather uncommon Italian words employed.²³⁶

It is interesting to look at some of Warlock's own songs of 1925 to see to what extent he himself followed his own suggestions as to the use of Italian "stage directions". Three songs date from this year: *Pretty Ring Time*, *A Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua* and *The Sick Heart*. Warlock is fairly consistent in giving English instructions (such as *slowly*, *very lightly* or *very quietly*) to the singer whereas the pianist finds the usual conventional Italian terminology apart from one unusual one, *ma chiaro*.²³⁷

In an earlier letter of February 1925 Warlock had written to Taylor about a mundane matter, the forwarding of some of the latter's books to South Africa. He begins his next letter with an apology for a misunderstanding as to why they had not been despatched as arranged:

I am so sorry there has been such a rotten muddle and delay about your books. It now appears that they have been lying in Burchett's warehouse all the while, owing to the miscarriage of a letter Burchett wrote me, asking whether they should be sent carriage paid or carriage forward. However, I am assured that they were actually despatched about a week ago.²³⁸

He continues this letter with a comment about London music publishers and an apology for the delay there had been with the MSS Taylor had sent him:

Since Winthrop Rogers Ltd. was acquired by Hawkes, the firm has become even slower and more unbusinesslike (if possible) than it was before. The

²³⁵ Words by James Stephens, 1882-1950, Irish poet and story-teller.

²³⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

²³⁷ "But clearly", in the song, *The Sick Heart* (composed 1925), O.U.P., 1928.

²³⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.9.1926.

MSS of your suite for piano and strings and your song "Retrospect" must have been lying there for months (mea culpa, for I should have prodded Mr. Voigt about them before), but there is nothing doing in that quarter; the firm is restricting its output considerably. I have now sent the MSS to Novello.²³⁹

At the beginning of January 1929 Warlock wrote a rather depressing letter to Taylor from 78 Denbigh Street in London. In it he tells of his unsuccessful attempts to get his rich uncle Evelyn to part with some money and continues to write in detail about the London music scene, composers and new music. All this is discussed in detail in chapter 7. Here he writes about his own gloomy state and the whereabouts of some of Taylor's MSS:

I am an execrable correspondent - if one may call a correspondent one who does not correspond at all - but in extenuation I can only plead that, as far as my own activities are concerned, there is less and less of any interest to correspond about, as time goes on....

I must apologize most humbly for not returning your MSS earlier. At the moment, I am sorry to say that they are stored in a warehouse with most of my other property, but I hope to get everything out in the course of the next month or two, and I will post them to you as soon as ever I can. It is no trouble at all to correct your proofs. No one ever looks at a proof at the Oxford Press, and if I didn't read them, they would just not be read at all. I have had to protest many times against this firm's habit of sending out proofs not only unread, but so wet from the press that one had to spread them out to dry before a fire, before it was possible to write on them.

This letter ended with the following paragraph:

I am so glad to hear you are well and happy. Long may you remain so! Please give my best regards to your family, and for yourself, accept my most affectionate greetings and every good wish for 1929.²⁴⁰

There was only one more letter to Taylor, written in August 1929, mostly concerned with the Delius Festival which Warlock was helping to arrange. This is one of the two letters which Taylor presented to the Eton Music School in 1939 and which is now housed in the Eton College Collections. From then on the correspondence with Taylor ceased and Warlock drifted more and more into the depths of gloom and depression which characterised the last year of his life.

²³⁹ *ibid.*

²⁴⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 29.1.1929.



To my friend Phil Heseltine

Frederick Delius

14. Frederick Delius
(Frontispiece to Warlock's book on Delius, John Lane, London, 1923)

CHAPTER 5

WARLOCK AND DELIUS

I feel I must write and tell you how very much I enjoyed your concert last night, though I cannot adequately express in words what intense pleasure it was to me to hear such perfect performances of such perfect music...your works appeal to me strongly - so much more than any other music I have ever heard....¹

Read any article or book on Warlock and his music and the name of Frederick Delius will occur almost immediately. Even those musicians who know little about Warlock will probably be aware of his infatuation with the music of Delius, the influence it had on his own development as a composer, and the enormous effort he put into its promotion. From letters written in his early schoolboy days to those written in the last days of his life, references to Delius and his music abound.²

Nowhere is this passion for Delius's music better illustrated than in Warlock's correspondence with Taylor. In these letters, which span some eighteen years, the reader constantly comes across comments and observations which illuminate the unique friendship between Warlock and Delius, often in a most moving way.

The young Warlock's first recorded reference to Delius appears in a letter to his mother from his preparatory school. Knowing that his Uncle Joseph lived not far from Delius's home at Grez-sur-Loing he wrote:

I am going to ask Aunt Jessie to write to Uncle Joe for Frederick Delius's autograph....³

¹ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 17.6.1911, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.39-40.

² Delius's letters to Warlock are in London, BL, Add MS 52547/8. The 160 letters from Warlock to Delius were acquired by the composer, Elizabeth Poston, at a Sotheby's auction on 16.5.1964 for £1300 and during her lifetime she was unwilling to allow anyone to see them. Fortunately many of these are quoted in Gray, op. cit. Rudland, M., and Cox, D., "Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987)", *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, February 1988, no.40, p.15.

³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 17.5.1908, London, BL, Add MS 57958.

At Eton in 1910 his interest in Delius gradually began to manifest itself, rather as schoolboys today develop a craze for a certain pop star or group. There is no record as to why he should have suddenly developed this interest. There are simply increasing references to Delius's music in his letters home, for example to the opera, *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, which he hoped would "be a big success" under Beecham, "the eminent pillmaker's son [who has] done and is doing a great deal for music in England".⁴

Besides Taylor, the young Warlock had been befriended by Edward Mason (1878-1915),⁵ a cellist who visited the school "some days in the week to teach music", and whom he described in a letter to his mother as someone who "used to be a kind of sub-conductor at Thomas Beecham's orchestral concerts...now in the New Symphony Orchestra and several quartets, and runs a choir of his own".⁶ Mason was also a great devotee of Delius's music and no doubt communicated his enthusiastic first hand knowledge to the youthful fellow admirer. So much so that Warlock wrote in excited terms to his mother about his musical hero:

[Mason] is an enthusiast in the cause of that really great and (here in his native land only) much neglected composer Frederick Delius, whose works I positively adore; I am studying his operas and songs now with very great pleasure...although I have heard nothing of his music, yet from what I can discover at the piano, I may say that so far as I have yet found, Delius comes the nearest to my own imperfect ideal of music, though when I say nearest I mean 'one of the nearest', as I could not say I like him better than Elgar or Wagner, but still I think he is wonderful. There is one little work of his: a part-song for voices unaccompanied, to words by Arthur Symonds,⁷ On Craig Ddu: I think that song appeals to me as much as almost anything I have ever heard, by the way it absolutely catches the spirit of the Welsh hills and transfers it to music. I would give anything to hear it sung, as it seems to me nothing short of wonderful.⁸

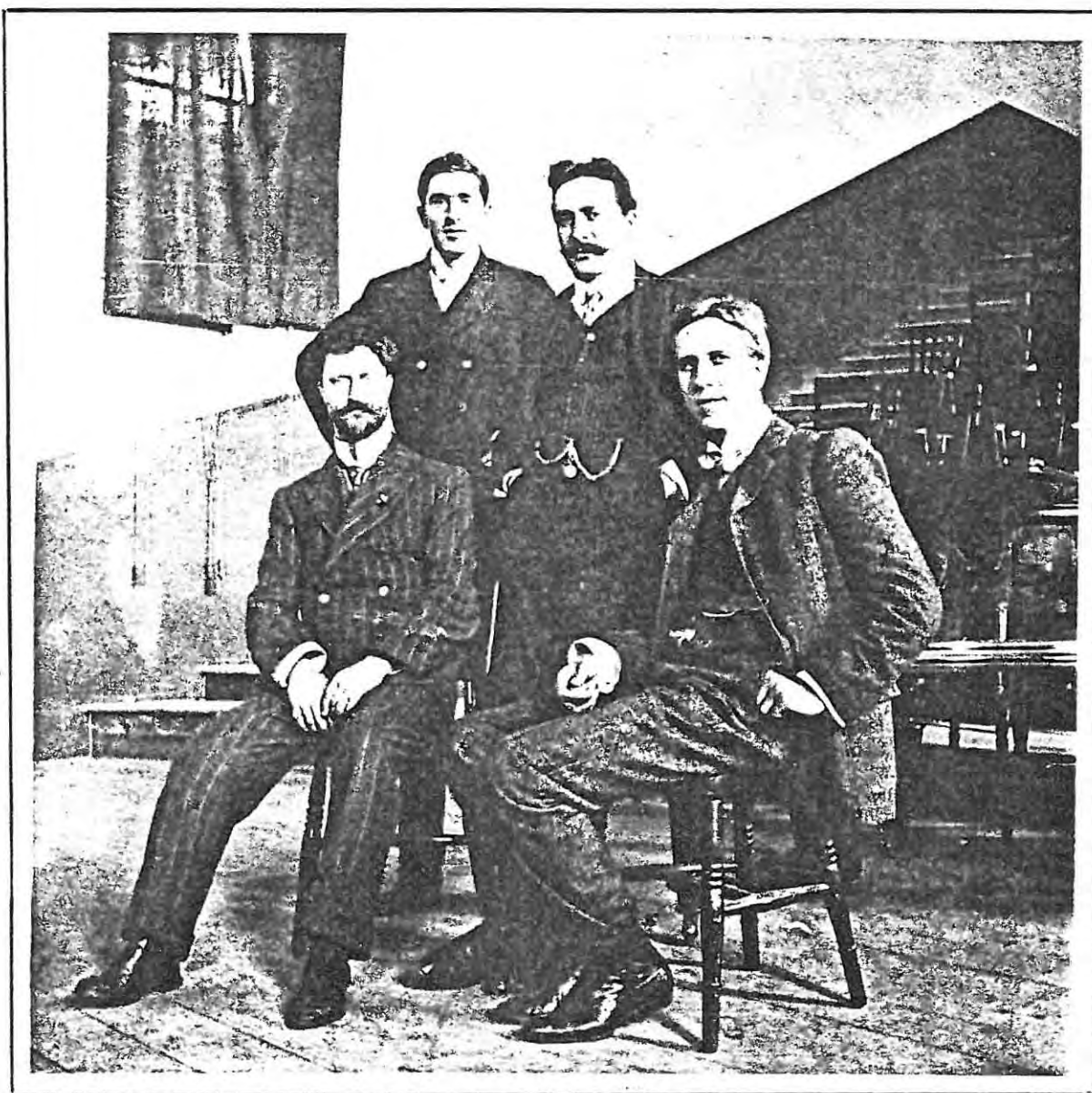
⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 20.2.1910, London, BL, Add MS 57959.

⁵ Cellist and conductor; a member of the Grimson Quartet together with Frank Bridge, and a director of the New Symphony Orchestra; killed in action in France.

⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 28.6.1910, London, BL, Add MS 57959.

⁷ 1865-1945, English poet.

⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 7.10.1910, London, BL, Add MS 57959.



15. Eton College Music Staff (c.1905).
Back row: Colin Taylor, Edward Mason; Front row: Claphaw, Thomas Dunhill (in
the possession of Hugh Taylor)

When reading this letter it is important to remember that Warlock was only sixteen at the time, and that he had managed, without assistance and without the aid of recordings (taken so much for granted these days) the remarkable feat of studying complicated scores of this difficult contemporary music. When it was time for Christmas presents at the end of 1910, his request was for some money to buy the score of *Brigg Fair*.⁹ Understandably he longed for the opportunity to hear some of Delius's music:

Mr Mason lent me a copy of Delius's *Sea Drift*,¹⁰ which he is producing in London shortly: it is absolutely heavenly, and, to my mind, as near perfect almost as any music I have ever seen. What it must be with the proper orchestral colour! O that I could hear some Delius!¹¹

At last this wish was granted. On Friday, 16.6.1911 Beecham was due to conduct a concert devoted entirely to the works of Delius. Warlock had heard all about it from Mason, who had shown him a copy of the *Songs of Sunset* which were to be given their first London performance by the Thomas Beecham Orchestra and Edward Mason Choir¹² on this occasion. In a letter to his mother he waxed lyrical about this new discovery:

Mr Mason showed me a copy of *Songs of Sunset* last week, and though I only had half an hour's strum at it, I am absolutely raving over it: I consider it is one of if not the finest and most lovely pieces of music I have ever come across: it is very sad in character, but will be glorious when performed. I do envy you going to the concert.¹³

As the day of the concert drew nearer, his frustrations grew at the thought of not being able to attend. This is clearly apparent when he writes:

Mr Mason was at the Queen's Hall this afternoon when they were having a rehearsal for the Delius concert: Delius was there himself. I cannot tell you how absolutely tantalizing it is for me to hear them all talking about it - I

⁹ 1907.

¹⁰ *Sea-Drift*, for baritone, chorus and orchestra, 1903.

¹¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 12.2.1911, London, BL, Add MS 57959.

¹² Formed by Mason in 1907 and consisting of some 100 voices its aim was to produce new works by young British composers; both Holbrooke and Beecham made use of it.

¹³ Letter from Warlock to his mother, 5.6.1911, London, BL, Add MS 57959.

who would give anything to hear one work of the composer whom I adore above all others.¹⁴

It is here that Taylor makes his appearance as the *deus ex machina* for, to use his own words, he "wangled permission"¹⁵ from the school authorities to take the boy to the concert. An excited young Warlock wrote excitedly to his mother the day before this great event:

I am so excited I hardly know what I am doing. I have permission to come to the Delius concert tomorrow night, under the supervision of Colin Taylor. Mr. Brinton¹⁶ has been extremely nice about it. I am to report myself to him at 6 o'clock tomorrow, come up by the 6.28 from Slough and report to Colin Taylor at Paddington: he is coming straight up from Oxford where he teaches on Fridays, and his train arrives at Paddington five minutes before mine. I shall come up with him to Queen's Hall where I will meet you (main entrance) shortly after 8. I shall go back with him, as he returns here.¹⁷

Tomlinson describes an amusing incident after the concert on the return journey to Eton:

On the way back to Eton after the concert Philip was brought down to earth by Thomas Dunhill, who travelled back in the same compartment...He announced to Colin Taylor and Philip that he almost went to the concert but didn't think he could stand a whole evening of Delius, so he went to White City¹⁸ instead.¹⁹

The next day still intoxicated by the heady music, the boy wrote a letter to the great man himself:

I feel I must write and tell you how much I enjoyed your concert last night, though I cannot adequately express in words what intense pleasure it was to me to hear such perfect performances of such perfect music. I hope you will not mind my writing to you like this, but I write in all sincerity, and your works appeal to me so strongly - so much more than any other music I have ever heard - that I feel I cannot but tell you what joy they afford me, not only in the hearing of them, and in studying vocal scores at the piano (which until last night was my only means of getting to know your music), but also in the impression they leave, for I am sure that to hear and be moved by

¹⁴ Letter from Warlock to his mother, 7.6.1911, Add MS 57960.

¹⁵ Taylor, op. cit., p.10.

¹⁶ Warlock's housemaster.

¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 15.6.1911, London, BL, Add MS 57960.

¹⁸ A sports stadium.

¹⁹ Tomlinson, *Warlock and Delius*, Thames, London, 1976, p.13.

beautiful music is to be influenced for good - far more than any number of sermons and discourses can influence.

It was extremely kind of you to see me in the interval, especially as you had so many friends to talk to. I am most grateful to you for allowing me to make your acquaintance, and I shall value it very highly.

I cannot thank you enough for allowing me to meet you and for the most glorious evening I have ever spent.²⁰

The following day he wrote an equally ecstatic letter to his mother mentioning Taylor and his reactions to the concert as well:

I have not yet got over Friday night - the recollections of that music and the impressions they made haunt me...I have never heard any music to touch it, and truly, words fail me to describe it at all - it is too divine. Colin Taylor enjoyed it immensely: he said he had not for a long time been so moved and described parts of the music by a singularly happy phrase, saying "it was so beautiful that it almost hurt", which I think is an excellent description...Yes, Friday evening was the most perfectly happy evening I have ever spent, and I shall never forget it.²¹

A review of this concert appeared in the *Musical Times* and is here quoted as it gives full details of the programme played that evening:

The Delius Concert given at Queen's Hall served both to introduce a new work by that composer, and to remind us of the existence of Mr. Beecham and his Symphony Orchestra. The new work was a cycle of 'Songs of Sunset' to poems by Ernest Dowson,²² expressing the mutually reasoned despair of two lovers on the eve of separation. The best feature of the music was the intensity and dignity of its pathos. It perhaps falls short of Mr. Delius's best work in inventiveness, but his characteristic harmonies and coloration are employed with abundance, and proportionate effect...The remainder of the programme consisted of 'Appalachia',²³ 'Paris'²⁴ and the 'Dance Rhapsody'.²⁵ Mr. Beecham conducted with all the ability and individuality of method with which he made us familiar last year.²⁶

It is interesting at this stage to see what Gray had to say on the subject of the ensuing friendship between Delius and Warlock:

²⁰ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 17.6.1911, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.39-40.

²¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 18.6.1911, London, BL, Add MS 57960.

²² 1867-1900, leading English poet of the 1890s.

²³ 1896.

²⁴ 1899.

²⁵ 1908.

²⁶ *Musical Times*, 1911, pp.470-471.

That such a close and enduring friendship should exist between two people of such disparate ages may perhaps seem surprising, or at least unusual - Delius was a man of close on fifty when they met for the first time - but all his life Philip possessed the rare gift of being able to surmount the invisible barriers which ordinarily cut off one generation from complete intimacy with another; he was always able to establish as close a contact and as real an equality with persons much older and much younger than himself as with those of his own age. The relationship with Delius, however, was of a deeper and more comprehensive order than that of ordinary friendship; it comprised also that of master and disciple, and almost of father and son. In the years of Philip's adolescence, indeed, from sixteen onwards till about twenty-three, Delius was not merely his guide and mentor in questions of music and art generally, but also in the affairs of ordinary life, and it is admirable and touching to see from their correspondence how often Delius would lay aside his work in order to write long letters of help and advice to his young friend concerning religion, sex, the choice of a career, and all the hundred and one problems that beset adolescence. In return Delius found in Philip not only an indefatigable propagandist for his art, but also an invaluable assistant in such matters as making of transcriptions of orchestral scores, correcting proofs, and in innumerable other services of a similar nature.²⁷

Both Gray and Alan Jefferson²⁸ register doubts as to whether this friendship was entirely beneficial to either of the two men:

...one cannot help feeling that such a complete absorption in the music of Delius...was definitely harmful in certain respects; not merely because such a highly personal and idiosyncratic art must of necessity constitute a dangerous influence upon an aspiring composer, but also because its inner spirit and emotional content are fraught with perilous consequences to any who are insufficiently provided with the necessary antidote to it.²⁹

Jefferson is much harsher in his criticism of the friendship though he fails to explain why he uses the strong words "irreparable damage" to describe Delius's advice to Warlock. A great deal of his comment seems somewhat influenced by what Beecham wrote in his biography of Delius in 1959. Tomlinson strongly disagrees with Jefferson's unsympathetic treatment and says that "anyone coming across Warlock for the first time in this book would receive a totally false impression".³⁰

And so a remarkable and in some ways unfortunate friendship started and grew between the two - remarkable because of the intense pleasure it gave to Delius and unfortunate because of Heseltine's particular psychology.

²⁷ Gray, *op. cit.*, p.37.

²⁸ b.1921, English author and musicologist.

²⁹ Gray, *op.cit.*, pp.58-59.

³⁰ Tomlinson, *op. cit.*, p.25.

His correspondence with Delius shows that he sought and was given advice by entirely the wrong person and that Delius was unaware - until too late - of the kind of person Heseltine really was. Delius treated him as though they both possessed the same characteristics and gave him the same warnings that he would have wished for in his own youth. But they were not in any way comparable either as personalities or as occupiers of the same environment, and Delius's advice did irreparable damage.³¹

Another person who knew both men well was the colourful and controversial conductor, Beecham, an ardent champion of Delius's music. This is what he had to say about their friendship:

Upon me the letters from both sides have always made an impression that is far from agreeable. The trouble began in 1913 when an anxious ex-schoolboy, beginning to look upon Frederick as an infallible guide, sought advice as to his immediate future. Frederick...advises his young friend to do exactly what he feels like doing, and to stick to it. If he considers that music is the only thing in the world which interests him, he should take it up to the exclusion of everything else. But he adds that everything depends on perseverance, for 'one never knows how far one can go'. This reads very pleasantly and would be harmless if there had not been a world of difference between the two men. Frederick, once he had escaped from Bradford, not only realized that music was everything on earth to him, but had the iron will to pursue his way towards a definite goal, without hesitations, misgivings, or complaints. By the time he had arrived at full manhood both his mind and character had hardened into moulds that nothing changed until the day of death. Philip was of quite a different type. At that time barely nineteen years of age, and of a mental development which he himself admitted was distinctly backward, he vaguely desired a career with all the intensity of a great longing and a fruitful imagination, but was entirely incapable of either following a fixed course, or doing some of those things which might have expedited the close of a long period of vacillating apprenticeship.³²

These critical words bring to mind the fact that Warlock, in a letter to Delius, had once referred to Beecham's operatic productions as "becoming more and more inferior and artistically valueless".³³ Beecham was certainly sensitive to such criticisms and also to the fact that Warlock and Delius had that same year (1916) tried to plan an ultimately unsuccessful rival opera season, "diametrically opposed to those of Thomas Beecham"³⁴ as Warlock himself put it. Small wonder then that Beecham's words on Warlock are far from complimentary. In the following extract it becomes blatantly apparent how patronising Beecham could be. After discussing

³¹ Jefferson, *Delius*, Dent, London, 1972, p.69.

³² Beecham, *Frederick Delius*, Hutchinson, London, 1959, p.175.

³³ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 11.10.1916, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.131-135.

³⁴ Beecham, op. cit., p.176.

this opera saga in rather egotistic terms, his final paragraphs on the friendship of Warlock and Delius become more and more uncomplimentary and judgmental:

...when I formed the English Opera Company which included most of the best singers in the country...I offered Philip a position on the musical staff. Here he would have had the opportunity of meeting a group of able and experienced persons, which after a while would have knocked some of the nonsense out of his head...He declined the offer....

It is no part of my task to denigrate either the character or abilities of that strange being Philip Heseltine. As I have said I always recognised his undoubted gifts, and I did something on more than one occasion to help steer them towards some definite goal. He had a genuine gift for composition, but this did not manifest itself until several years later, when he produced a handful of songs and small choral works, in many ways equal to anything being turned out by his contemporaries in England. This side of his development, however, is not that with which I am at present concerned. It is the string of letters from him to Frederick beginning in 1913 and continuing until 1919, most of which contain a repetitious story of self-impotence, self-distrust and wandering intention. Hardly the most considerate sort of communication to inflict upon a great man, whose health at this time was far from normal, and who had enough troubles to occupy his mind without being harassed by those of others...The real culprit, if culprit there be in this tangled affair, is Frederick, who should never have committed the psychological blunder of preaching the doctrine of relentless determination and assertion of will to someone incapable of receiving it. It is hard to resist the impression that Philip's whole life would have been smoother, better ordered and increasingly rational if he had not devoted it wholly to the service in many forms of one art alone...The result was that for most of the time he did not really know what to do with himself, and worked off his self-discontentment by vilipending diatribes against nearly everyone around him. That he had quite another side to his disposition which abounded in humour (many of his limericks are deservedly still in currency), a more than occasional streak of practicality, and a rousing enthusiasm when his interest was excited, I am happy to bear testimony; and this aspect of him arose more and more to the surface, after the assumption of the second facet of his dual personality as Peter Warlock. It was not until July 17th, 1919, that Frederick began to realize what was really the matter with his young friend, for he writes:

"Do not think, dear Phil, that luck is against you, because the real reason is that you do not push your ideas to their material end with sufficient energy and *suite dans les idées*. You would succeed at anything you take up if you would concentrate on it and not diffuse your energies in so many things. Stick to one thing just for two or three years and see if I am not right. I think you are admirably gifted as a writer; you would succeed either at this or as a composer if you would stick to it and push it through regardless of everything else...do not think I want to preach at you, I am so fond of you that I would like to see you become something and assert yourself, and know how gifted you are and what possibilities are in you".³⁵

³⁵ Beecham misquoted the postscript from Delius's letter to Warlock, 17.7.1919. See Carley, op. cit., pp.218-219: "Don't think I want to preach at you but I am so fond of you that I would like to see you become something & assert yourself as I know how gifted you are & what possibilities are in you. It annoys me to see fools succeeding all around us".

All quite true and sound, but advice that might have been given a little earlier in the day.³⁶

Brushing such criticism aside, Tomlinson sums up in a succinct paragraph the need to understand the vital importance of this friendship in Warlock's life and development:

It has been suggested that the friendship was harmful to Philip, and if Delius had never encouraged him his life might have gone differently. What would they want of Peter Warlock? A civil servant? If he had concentrated on one aspect to the exclusion of others, which would you choose? *The Curlew* or the *Peterisms*? *The Sackbut* or the lute transcriptions? *The English Ayre* or *Merry-go-down*? *Capriol* or the *Purcell Fantasias*? The carols or the limericks? All were part of Warlock, and the Delius friendship was a vital component.³⁷

This increasing obsession with the music of Delius during his last year at school had repercussions at home. After the ecstasy of that concert in June, his meeting with Delius and their ensuing correspondence, Warlock was now determined to pursue a career in music. His mother was, however, equally determined that he should go to Oxford to prepare for a career in the Civil Service or the Stock Exchange. In his article about the young Warlock, Taylor wrote in 1964:

It was not long before the burning question of Heseltine's career exercised the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Buckley Jones, the boy's mother and stepfather. Music of course was absolutely ruled out. When appealed to, Mamma (hoping I would side with the family) would say: "Dear Mr. Taylor, you have such great influence; cannot you make Phil see reason? He will listen to you".

This was all very well, but as my sympathies were entirely with the boy, I had to say so and naturally my stock was at an all time low.³⁸

Eventually a compromise was reached. Mrs. Buckley Jones agreed to allow the boy to go to Germany to study music for a while, feeling, no doubt, that he would at least acquire a knowledge of another language which would be useful in a Civil Service career. So in the autumn of 1911 Warlock left for Cologne where he stayed until early the following year.

³⁶ Beecham, op. cit., pp.176-180.

³⁷ Tomlinson, op. cit., p.28.

³⁸ Taylor, op. cit., pp.9-10.

Unfortunately his piano-teacher at the Conservatoire where he enrolled for lessons made him concentrate on finger exercises to the exclusion of everything else. The result was that his enthusiasm soon waned:

I am having piano lessons, but for five weeks now I have been given nothing but finger exercises to practise which, I am sorry to say bore me horribly, since I have not the slightest wish to become proficient on the piano.³⁹

By the end of 1911 he was so depressed that he wrote:

Heaven preserve me then from studying music! I should loathe music if I had to grind at it!

Certain musical work, such as orchestration, and its attendant studies, such as copying Delius scores, I do with pleasure, but piano I could never do, for my heart is not in it.⁴⁰

All this must have been a great disappointment for one who had obviously enjoyed piano lessons as a schoolboy. The approach of his teacher in Cologne was so very different from that of Taylor who had made every effort to encourage and interest him in an imaginative way. Warlock, nevertheless, tried to make the most of other musical opportunities by attending concerts and operas during his remaining time in Germany. His letters from this period are full of perceptive and often amusing comments about the music he had heard.

So much then by way of introduction to his obsession with the music of Delius. It is at this stage in the story that his correspondence with Taylor begins. His first letter had been a rather formal one from Eton thanking Taylor for making him "know and love modern music" which had become "the greatest joy"⁴¹ in his life.

His second letter to Taylor was a much longer one written from Cologne, full of references to Delius and his music:

³⁹ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 25.11.1911, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.40-43.

⁴⁰ Letter from Warlock to an unnamed correspondent, 9.12.1911, quoted by Tomlinson, op. cit., p.14.

⁴¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1911.

I have lately had two exceedingly interesting letters from Delius. He looked through my transcription of "Brigg Fair" and made corrections, and suggested that it should be fuller and more literal, though it is almost unplayable as it is!⁴² I am going to start work soon on an arrangement for 2 pianos of his poem "In a summer garden".⁴³ He was also kind enough to say that he would be glad to look through my "Nursery" scores⁴⁴ and give me a criticism of them, so when you have finished with them, will you please send them to him at Grez-sur-Loing, Seine et Marne, France, as that will save extra postage?⁴⁵

He then carries on to comment on a performance of *Brigg Fair* which he had heard in Coblenz the previous month (November 1911). Warlock had instinctively felt that in certain sections the piece had been performed at the wrong speed and a letter from Delius confirmed that this had indeed been the case. Delius went on to suggest that Warlock make a piano arrangement of either his *Summer Garden* or *Dance Rhapsody*:

I went to Coblenz last month to hear "Brigg Fair": such a performance!...In the "pastoral" introduction, I thought the flute and harp were playing in different keys! The wood-wind were extremely bad in it, though, as a whole, the orchestra was good: but the conductor!! The first section where the tune is stated, "With easy movement: ♩ = 63 was dragged so terribly as to lose all possible ease of movement. Would you believe that the man beat three slow beats in a bar!!! Much slower than ♩ = 63, but the three destroys the rhythm entirely. The second slow movement where the tune is given out in 4/4 in the brass, with detached chords for the strings: "Slow - with solemnity", he simply rushed, taking it only about twice as slow (i.e. ♩ = ♩ of 4/4 movt.) as the preceding quick movement in 3/4; of course, all the solemnity was clean gone!! I wrote and told Delius, and he said it made him shudder to think of!

Here is Delius's reaction to Warlock's letter about this unfortunate performance:

I am so glad you like the sound of Brigg Fair & am sorry you did not hear it conducted in a better way - What you say is perfectly correct - One must beat one in a bar; 3 makes me shudder - Then again the slow section can scarcely be taken slow enough - The maestoso section must be taken solemnly & not hurried - In other words it seems to have been a miserable performance!....

⁴² Delius's actual words were: "I have looked at it [the transcription of *Brigg Fair*] carefully again & find it exceedingly well done - In several places there are notes missing - & at times you might have made it rather fuller - With 2 pianos one need make no restrictions. One ought at times, I think, to interpret rather freely in order to try & regive the orchestral effect...." Letter from Delius to Warlock, 26.11.1911, Carley, op. cit., p.78.

⁴³ 1908; revise before 1911.

⁴⁴ Warlock had orchestrated six movements from the piano duets, *La Nursery*, based on French folksongs, by Désiré-Émile Inghelbrecht, 1880-1965.

⁴⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

There is no piano score of the "Summer Garden" as yet or of the "Dance Rhapsody". Do one of them for 2 pianos - & I will hear it when I next come to Germany - perhaps in March.⁴⁶ Send on the pieces you have orchestrated & I will be very glad to help you - You have a great talent for Orchestration - that I could see from the 2 pieces you showed me.⁴⁷

In the letter to Taylor quoted above Warlock goes on to write more about Delius's music showing, at the same time, how informed he was about contemporary English music:

I love "Appalachia"⁴⁸ too, though I do not know it except from having heard it. There is a very curious reminiscence of the theme of it in the "Songs of Sunset", which I am inclined to think is intentional, because of the significance of the words, which run thus:-

"The sound of the waters of separation
Surpasseth roses and melody"

which recalls the idea of the separation of the poor niggers, which underlies much of "Appalachia".

Here is the passage:-



These "Songs of Sunset" are so lovely, as are also Dowson's words.

I fear the chances of hearing "A Mass of Life"⁴⁹ in England are rather small, unless it is done at Hanley,⁵⁰ or Beecham does it again. I believe it has only been done four times, first in London, then at Elberfeld, then in Vienna and then again at Elberfeld: I have heard of vague, prospective performances at Hagen and Basel also, for the future. Mr Mason ought to do it! I do not think Delius interests himself very much in the English composers, although he makes such sweeping statements about them, for he told me he did not know either Elgar's Second Symphony,⁵¹ or Clutsam's⁵² opera, "A Summer Night"⁵³ or Bax's Celtic Song-Cycle,⁵⁴ which I suggested were the best examples of English music I could think of.⁵⁵

⁴⁶ In 1911 Warlock arranged both *Brigg Fair* and *In a Summer Garden* for two pianos.

⁴⁷ Letter from Delius to Warlock, 4.12.1911, Carley, op. cit., p.79.

⁴⁸ *Appalachia*, for chorus and orchestra (1902).

⁴⁹ 1904-5.

⁵⁰ The North Staffordshire Festivals, held at Hanley, were founded in 1888 and became noted for their fine choral performances.

⁵¹ In E flat, Op.63 (1903-11).

⁵² George Clutsam, 1866-1951, Australian composer, conductor and critic. In a later letter to Warlock, 24.9.1912, Delius wrote of him: "Of course the attitude of critics

In the Colin Taylor Collection⁵⁶ there is a hitherto unpublished letter from Delius to Taylor thanking him for the music (i.e. Warlock's orchestrations of Inghelbrecht) which Taylor had duly sent as requested:

Greuz-sur-Loing
S[eine] et M[arne]
18 Dec 1911

Dear Mr Taylor,

Many thanks for your kind note and the music.

Heseltine seems to me to have remarkable musical intelligence and also to be very gifted - I like him very much and find his enthusiasm very refreshing - I hope I shall have the pleasure of meeting you when next I come to England.

I remain
Sincerely yours

Frederick Delius

In his next letter to Taylor, also from Cologne, Warlock relates an amusing little story he had heard from Delius's wife, Jelka:⁵⁷

The Johnstone book⁵⁸ reminds me of a priceless story Mrs Delius told me about the Duchess of Sutherland, who asked her "whether her husband's music was operatic or oratorio", and when she replied that it was neither, the "aristocrat" retorted: "But it must be either operatic or oratorio". (!!)⁵⁹

Home in Wales for Christmas 1911 Warlock wrote a short letter to Taylor thanking him for the gift of a book by Cecil Forsyth. The reference to Delius in this letter is a very brief one:

is always stupid - Critics as a rule are musicians who have failed. I know of no exceptions. Clutsam is a man who for 25 years has tried to imitate every musician of repute & of every style...But he himself...is a dead failure & he knows it...." Carley, op. cit., pp.91-92.

⁵³ 1910.

⁵⁴ 1904.

⁵⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

⁵⁶ Cape Town, UCT Library, BC76 A4.149. This letter is on a single sheet of blue, ruled paper measuring 24cm by 16.5cm and folded down the middle.

⁵⁷ Jelka Delius, 1872-1934.

⁵⁸ Johnstone, J.A, *Modern Tendencies and Old Standards in Musical Art*, William Reeves, London, 1911.

⁵⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.12.1911.

Get our loving
Son
18 Dec 1911

Dear Mr Taylor
Many thanks for
your kind note &
the music
Huseltun seems
to me to have
remarkable musical

Intelligence & also to be very gifted -
I like him very much & find his enthusiasm
very refreshing - I hope I shall
have the pleasure of meeting you
when I next come to England

I remain

Yours

Frederick Delius

I have had several long and extremely interesting letters from Delius lately, also a beautiful signed photograph of him! He is really a most awfully kind man.⁶⁰

Before returning to Germany at the end of January 1912, Warlock wrote to Taylor from the family home in Wales telling of his plans for the future and how he had sent an arrangement and some of his own compositions to Delius. It must have been rather disappointing for his former piano-teacher to learn in this letter that Warlock had finally decided he would never be much of a pianist:

...I have definitely abandoned piano lessons in Germany, as I could not stand them any longer!...Besides, I shall not have time to keep practising sufficiently, for when I have spare time to play the piano, I make myself acquainted with the divine works of Delius and others (whose works one cannot always hear) and get to know them, even though I cannot play them properly. One can always hear the best piano music at concerts, played in the best manner, which, to my (perhaps absurd) mind, is much better than practising them and playing them (badly) myself, without talent or enthusiasm!

I sent...to Delius...a fair-copy of "In a summer garden" for 2 pianos, but beyond an acknowledgment on a post card, I have heard nothing further from him: I expect his disgust was, literally, too great for words! His "Summer Garden" is a lovely work: I like it as well as anything I know of his, which is saying a great deal. It is dedicated to his wife, and I think it must be rather "autobiographical" - perhaps "Thoughts in a summer garden", for there are parts of it which I am sure have no connection with a summer garden, notably an immense climax, marked FFFF for two bars!⁶¹

He was back again in Germany by February 1912 and wrote to Taylor enclosing a song which he had just composed, lamenting the fact that he had still had no reply from Delius:

I have not heard a word from Delius about the songs or "La Nursery" or the "dishing-up" of "In a Summer Garden", but I expect he is very busy at the new choral work he told me he is doing.⁶² After all, it was exceptionally kind of him to allow me to send him any of my poor stuff at all.⁶³

⁶⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.12.1911.

⁶¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.1.1912.

⁶² Either *An Arabesque* (the MS is dated Autumn 1911) or *A Song of the High Hills* (the published score is dated 1911).

⁶³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.2.1912.

Later that month, or early in February, Delius eventually replied making the following comments on Warlock's youthful efforts at arranging, orchestrating and composing:

Forgive me for keeping you waiting so long; I have been very busy with a new work. The arrangement of my *Summer Garden* I think is excellently done...The only fault I find with the orchestration of the *Nursery* is that you employ far too big an orchestra. The matter is too slight for such an enormous apparatus. Otherwise it is orchestrated with great taste.

Your songs are beautiful. In one or two I have made slight alterations - only a suggestion, mind - you come back so persistently to E flat in one of them....⁶⁴

Warlock duly reported all this to Taylor in his next letter. He had left Germany at the end of February and was now back home at Cefn Bryntalch. The tremendous ambition and drive shown by the seventeen-year-old Warlock in this letter must surely fill any reader with admiration.. He had succeeded in befriending Delius while still a schoolboy and now, still in his teens, had his sights set on a performance of one of his own arrangements at a principal London concert:

Delius returned the copies I sent him, and the orchestration, in which he objected to the enormous number of instruments used, though, as a matter of fact, very few are used at a time! Otherwise he was encouraging, but omitted the point I was most anxious to know - viz. whether the thing would be effective, and if so, I should like to send it to Wood,⁶⁵ and see if he would play it at the "Proms", as you suggested at first, though I do not want to send him a score, which, to an expert as he is, would appear as nothing more than it really is - an orchestration exercise!⁶⁶

Warlock's experiences in the concert hall seemed to have been dogged by bad performances of Delius's *Brigg Fair*. After hearing another performance of the work conducted this time by Hugh Allen (1869-1946)⁶⁷ he wrote despairingly to Taylor:

"Brigg Fair" was positively murdered last night by Dr. H.P. Allen! The performance was quite as bad as the one I heard at Coblenz. The whole

⁶⁴ Undated letter from Delius to Warlock quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.45-46.

⁶⁵ Sir Henry Wood, 1869-1944, English conductor and founder of the famous Promenade Concerts.

⁶⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.3.1912.

⁶⁷ English organist, conductor and teacher: organist at New College, Oxford; he later became professor of music at Oxford, 1918-46, director of the Royal College of Music, 1918-37 and director of the Bach Choir, 1907-20.

character of the first movement in 3/8 time was lost by the conductor, who beat three in a bar, when it was perfectly obvious that one must beat one - the same gross blunder as the conductor at Coblenz made: when I told Delius that the Coblenz man beat three, he said the idea made him shudder! If shudders could be conveyed by telepathy, he would have received a nasty lot last night! the orchestra played with very little spirit, and equally little expression: the whole performance sounded confused. The slow *maestoso* section where the theme is stated by the brass in 4/4 time, with strings accompanying, was very hurried, as at Coblenz, and the trumpet, who has the melody to play, not content with blowing "forte" where "pianissimo" is marked, and that fiendishly out of tune, tried his best, for the first bar or so, to play his part twice as fast as even the scurrying conductor desired! I thought there was going to be a breakdown, but he managed to pull through. Three in a bar was beaten again at the "gaily" section in 3/8 though the conductor warmed up after a page or two, only to miss one of the best points in the work in his excitement (or carelessness), namely the *rallentando* at the heavenly passage of descending sevenths, which I always think is one of the most hauntingly beautiful things in Delius's works:-



And the wretched conductor raced past it as though it wasn't there at all! Yet it was a very great treat to hear "Brigg Fair" again at all, in spite of the performance; every time I hear a work of Delius, it seems more and more appealing, more absolutely perfect - to my mind, at least; I know no other music that appeals to me anything like as much as his does, and knowing Delius makes it even more lovely - if possible. I can never be too thankful for my good fortune in getting to know him⁶⁸

In his next letter to Taylor he enthused once again about Delius's *In a Summer Garden* repeating largely what he had written earlier in January that year:

The Delius work is particularly lovely - one of his very best, I think: I am sure there is a lot of autobiography in it: anyway, there is a good deal behind the mere title - what would "FFFF" be doing in a summer garden? And one must consider the dedication⁶⁹ also, I think.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.5.1912. This was written from Chadlington where he was staying with the Rev. C.E. Holt "cramming" for the Oxford entrance examination

⁶⁹ To Jelka, his wife.

⁷⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Delius, 5.6.1912.

In a letter written some three months later from Wales, Warlock reports yet again about a recent letter from Delius.⁷¹ This letter throws some interesting light on Delius's early musical tastes:

I had a very delightful and long letter from Delius yesterday: He will not be able to come here⁷² before the B'mham festival, but hopes he will be well enough to come for a few days afterwards. In his letter he also told me a lot of his likes and dislikes in music: Beethoven, he says, always leaves him cold, and so does Brahms: Bach he loves because he is more spontaneous: when he first heard Chopin at the age of 7, he thought heaven had been opened to him, and he felt much the same sensation when he heard "Tristan" for the first time at the age of 23, and later when he first heard Grieg's "Humoresken".⁷³

In October Warlock went to the Birmingham Festival, staying with his mother at the same hotel as Delius. A letter to Taylor, telling him all about the music he had been hearing at the Festival, contained the latest news about Delius:

"Sea-Drift" comes to-morrow. Delius is staying here: we see a lot of him. This morning he and I...played through "In a Summer Garden" on two pianos; we also went through some Schönberg together: D. thinks it is purely headwork: he says it is the most logical and academical music he has ever seen - all done by rule of thumb!...My next musical task will be to score "A Dance Rhapsody" for military band! I find D. has three new works up his sleeve, an opera,⁷⁴ an orchestral piece with wordless chorus obbligato,⁷⁵ and a song⁷⁶ for baritone and orchestra.⁷⁷

Warlock gave a fuller report of the Birmingham Festival in his next letter written from Cefn Bryntalch. As he put it:

...I am not going back to Warwickshire until next week: for which reason in one respect I am very sorry, as it will prevent my going up to London to-

⁷¹ "When I first heard Chopin as a little boy of 6 or 7, I thought heaven had been opened for me - When also as a little boy - I first heard the Humoresken of Grieg - a new world was opened to me again - When at the age of 23 I heard Tristan - I was perfectly overcome - also when I heard Lohengrin as a schoolboy. Beethoven always left me cold & reserved - Bach I always loved more...Brahms I never liked much & never shall...." Letter from Delius to Warlock, 24.9.1912, quoted in Carley, op. cit., pp.91-92.

⁷² Letter from Delius to Warlock, Carley, *ibid.*, pp.91-92: "I feel terribly disappointed that I could not come to Wales & walk about the moors with you - I might be able to come for a day or 2 after the Festival if I feel alright...."

⁷³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Delius, 27.9.1912.

⁷⁴ No further operas were in fact written.

⁷⁵ *The Song of the High Hills* (1911).

⁷⁶ *Cynara* (1907, finished 1929 with Fenby's assistance).

⁷⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Delius, 2.10.1912.

morrow to hear Delius's concerto,⁷⁸ and meet you at Q[ueens] H[all] and have a jolly time altogether....

...I had a perfectly gorgeous time in Birmingham, seeing a great deal of Frederick D. who was quite alone at the Queen's Hotel. "Sea-Drift" was perfectly wonderful: though I quite agree with Legge⁷⁹ in the "Telegraph", that it would be much better if sung by a tiny chorus. The effects are too subtle for such a large number of singers. The programme could not have been made up worse: we had to sit through 1½ hours of Verdi (Requiem) before "Sea-Drift"! I thought the Verdi appalling....⁸⁰

...On Thursday evening Balfour Gardiner turned up in his motor to hear "Sea-Drift", and I had a long conversation with him after the concert: he is an extremely nice person - very cheerful, and "hearty". He wants me to make a piano score of Delius's orchestral work "Life's Dance"⁸¹ for him: he is going to perform it at his concerts next year.⁸² I have done about a quarter of it, but my progress with it is far from rapid, as it is frightfully complex: I am not surprised that B.G. wants a piano version, if he has to read such a score!⁸³

By the time he wrote the next letter to Taylor he had moved with his tutor to Newbold Pacey in Warwickshire. He discusses his transcription of Delius's *Dance of Life* and the piano concerto further:

Delius's "Dance of Life" of which I made a piano score just lately, presented many difficulties arising from this question. Some pages of it are so fearfully complex, and contrapuntal - unusual for Delius - that it is simply impossible to reproduce them on the piano.

It was most awfully interesting to transcribe, although it was rather hard work to make musical Bovril⁸⁴ (for I cannot call it a "piano score" with any justice!) out of sixty pages of such tremendously full scoring.

The work was written as early as 1898, but has only just been published. It is quite in the well-known and absolutely original Delius "style", and there are some most haunting things in it. As a whole, however, I do not like it as much as some of the later works.

⁷⁸ The piano concerto in c (1897, revised 1906).

⁷⁹ Robin Legge, 1862-1933, music critic of *The Daily Telegraph* (1906-31), also music editor for the publishers, Forsyth Brothers.

⁸⁰ So did Elgar. After the performance he went into the artists' room and said to the contralto soloist, Muriel Foster, "in a voice loud enough for all to hear: 'That is the worst performance of Verdi's *Requiem* I ever heard.'" The other three soloists were the Finnish soprano, Aino Ackté, 1876-1944, who evidently did not know her part, the Irish tenor, John McCormack, 1884-1945, and the American bass-baritone, Clarence Whitehill, 1859-1935. The conductor was Sir Henry Wood. For a full account of the incident see Strong, L., *John McCormack: the story of a singer*, Methuen, London, 1941, pp.104-105.

⁸¹ *Lebenstanz* (revised version of *La Ronde se déroule*) sometimes referred to as *Dance of Life* or *Life's Dance* (1901, revised 1912).

⁸² It was in fact performed at the sixth Balfour Gardiner concert on 25.2.1913.

⁸³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Delius, 9.10.1912.

⁸⁴ Trademark used for a concentrated beef extract.

I should have loved to have heard the Piano Concerto: it must have been magnificent. I have never seen a better notice than Legge gave it in the "Telegraph", while the Birmingham Post's London critic (not Newman, I imagine, as it was not signed E.N.) wrote: "How long, one cannot but ask oneself, is a composer of Mr Delius' originality and power to wait for due recognition of his genius in the country of his birth? He is no longer young, and his work has been before the public for many years, yet he is still, as it were, on his promotion. Let us hope that the performance of "Sea-Drift" at the Birmingham Festival and that of the concerto to-night may prove to be the inauguration of a new epoch in the composer's history".

Legge wrote: "When the history of the piano concerto comes to be written, it is highly probable that the C minor of Frederick Delius will rank beside the immortal Schumann.⁸⁵ Two other concertos - the Tschaikowsky⁸⁶ and the Grieg⁸⁷ - immediately occur to mind. But the Delius is less sentimental and melodramatic than the one, and much stronger, intellectually, than the other, and it is a proud reflection that the composer of this glorious work is an Englishman".

I had some tremendously interesting talks with him in Birmingham: I should think there has never existed a more conscientious and completely artistic composer. He has written loads of music that has never been given to the world: even his best work he lays aside for about three years before allowing it to be published.

I was interested to discover that the date of the rather "Griegy" songs,⁸⁸ and the Shelley songs⁸⁹ is 1889-90. He has done some more songs lately, though he has not yet sent them to a publisher: one is a setting of Henley's⁹⁰ poem, "The nightingale has a lyre of gold", which should make a very beautiful song. Delius and Gardiner were nearly killed on their way back from Birmingham: the steering of the motor broke and if they had not been going very slowly, they would most certainly have had a serious accident.⁹¹ Fortunately both were unhurt as it was.⁹²

His next letter from Newbold Pacey was taken up with telling Taylor about the correspondence he was having in the *Musical Standard* over his article on Schönberg which had appeared a short while back. He also asked Taylor's help and advice, referring to Delius's *Sea-Drift* in the course of one of his queries:

As you know, my knowledge of music is absolutely "nil", but I remember you spoke once to me of "restless tonality" as a characteristic of much of Delius music.

⁸⁵ Piano concerto in a, Op.54 (1845).

⁸⁶ Piano Concerto in b flat, Op.23 (1874-5).

⁸⁷ Piano concerto in a, Op.16 (1868).

⁸⁸ Two sets of *Songs from the Norwegian*.

⁸⁹ *Three Shelley Lyrics*.

⁹⁰ William Ernest Henley, 1849-1903, English poet.

⁹¹ Delius had written to Warlock from Grez on 21.10.1912: "We motored to Oxford & looked over the Colleges - We nearly got killed in the motor car. The steering broke - luckily we were in a village & going slow - otherwise my career would have ended abruptly...." Carley, op. cit., p.94.

⁹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Delius, 9.10.1912.

Now, could a passage such as the one I enclose (from "Sea-Drift") be taken as an example of this?⁹³



His reply from Newbold Pacey vicarage contains an answer to what must have been an enquiry by Taylor as to the availability of certain works by Delius. Warlock then continues at some length on the subject of Delius and his music, making reference to Beecham's early promotion of his works:

There is no piano transcription of the "Dance Rhapsody" of any kind, nor is Delius' name to be found in the pianola-roll catalogue of the Aeolian orchestrelle, Co, or the Angelus Co or Kastner's, which I am told are the three largest manufacturers of rolls.

I should love to make a piano score of the "Dance Rhapsody", but the scores are so fearfully expensive, and even when I told Delius last year that I wanted to make another transcription of one of his works, he never offered to lend me a copy of the score, so I had to buy the score of "In a Summer Garden" - not that such a priceless work is not worth any money, but personally I cannot afford many scores at the price. He told me before I transcribed "In a Summer Garden" that the Dance Rhapsody had never been done for piano, which is very curious, for it would surely sell as a piano duet. He suggested that he might publish the arrangement of "In a Summer Garden".

He promised to send me a lithograph copy of the score of an unpublished opera "Margot-la-Rouge", but it never arrived.

Why has Ronald⁹⁴ never played the "Dance Rhapsody" lately, if he went through it with D[elius].? Also, when and where did he play it? I thought he was always unselfish enough to leave Delius all to Beecham!

I have seen it stated that Ronald conducted the first performance of "In a Summer Garden" at the Philharmonic in 1908, but Grove's dictionary has it that D. conducted himself. Otherwise, I have never heard of Ronald doing anything except "Brigg Fair", in the provinces.⁹⁵

⁹³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Delius, 3.11.1912.

⁹⁴ Sir Landon Ronald, 1873-1938, English conductor.

⁹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Delius, 10.11.1912.

In the early October correspondence (the letter from Birmingham quoted above) mention was made of the possibility of Delius' part-song, *Midsummer Song* (1908), being sung at Windsor sometime on December 9th. He wrote in this letter that he would certainly come to hear the performance and that Delius was "very keen to come too":

I do not think it has ever been done before: in any case he has not heard it. He is coming over again in December for a performance of "A Mass of Life"⁹⁶ which Beecham is going to give in London on Saturday afternoon, December 7th. Perhaps we might go together: I shall make a point of going, and I hope you will be able to come too: it is the grandest music ever written!⁹⁷

A week or so before this proposed Windsor concert he wrote to jog Taylor's memory:

I suppose the Windsor Madrigal Society's Concert is coming off alright on the 9th? I wrote to Delius last week and asked him to come down to Eton for the concert, if he would be in England, but I have not heard from him yet. My mother also wants to go to the concert. Where can one get tickets? Will you please let me know, as I had better get them before they are all swallowed up...I am much looking forward to my week-end with you: I hope we shall be able to induce Frederick the Great⁹⁸ to come down on Monday the 9th, though I fear he may not be leaving France under the present circumstance.⁹⁹

By February Warlock had changed tutors; he was now studying with the Rev. H.B. Allen at Didbrook in Gloucestershire. It was at this time that he received a letter from Delius advising him "strongly and unreservedly"¹⁰⁰ to devote himself entirely to music. Here is the relevant section from a letter to Taylor showing his response:

I had a most kind and encouraging letter from Delius about 3 weeks ago: he advised me strongly and unreservedly to devote myself entirely to music...I had an immense row with my mother, who, however, seems to be becoming more amenable as time goes on. The only question that remains is - how am I going to earn a living? I find that the £100 a year of my own, which I

⁹⁶ *A Mass of Life*, for solo voices, chorus and orchestra (1904-5).

⁹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 2.10.1912.

⁹⁸ A pun on the name of Frederick the Great (Friedrich II, King of Prussia), 1712-1786, who was also a composer, flautist and patron of music.

⁹⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Delius, 1.12.1912.

¹⁰⁰ Delius's exact words were: "I should advise you to study music...I think that you are sufficiently gifted to become a composer - Everything depends on your perseverance". Letter from Delius to Warlock, 11.1.1913, Carley, op. cit., pp.98-99.

mentioned to you in Birmingham, may possibly be withheld altogether. My ambition, of course, is to become a critic, though whether I shall ever achieve that I have no idea. I am not sanguine about composition!! However, I think my mother will agree to my having a proper musical education, for I have explained to her (1) that one must devote oneself properly and thoroughly to the subject if one is to do any good, and (2) that I absolutely refuse to entertain any further ideas of working for the Civil Service, or going to the Stock Exchange.

I am at present waiting for another letter from Delius: he is coming over to England for a performance of the "Mass of Life" which Beecham is giving in February at Covent Garden, so I shall go up and see him there...I am going up for the "Mass of Life" in February (I am not yet certain of the date)...Delius was very pleased with the poems of Fiona Macleod which I sent him at Christmas, and has already set one of them¹⁰¹ as a song.¹⁰²

As Tomlinson points out, this marked "the first direct influence of Philip Heseltine on Delius' compositions".¹⁰³ Jefferson once again writes unsympathetically and critically about this period in their friendship:

The Delius-Heseltine correspondence was at its peak. Delius was advising the young man to resist parental wishes in the direction of the Civil Service. It is revealing to find that no matter where he was, or how busy, he always found time to write to Heseltine. He knew only too well what it was like to be without help from anybody, and this fondness for the young man served to place him *in loco parentis*. But the vigour of youth and the excitement of growing up deluded Heseltine into imagining that half-hearted effort was sufficient. He also thought, misguidedly, that he 'knew it all' and that he was going to be welcome wherever he chose to go....¹⁰⁴

Because of the criticism of this advice given to Warlock, perhaps Delius's own words and Warlock's reaction should be briefly considered at this point. Here are the relevant extracts from the letter under discussion:

You ask me for advice in choosing between the civil service - for which you seem to have no interest whatever - & music, which you love - I will give it you - I think that the most stupid thing one can do is to spend ones [sic] life doing something one hates or in which one has no interest - In other words it is a wasted Life - I do not believe in sacrificing the big things of Life to any one or anything - In your case I do not see why you should sacrifice the most important thing in your life to your mother: you will certainly regret it if you do, later on...One has every chance of succeeding when one does what one loves & I can tell you that I personally have never once regretted the step I took...I should advise you to study music, so that you will be able to give lessons in Harmony, Counterpoint, and orchestration. You can

¹⁰¹ Delius wrote to Warlock on 11.1.1913: "I have already written a song to words by Fiona MacCleod I-Brasil - I think it is good...." Carley, op. cit., p.99.

¹⁰² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1913.

¹⁰³ Tomlinson, op. cit., p.14.

¹⁰⁴ Jefferson, op. cit., p.72.

always become a critic. I think that you are sufficiently gifted to become a composer - Everything depends on your perseverance....¹⁰⁵

It was for the young man as if scales had fallen from his eyes. Having done some deep self-searching, he bared his soul in an emotional reply to Delius. After such advice from Delius the scene was obviously set for an inevitable confrontation between mother and son:

...I never stood on my own feet, never woke up to life beyond the nursery and my mother's apron strings until a year or so ago - that is, exceptionally late. I suppose I woke up comparatively suddenly, with a rude shock, so to speak, being quite incapable of standing on my own legs at all - as though the previous foundations had collapsed...I struggle hard to develop now, I am trying my very best to live so as to redeem a part at least of the lost years, but I am constantly being dragged back - at least I am always feeling the drag, though I do think I really am becoming harder and a little stronger at last...now, at any rate, I am determined to live my life, to drain its cup to the very dregs, to live each day, each hour, feverishly perhaps just now. I am absolutely ravenous for life; what I do matters not so very much, so long as I live....¹⁰⁶

As Gray so very rightly points out "the importance of this as a psychological document cannot...be over-estimated".¹⁰⁷ The last sentence of this extract amounts almost to Warlock's moment of truth and is absolutely crucial both to the understanding of the whole development of his personality over the succeeding years and also as to what motivated him during his multi-varied career in music.

The much-discussed performance of Delius's *Mass of Life* did not, in fact, take place until March 10th and there is no evidence as to whether Warlock actually attended the performance or not. It is, however, known that he accepted an invitation to stay with Delius at Grez-sur-Loing¹⁰⁸ in France later that same month. He wrote from Didbrook to Taylor:

The performance of the "Mass of Life" appears, unfortunately, to have been again postponed. I heard from Delius on Saturday: he has heard no more about it, and so is not coming over to England after all. I am going over to

¹⁰⁵ Letter from Delius to Warlock, 11.1.1913, Carley, op.cit., pp.98-99.

¹⁰⁶ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 17.2.1913, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.54-56.

¹⁰⁷ Gray, op.cit., p.56.

¹⁰⁸ Delius and his wife lived in Grez from 1897-1935. To assist them financially, the house was bought for them by Balfour Gardiner in the 1920s.

stay with him, about the middle of March, I think...My people are at present in the south of France: they went to lunch with the Delius' en route!!¹⁰⁹

Soon after he returned from France he wrote at length to Taylor to tell him all about the trip. He described Delius's house, waxing enthusiastic about his music and the piano duet arrangements he (Warlock) was making:

I returned on Wednesday last from a perfectly delightful visit to France - eight days with Delius and five with my uncle in the next village. I have seldom enjoyed any holiday so much as this fortnight. Mr and Mrs D. were both most kind, and it was intensely interesting being with them.

Their house is quite charming: the walls are decorated principally with Mrs D's pictures, which exhibit the rare combination of extreme modernity and real beauty that can be appreciated by the uninitiated. Delius has what is considered one of the finest Gauguins¹¹⁰ in existence [sic] in his music-room. He bought it from Gauguin himself years ago, when his pictures were quite unknown, and paid him £20 as a favour to a friend: he recently refused £1500, now that Gauguin is dead!

Delius has five works about to be published: (1) a song, "Arabesque" (poem by Jacobsen) for baritone solo, chorus and orchestra;¹¹¹ (2) "A Song of the High Mountains"[sic]¹¹² for orchestra and chorus (no words) (3) a long music-drama "Fennimore and Gerda", adapted from Jacobsen's novel "Niels Lyhne" ("Siren Voices" in the English translation)¹¹³ (4) "Margot-la-Rouge" a melodramatic one-act opera written ten years ago,¹¹⁴ and (5) a group of five songs, of various dates, including two lovely English songs, "I-Brasil" (Fiona Macleod)¹¹⁵ & "The nightingale has a lyre of gold" (W.E.Henley)¹¹⁶ - (the latter would be very suitable for Miss Spencer: the accompaniment is very difficult.) The two first are as yet only in MS full score, but I made the acquaintance of all the rest by means of piano scores.

"Fennimore" is to be produced at Cologne for the first time at the end of the year:¹¹⁷ the scenery is all being designed by Mrs D. and Delius has stipulated that not less than 6 performances shall be given during the season. "Margot" is very dramatic and ought to come off very well on the stage...It has never yet been performed - a fate it shares with two other much longer music-dramas, and a perfectly colossal pile of early MSS of all descriptions which will never see the light. Delius is very diffident about getting even his best work known: when, as so often, it is only published in full score at enormous price, the ordinary music-lover cannot become familiar with it.

¹⁰⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.2.1913.

¹¹⁰ Paul Gauguin, 1848-1903, French painter. This painting of a reclining female nude, entitled *Nevermore* (84.8cm by 115.8cm), was bought by Delius in 1898 for 500 francs. Owing to a severe financial crisis he sold the painting in 1923. It is now in the Courtauld Institute Galleries, London.

¹¹¹ 1911.

¹¹² *Song of the High Hills* (1911).

¹¹³ 1908-10.

¹¹⁴ 1902.

¹¹⁵ 1913.

¹¹⁶ 1910.

¹¹⁷ It was not in fact produced until 1919 at Frankfurt.

I have made a new arrangement of "In a Summer Garden" for piano duet (one piano this time) which he has consented to send to his publisher, and he is going to send me the score of the "Dance Rhapsody" to transcribe. But all this ought to have been done years ago!

"In a Summer Garden" is quite one of his most perfect things: of all his works that I have seen, this and the "Songs of Sunset"¹¹⁸ appeal to me the most, which is saying a very great deal. It goes well for piano duet: nothing whatever is omitted, and it is still quite easy to play. A duet arrangement of "Brigg Fair" has recently been published, but it is very bad and full of absolutely unnecessary omissions. Delius is still very down on English music, though he has become quite enthusiastic about Bax, whose "Enchanted Summer"¹¹⁹ he has commended to the notice of a certain German Kapellmeister, together with Gardiner's "News from Whydah"¹²⁰ - he likes Grainger's folk-song arrangements....

This year I have already attended eight concerts, all of modern British stuff! Of course there is chaff with the grain, and with regard to some of the composers, I quite share Delius' opinion, but I think Bax, Austin and Gardiner are immense! - in their several ways, of course.

Delius advises me to work for a musical degree at Oxford: he thinks it would be a great help....

I enclose a P[ost] C[ard] of Grez; if you hold it up to the light, you will see where D's house is: I have marked it on the back: he has a lovely garden which extends right down to the river - where you see the seat in the picture, on the right of the wall.¹²¹

Warlock paid another visit to France in 1913, this time in the autumn but in this, his last letter to Taylor from Didbrook, he made only a short reference to the visit and to Delius:

I have just finished a piano duet arrangement of the "Dance Rhapsody", and am eagerly awaiting the score of "A Song of the High Hills", a new work for wordless chorus and orchestra, of which I am to make a vocal score. Delius hopes to get it performed at the next Sheffield Festival.¹²² I am very anxious to play with you, à quatre mains, the "Dance Rhapsody" and "In a Summer Garden"....

In France I enjoyed myself hugely, and again fell into the vicious habit of thumping songs out at the piano - alas, for good resolutions! My uncle, and his works of art (!) are wilder than ever: the nude males in such abundance are most depressing, though I frequently sought, and found, more than

¹¹⁸ *Songs of Sunset*, words by Dowson, for mezzo-soprano, baritone, chorus and orchestra (1906-7).

¹¹⁹ Act II, sc. ii from Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* for tenor, chorus and orchestra (1909).

¹²⁰ *News from Whydah*, a ballad for chorus and orchestra (1912).

¹²¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.4.1913.

¹²² Dating from 1896 the Sheffield Festival was noted for its magnificent choral singing.

relief at Grez, in the wonderful Gauguin and Mrs Delius' delightful works.¹²³

It is in Warlock's letters to Viva Smith that there is a fuller, almost poetic account of this visit to France. He was evidently captivated by Grez and the surrounding countryside:

...I have been here one whole week - it seems more like the mere shadow of a day. I love being here, and all my surroundings are wonderfully soothing and peaceful, though I have an immense deal of interest that more than fills every day: I am working, with fitful energy, at a piano duet arrangement of a large orchestral work of Delius, called "A Dance Rhapsody"....

The big studio is enormous...picturesquely built, with a first-floor balcony overlooking a strip of garden, a few white houses with tiled roofs of a redder brown than Cotswold hue, and a vast expanse of open country - very flat with no hedges at all, patchily wooded, mostly with small clumps or solitaires, though the distance promises wider tracts of woodland...

Just outside the village begins the *Fôret de Fontainebleau*, an immense area of pine and beech woods, interspersed here and there with open spaces covered by enormous rocks and boulders. Two miles in the opposite direction is Grez, a wonderfully picturesque village on the Loing, a fine broad river whose banks are plentifully covered with fine trees and a wild profusion of undergrowth....

On Sunday I walked over to Grez and saw Delius: he has just returned, in great form, from a two month's sojourn in the Norwegian mountains, and is working hard at his magnificent "Requiem"¹²⁴ (which will be the first atheistical requiem in musical literature): the text is a wonderfully lovely prose-poem by a modern German poet,¹²⁵ and, in the section devoted to Woman, contains some of the most beautiful things I have ever read...I wish you could know Delius: he is so wonderful....¹²⁶

Unfortunately Warlock was unable to stay with Delius during this second visit:

I have not gone to stay at Grez after all, since both Delius' servants have suddenly sacked themselves, and Mrs D. is overburdened with household work, so that any visitor would be imposs[ible]....

I have been very busy with the piano transcription of the "Dance Rhapsody" (generally between 10 pm, when the old boy retires, and 2 am) as it is a big score and Delius wants it back next week, so I want to get a rough copy of the whole work done by Saturday.¹²⁷

¹²³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.10.1913.

¹²⁴ *Requiem*, for soprano, baritone, double chorus and orchestra (1914-16).

¹²⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche.

¹²⁶ Letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, September 1913, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

¹²⁷ Tomlinson, *ibid.*, p.16.

In his recollections of Warlock, his composer friend, Charles Wilfred Orr (1893-1976),¹²⁸ wrote a paragraph about a performance of this particular arrangement and of Warlock's comments about the work. It is an important document in that it shows that Warlock was fully aware of the bad as well as the good in Delius's music:

Knowing that I shared his admiration for Delius' music, he would produce piano solo or duet arrangements of some of the scores, which latter we would play through together, ignoring any wrong notes or mishaps on the way, and accompanied at times by Philip's whistling, which was of a peculiarly musical kind that I have never heard equalled - it was quite flute-like in quality and purity. I well remember our performing the first Dance Rhapsody, and Philip saying to me as we came to the penultimate variation: "This is one of the loveliest passages he ever wrote", and then as we began the last one: "And this is one of the worst!"¹²⁹

On October 10th a new chapter opened in Warlock's life when he began the Michaelmas term at Oxford, reading classics. It was not a happy or successful year as he told Taylor in a letter from Grez where he was spending the Easter holidays helping Delius in various ways:¹³⁰

...I simply cannot stand Oxford: it has an enervating, depressing influence on me and I am quite sure that I shall never do anything whatever until I can get away from the place.¹³¹

During that disastrous year at Oxford, which he described as "this blasted colony of Hell"¹³², his enthusiasm for Delius's music continued unabated. In the Christmas holidays he had written to Taylor from Wales as follows:

I have had a peaceful, if somewhat solitary week, since my people have been away...I have had quite a quiet, restful time, and have nearly finished the 2-hand arrangement of the Delius score....

...The first performance in England of the two little tone-poems, "On hearing the first cuckoo-note in spring",¹³³ and "A summer night on the

¹²⁸ English composer and writer on music.

¹²⁹ Orr, op. cit., p.1.

¹³⁰ Delius invited Warlock to help him correct the orchestral parts of *Fennimore and Gerda*: "On my return here I found the whole material of *Fennimore* awaiting me - Won't you come here & correct it for me? or help me?" Letter from Delius to Warlock, 11.3.1914, Carley, op. cit., p.123.

¹³¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.4.1914.

¹³² Letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 14.2.1914, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

¹³³ 1912.

river"¹³⁴ takes place, under Mengelberg¹³⁵ at Queen's Hall on Tuesday evening, Jan 20.¹³⁶

Early the following year he wrote to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch inviting him to join him at this concert:

I have just finished the piano score of the "Song of the High Hills":¹³⁷ it is the only work of Delius that has made no definite appeal to me: technically, it is extremely interesting, the orchestration is quite wonderful, and the big chorus in the middle must be tremendously fine, but this, and the last two pages are the only parts that really "get there" - on paper, anyway: but I think this is due to the fact that D. relies much more on orchestral colour and effect in this work than he usually does. It will probably seem quite different when I hear it, and the performance will be a very welcome revelation!....

Will you let me know soon whether you are free on Tuesday evening the 20th, of this month, as I want to get tickets early. I shall have to catch the 9.50 back to Oxford, but fortunately the Delius pieces come early in the programme....

Filthy weather here - no pianola, no mo-bike, and a herd of horrid humans: but for the Delius score, I should go mad with boredom....¹³⁸

Warlock was completely transported by the performances of these two works as he told Delius in a moving letter from Oxford:

I have postponed answering your letter far too long - please forgive me...First of all, let me try and tell you, as best I can, what a perfect joy it was to me to hear your two pieces for small orchestra at Queen's Hall on January 20th; the first piece of music I have heard for many a long day - it almost makes one cry for the sheer beauty of it.¹³⁹ I play it often on the piano and it is constantly in my head, a kind of beautiful undercurrent to my thoughts. For me, the deep, quiet sense of glowing happiness, and the mysterious feeling of being at the very heart of nature, that pervades the piece, is too lovely for words. I only wish I could express to you a tithe of what the music makes me feel; it is simply perfect. Lately things have happened which have made me feel a new being altogether, and given me a

¹³⁴ 1911.

¹³⁵ Willem Mengelberg, 1871-1951, Dutch conductor.

¹³⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 29.12.1913.

¹³⁷ Delius wrote to Warlock about this arrangement: "In your piano score of the Song of the high hills, the chorus must of course be on separate lines - When necessary also use 3 systems (lines) instead of only 2 for the piano - Why is it impossible to work in the quaver accompaniment to the melody on Page 7. Put in on a 3rd line perhaps - you see the effect must be attained some way or other - otherwise one gets a wrong impression of the work - the quavers there are important...." Letter from Delius to Warlock, 2.1.1914, Carley, op. cit., pp.117-120.

¹³⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.1.1914.

¹³⁹ cf. Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 23.1.1914: "The first of the two pieces was almost too beautiful - I simply wanted to cry all the way through: I have never heard anything to approach it in sheer loveliness and depth of feeling".

deeper joy and a greater realization of life than I have ever known before; your music ministered to this mood in a wonderful manner - it seemed to have a new and intimate message to me, and strangely to express the very thing that was awakening in me. Forgive this confused attempt to express what mere words can never do, but I feel I must try and tell you, however feebly, what a wonderful message your Cuckoo brought me.¹⁴⁰

The short review of this concert in the *Musical Times* makes a brief, and disappointingly noncommittal reference to these two new Delius pieces. The sentence quoted below could, in fact, describe any Delius work. But it is interesting to note that the programmes London audiences were listening to in the early years of this century were not very different from those found nowadays in the last decade of the same century. Other works played were the Overture to Mozart's *Magic Flute*,¹⁴¹ Rakhmaninov's Piano Concerto no. 2 in c, Op. 18¹⁴² and Beethoven's 7th Symphony in A.¹⁴³

It is a long time since we heard an important new work from the pen of Frederick Delius, and it cannot be said that the spell is yet broken. Neither of these tone-poems, in spite of their great charm, could be described as important. They are small, both in design and character, but within their range they are completely successful. Their delicate tone-painting and subtle, shifting orchestral and harmonic colours reveal the hand of a master at every point.¹⁴⁴

Although in the letter written to Taylor later in January that year Warlock is concerned largely with further accounts of his unhappiness at Oxford, he wrote in a similarly enthusiastic tone about these new Delius works. Taylor had obviously not been able to join him for that particular concert:

I was able, after all, to go up to hear the Delius pieces...the first of the two pieces was almost too beautiful...and the second one was not far behind it....¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 11.2.1914, quoted by Gray, op. cit., p.57.

¹⁴¹ K.620 (1791).

¹⁴² 1900-1; the soloist in this concerto was the Russian pianist, Vasily Sapellnikov, 1868-1941.

¹⁴³ Op.92 (1811-12).

¹⁴⁴ *Musical Times*, 1914, p.117.

¹⁴⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 23.1.1914.

The rest of this letter is confused and agitated: he had had yet another row with his mother about wanting to leave Oxford, there were problems with his relationship with Viva Smith and, to crown it all, the sale of his motor-bike had been a disaster:

I thought I was not coming back here at all, and practically determined to go straight away and look for a job of some sort, after this last row with my mother: however, at the last moment a temporary lull occurred, though I do not intend to remain after this term, if I can help it....

Do you know, you were absolutely right when you told me never to go back to her on any condition whatever...she wrote to me about a fortnight ago, as though nothing has happened, it's worse than ever with me...the whole thing becomes more and more complex..but details will only weary you, and I don't think I could possibly write them down...the sale of the bike was disastrous...Forgive this incoherent letter, but I simply cannot write any more at present.¹⁴⁶

Although Warlock gives no specific details, the paragraph about "never going back to her on any condition whatever" refers almost certainly to Viva Smith. Early in January 1914 Delius wrote a long letter to Warlock replying to what must have been a very personal letter about this relationship with Viva Smith. Delius's advice is not unlike that which Taylor had given:

My opinion of your friend is the following - She does not love you but is flattered at being the object of such a great passion...The only possible way of bringing her to the point is the one you have taken - to see her no more - If she wants you *she* will come to you & then you might enjoy the one thing that is absolutely necessary between a man & a woman before they can be true friends. I am afraid your friend is very cold - all you tell me about her lying naked with you before the fire points to a very self-possessed and cold nature....¹⁴⁷

The next letter to Taylor shows a complete change of mood, mainly on account of the fact that he was making successful progress in his plans to leave Oxford. His comments about the Delius scores in the final paragraph are further examples of both his generosity and his continuing attempts to promote the music itself:

I went over to spend the day with [Balfour] Gardiner last Wednesday, and we played the "First Cuckoo-note in Spring" vierhändig: really it is, almost without exception, the most perfectly beautiful little piece of its kind I have ever heard....

¹⁴⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 23.1.1914.

¹⁴⁷ Letter from Delius to Warlock, 2.1.1914, Carley, op. cit., pp.117-120.

...With regard to my own affairs, things have, during the last week, so happened as to exceed my wildest hopes, - I am perfectly happy - more than happy, in every way...I shall probably leave here this term, and go into an office in London, where there seem great possibilities of making money - though this is not quite settled yet, but my step-father highly approves and is doing all he can for me in this direction....

Now that the small Delius scores are out, do you think it would be any good if I presented my copies of the big scores to some London orchestra's library? It might encourage them to turn their attention to Delius. I have "Brigg Fair" and "In a Summer Garden". Will you ask Mr Mason?¹⁴⁸

The last letter that Warlock was to write to Taylor from Oxford came ten days later.

The first paragraph was predictably about Delius and his doings:

I am sending you my 4-hand arrangement of the "First Cuckoo-note", which you can keep if you like, as I have made a two hand version for myself. I believe there is an arrangement of some sort coming out, but I don't know anything about it. Delius has just finished three more little pieces for small orchestra, and is working hard at his "Requiem". He is coming over to England, on a very brief visit, in March, to hear "Sea-Drift" at Queen's Hall on March 10th, and again, for a longer stay, in June.¹⁴⁹ The new opera "Fennimore" is due at Cologne towards the end of March.¹⁵⁰

In March Warlock was in London for two weeks attending concerts and during that time wrote to Delius. He was still in a great state of anxiety about wanting to leave Oxford and in this letter asks Delius's advice as to what he should do:

...I am burning to find some means of escape from the appalling, enervating, and depressing atmosphere of Oxford; the place is just one foul pool of stagnation - I simply cannot stand it, and I am getting no good, and any amount of harm, from staying there. Yet nothing can I find to do elsewhere; I would do anything to get away from the place, and if possible make a little money. But it seems hopeless, and my people suggest nothing. Oxford leads nowhere, and it is fearful to wander on through life, aimless, objectless, and - what is worse - moneyless.¹⁵¹

He then goes on to discuss the possibility of his trying to become a music critic. On this score he had spoken to Ernest Newman, the famous critic, who had begun his career as a bank employee:

¹⁴⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1914.

¹⁴⁹ The March visit did not materialize. Delius came to London on 21.6.1914 where Beecham was to perform some of his music. For a few days at the end of the month he and Warlock stayed with Balfour Gardiner at his home at Ashampstead, near Oxford.

¹⁵⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 11.2.1914.

¹⁵¹ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 24.3.1914, quoted by Gray, op. cit., p.93.

I met Ernest Newman the other day, and sought to discover what it was necessary to do to become a critic. Apparently there is nothing to be done, save to study scores, ancient and modern, on one's own account, and write articles in the hope of getting them accepted, and thus becoming well known enough to get a permanent engagement with some paper. He considers the ordinary academic training of small use, and he strongly advises taking up some other profession to keep the pot boiling till one is ready and able to stand on one's feet in the musical world. but as for other professions - this accursed public school and university 'education' (!) fits one for nothing; at the age of 19, the product of Eton and Oxford is worth a thousand times less than the product of the national board schools. What, in the devil's name is to be done? My case, really, is very akin to that of the unjust steward we used to hear so much about, who could not dig and was ashamed to beg!¹⁵²

Can you suggest anything - no matter what it is - that I could do now - or at least begin studying with a definite view to and prospect of doing in the near future? I simply cannot continue to drift along in my present aimless fashion. Could one get a job in the way of copying or transcribing music, correcting proofs, copying orchestral parts, etc.? I don't mind what it is, so long as it gives one occupation.¹⁵³

Warlock went across to France again in April where he stayed with Delius at Grez. The opera *Fennimore and Gerda* was to be given its first performance in Cologne later that year and Warlock was helping to correct the orchestral parts. The performance had, however, to be postponed because of the outbreak of war a few months later. In April Warlock wrote to Taylor from Grez for yet further advice. He had now poured out his troubles to Delius, Balfour Gardiner and Cecil Forsyth as well as Taylor and was now considering all options including that of running away:

I am just writing you a few lines to ask if you approve of my plans, and how you would suggest entering upon them. I am certain that unless I myself make some decided move, nothing will ever be done: I believe the real reason why my people want me to stay at Oxford is because it saves them the trouble of thinking out anything further for me to do...Forsyth,¹⁵⁴ as I think I told you, seemed to think that an Oxford degree was of great use for a critic or anyone bent on journalism of any kind: do you really think this is so? Delius and Gardiner are both very strongly against Oxford, which they regard as complete stagnation....

¹⁵² Luke 16, 1-8.

¹⁵³ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 24.3.1914, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.93-94.

¹⁵⁴ Forsyth had written an important book on orchestration that year, 1914. According to a note written in the margin of the transcript of this letter, Cape Town, UCT Library, BC 76 C1.2.33, Taylor introduced Warlock to Forsyth.

Delius also suggests studying accompanying, with a view to being engaged at an opera house to teach singers their parts...Now what I propose to do is simply to tell my people that I am not going back to Oxford, and point out that it is quite useless, and, in the matter of prospects, far less hopeful than music. I shall then propose that I go to London and seriously study music - not merely theoretically, but practically also, (i.e. so that I have time to go to concerts and study all kinds of music by myself, at the piano, so as to become thoroughly acquainted with all sorts of music, ancient and modern, as Newman says, is the only real equipment for a critic.[] As regards the details of the scheme, I should be immensely grateful to you if you would tell me, more or less, how to set about doing so - i.e. whom to go to, in London, etc. I should like, if possible, to go to someone like Vaughan Williams, rather than any of the real academics - though he is academic enough, in his compositions at any rate - but as I know nothing whatever about this part of the business, it would be of the greatest possible help if you would tell me some of the details of it - what to study and where to study it...Please forgive all this tedious stuff about myself: I dislike inflicting it upon you, but as I am due back at Oxford on April 19th, I want to find out these things soon, so that when I see my mother, as I propose to do about four days before Oxford begins again, I can lay the matter quite plainly before her. Incidentally it will cost her far less than Oxford, so I am sure that, in the end, she will not be averse to it, though I foresee that it may be necessary for me absolutely to refuse to return to Oxford, and possibly to disappear for a week or so - a rather hateful course, but what is one to do, after all, if people will be guided by prejudice and not by any sort of reason?¹⁵⁵

Apart from all the anxieties about his future he was enjoying himself in the idyllic setting at Grez:

It is simply lovely over here - perfect spring weather, so warm and bright - and everything beautiful and green.

I am working very hard, correcting the orchestra parts of D.'s new opera "Fennimore and Gerda" which is to be produced in Cologne next October. I have also translated the text of "Arabeske", a new work for chorus and orchestra (just published), for which I hope I will get paid by the publishers.¹⁵⁶ Leuckart will not pay for my duet arrangement for the "Dance Rhapsody", etc, so they are not going to be published after all...By the way, if you happen to be at Augener's in the near future, ask if they have copies of the "Five Songs from the Norwegian" of Delius,¹⁵⁷ published twenty years ago (before the other early songs). I came across an old copy here, and they are perfectly delightful - to my mind, far better than the early songs, and simpler, though also a little Grieg-y. D. has also played me an "Indian Love-Song"¹⁵⁸ (recently published by Tischer and Jagenberg, Cologne) which, though early, is quite splendid, and affords magnificent opportunities for a dramatic singer. But the other five songs are too delightful for words...I hope you liked "In a summer garden", in spite of Geoffrey Toye's¹⁵⁹ horribly slow tempo, for the first quick section, and the

¹⁵⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.4.1914.

¹⁵⁶ Universal-Edition promised him £2.

¹⁵⁷ 1888.

¹⁵⁸ The first of *Three English Songs* (1891), settings of poems by Shelley.

¹⁵⁹ 1889-1942, English conductor; he gave the first performance of the *London Symphony* by Vaughan Williams in 1914.

jerky rallentandos, which every conductor seems to inflict on Delius' work.¹⁶⁰

This concert, described in the advertisements as a concert of "Modern Orchestral Music", took place at the Queen's Hall on Friday 27th March at 8.15, the Queen's Hall Orchestra being conducted by Geoffrey Toye and F.B. Ellis. It was a programme which contained, besides the first performance of Vaughan Williams' *London Symphony*, the first performance of *Three Songs with Orchestra*¹⁶¹ by Arnold Bax, and of the revised edition of Delius's *In a Summer Garden* and the second London performance of *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* (1912) by Ravel.

July 1914 found Warlock at home at Cefn Bryntalch for most of the summer holidays. He did, however, manage some outings, one of which involved an enormous cross-country excursion: first of all by push-bike to his aunt at Whitney-on-Wye, near Hereford, (53 miles) on July 4, then on to Didbrook (another 56 miles) on the 6th and then finally on to London (on Viva Smith's motor-bike) to hear the all-Delius concert on the 8th.¹⁶² It is easy to imagine his delight at managing to get to the concert that afternoon, especially as the composer himself was present. Here is how the *Musical Times* reported the occasion:

A high compliment was paid to Mr. Frederick Delius by the above organization¹⁶³ at the Duke's Hall on Wednesday, July 8, when a programme drawn from his works was played. Splendid performances were given of the "Brigg Fair" Rhapsody, the "Dance Rhapsody", "On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring", "A Summer night on the river", "In a summer garden", and the Entr'acte and final Scene from the opera, "A village Romeo and Juliet"...a couple of unaccompanied part-songs, "On Craig Dhu" and "Midsummer Song", were on the programme, but owing to lack of sufficient rehearsal, were omitted. A one-composer programme is a severe test, and it may be said at once that Mr. Delius came out of the ordeal with distinction. Any lack in the matter of melodic invention is more than atoned for by a wealth of glowing harmony and poetic fancy. Moreover, his music has the ring of genuine emotion. Possibly the short notice at which the concert was arranged, and the counter-attraction of a warm summer afternoon, were responsible for the meagre attendance. Those present, however, made up for lack of numbers by enthusiasm, and at the close the

¹⁶⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.4.1914.

¹⁶¹ 1904, orchestrated 1914.

¹⁶² Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 17.7.1914, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

¹⁶³ The Beecham Symphony Orchestra.

conductor (Mr. Thomas Beecham), the Orchestra, and the composer received an ovation.¹⁶⁴

It would seem that although Warlock had made up his mind, at all costs, not to return to Oxford, he still had to obtain his mother's consent. A rather sad letter written three days before England declared war on Germany, shows that he still sought solace in the music of Delius and that the obsession was still as strong, if not stronger than ever:

...it is lonely by oneself. My people return from Scotland tonight. I spend most of my time saturating myself with Delius' music - more especially the early, unpublished work at present - and I hope to begin my little book soon.¹⁶⁵ I have yet to get over the almost terrific loveliness of that concert: I am sure there is no music more beautiful in all the world: it haunts me day and night: it is always with me, and seems by its continual presence, to intensify the beauty of everything else, for me.¹⁶⁶

Up until now no one seemed willing to make a firm decision about his future at Oxford. In a sense the decision was made by the declaration of war on the 4.8.1914 and the resultant financial scare when Warlock seized the moment to convince his mother that it would be cheaper for him to live in London rather than Oxford.¹⁶⁷ In this he was aided and abetted by an Indian friend, Shahid Suhrawady, who according to his own words was:

a man of real genius - of quite un-occidental coolness in argument, and much persuasiveness of speech and manner. He ingratiated himself very successfully with my mother and step-father, and has talked to them about my plans far better than I could have done myself....¹⁶⁸

Once he had decided upon this course of action, Warlock lost no time in moving to London. In this same letter he expressed admiration for Taylor who had just joined

¹⁶⁴ *Musical Times*, 1914, p.541.

¹⁶⁵ A book on Delius which was eventually completed in 1922 and published the following year.

¹⁶⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.8.1914. Warlock had written to Delius the month before in similarly extravagant terms: "...such superb, such glorious music. No words could do it justice; it is too magnificent. It transcends everything - not only all other music. For me it is the greatest thing in life...." Letter from Warlock to Delius, 10.7.1914, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.57-58.

¹⁶⁷ He suggested that his annual allowance could be reduced from £250 to £150 p.a.; unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 24.8.1914, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

¹⁶⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.9.1914.

up, saying "my nervous stricture and general unfitness give me a rather mean advantage...." In October 1914 he also wrote to Delius about the war referring to himself as being "physically unfit for service".¹⁶⁹

Once in the city he enrolled at London University to read English in October - his last attempt at formal study. He also planned to take lessons with Gustav Holst but these never materialized. Judging from his later waspish comments about Holst's music in later letters to Taylor this was surely fortunate. For a time he also looked after a little amateur orchestra in Windsor while Taylor was away and he even asked Delius where he could obtain the material of the *First Cuckoo in Spring* so that he could vary their diet of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven.¹⁷⁰

In February 1915 he was appointed to the staff of the *Daily Mail* as a music critic and withdrew from his studies at the University. Unfortunately there was little room for matters musical in a wartime newspaper and, frustrated by the lack of real opportunity, he left in June after only four months.

There is something of a gap in the Taylor correspondence during this period. Warlock wrote again at the end of the year saying that he was "recovering from a fearful, nerve-racking and entirely horrible three months".¹⁷¹ His only reference to Delius was to say that he had done a few transcriptions (Delius' new double-concerto, etc) and to "make a few sketches for the Delius biography, which is maturing". The double-concerto mentioned was the one of 1915 for violin and 'cello, and Warlock's transcription was eventually published by Augener in 1920.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 18.10.1914, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.94-98.

¹⁷⁰ "In the absence of Colin Taylor I have become conductor of a little amateur orchestra in Windsor...It is very good experience for me, and I hope to improve with more practice...If it is possible to get hold of the "First Cuckoo in Spring" without great expense, I want to make them do that; it would be so good for them, after many years' surfeit of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven". Letter from Warlock to Delius, 18.10.1914, quoted by Gray, op. cit., p.97

¹⁷¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 20.11.1915.

¹⁷² There is a brief reference to Warlock's transcription of this work in a letter from Delius to Warlock, 24.11.1915: "Send me my score as soon as possible - *Insured & let May Harrison have the piano score of which she will have a copy made....*" This work was dedicated to the violinist, May Harrison, 1891-1959, and her cellist sister, Beatrice. Carley, op. cit., p.155.

In a letter written to Taylor a few days later he added that "the Delius Violin Sonata is in the press, with Forsyth, Bros."¹⁷³ This is the Violin Sonata no 1 (1905-14) of which he made a copy for the publishers to print from.

In March 1915 the twenty-year-old Warlock wrote an article for the *Musical Times*, the longest he had written to date.¹⁷⁴ It was also the first time that that journal had featured anything substantial on Delius, appropriately by one of his greatest and youngest champions. In this article of over 5000 words Warlock wrote two introductory paragraphs of background information in which he drew the reader's attention to various characteristics of Delius's music notably that "one of the most striking features...is the almost complete absence of any other composer's influence".¹⁷⁵ In the remainder of the article he summed up Delius's achievements, discussing some of the major works in detail and describing him as being:

...pre-eminently a harmonist...his harmonic effects are obtained vertically and not...horizontally, by the interweaving of several contrapuntal threads. He does not, however, limit himself to any fixed scale or system...consequently he avoids monotony and mannerisms alike, and gains considerably in freedom and range of expression. One cannot pin Delius down to a fixed harmonic scheme, although his harmonic idiom is quite unmistakably his own. The most one can say is that there is a certain harmonic aroma, as it were, which one can always recognize....¹⁷⁶

It is somehow predictable that the Warlock should end his panegyric with the sweeping statement that he was sure there was "no composer in Europe to-day of greater significance...nor any whose work seems more likely to outlast that of his contemporaries".¹⁷⁷ History has judged somewhat differently.

The publication of this article was symbolic too for it marked the end of a period in Warlock's musical and intellectual development. Up until this time his whole musical outlook had been dominated by this obsession with the music of Delius.

¹⁷³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.11.[1915].

¹⁷⁴ Heseltine, "Some Notes on Delius and His Music", *Musical Times*, 1915, pp.137-142.

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p.137.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*, p.140.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p.141.

With his move to the cosmopolitan life of London, Warlock began to meet a number of new people who gradually began to usurp the position hitherto occupied by the idol of his adolescence. Two names immediately spring to mind: the author D.H. Lawrence and the composer Bernard van Dieren.

After no mention of Delius' name for some four years, there appears suddenly the following long discussion of his music in a letter to Taylor from London. For the first time in these particular letters he voices outright criticism of a Delius piece, a new work called *Eventyr (Once upon a time)*. Having expressed his distinct reservations about this piece which he had just heard, he goes on to elaborate on his feelings about Delius' music in general, commenting on some of the early works, which he still admired, and then criticising the *Requiem*. It would be dangerous to use what Warlock wrote in this letter as evidence that he had begun to dismiss Delius completely. He possibly wrote so critically in this particular letter because he had expected so much more of the *Requiem*, especially as Delius had told him how highly he himself regarded the piece. (Warlock had written excitedly to Viva Smith as early as September 1913 telling her that Delius was "working hard at his magnificent Requiem".¹⁷⁸) In the period following this critical letter he still continued to make arrangements of Delius' music, write about him for music journals, even commission him to write two articles for *The Sackbut*, complete the first full-length book to be published on Delius and to continue promoting his music. It was only in confidential letters to his close personal friends that there is any hint of criticism. In his public writings he always supported Delius.

Not so very long ago I should have laughed if anyone had suggested that in 1919 I should go to a concert and be enchanted, overwhelmed by a Beethoven Symphony¹⁷⁹ after the first performance of a new Delius work had left me cold and disappointed!...

The new works of Delius make me sad, first because he is a very dear friend of mine, who has always been exceptionally good and kind - a sort of musical god-father to me: secondly, because he himself imagines that he is still progressing, and has even said that he has never done better than the

¹⁷⁸ Letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 20.9.1913, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

¹⁷⁹ No.7 in A, Op.92 (1811-12).

Requiem which, I must most mournfully testify after making the piano score of it, hardly contains one striking page, while the general conception of the work is on the level of intelligence displayed by the verbose representatives of the Rationalist Press Association in Hyde Park. It is indeed astonishing that anyone can in words deny what the spirit of their work breathes out in every line. One day I shall write an article to show Delius as the most truly and literally Christian composer of the twentieth century! It is an interesting reflection and a surprisingly true one: the key to his whole spiritual outlook is Hy-Brasil¹⁸⁰ - or call it by what name you will. Yet this man solemnly employs a chorus and orchestra of not less than 200 members to assert as dogmatically and irrationally as the most bigoted priest could assert to the contrary:-

"Die Lebenden wissen dass sie sterben müssen
Aber die Toten wissen nicht das Geringste" !!¹⁸¹

It sounds like a catechism: one can just hear the teacher examining the wretched class - "Also, was wissen die Toten? - as our friend Mr Booker¹⁸² at Eton would proclaim some miserable pupil "exceptionally worthless, idle and vicious dog" and then proceed to ask him "What kind of dog" he was!! But I digress from the point: great music can redeem the shortcomings of any text - but alas, this Requiem is doomed to oblivion or ridicule, I am afraid.

Of course I tell you all this in the strictest confidence, as one friend may lament to another over a third. I would not for anything abuse the privilege of having access to manuscript scores by saying anything about them that might be prejudicial, before they are performed or published - except in the private ear of an intimate: more especially when these are the work of one whom I love and honour as much as Delius.

I began to wonder some weeks ago whether perhaps it was my own sympathy and understanding that had waned as the critical faculty had become sharper, and to put this to the test I played through a number of the earlier works - the "Mass of Life"¹⁸³ "Sea Drift"¹⁸⁴ and I found their magic was if anything more potent than ever - in the "Mass" especially, there are passages that I can scarcely play without tears. The "Mass", the "Village Romeo and Juliet",¹⁸⁵ "Sea Drift", "Appalachia", the pieces for small orchestra,¹⁸⁶ "In a Summer Garden"¹⁸⁷ - all these are masterpieces of the first order which proclaim their composer the most significant since Wagner. But the later works - however, one may be hyper-critical just by reason of the very intensity of one's appreciation of those others. The Violin Concerto,¹⁸⁸ which Sammons¹⁸⁹ is producing on the 30th, is the best

¹⁸⁰ 1913, a short song of 34 bars, a setting of a poem from an anthology by Fiona Macleod which Warlock had sent to Delius at Christmas, 1912. It has a magical ending which only Delius could have written.

¹⁸¹ "For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing". Ecclesiastes 9: 5.

¹⁸² Robert Penrice Lee Booker, 1864-1922, M.A. (New College, Oxford), FSA, a classics master at Eton from 1888-1920.

¹⁸³ 1904-05.

¹⁸⁴ 1903.

¹⁸⁵ 1900-1.

¹⁸⁶ 1911-12.

¹⁸⁷ 1908, revised before 1911.

¹⁸⁸ 1916.

of the last batch - so far as I have seen: indeed, the last two movements are almost on the old level.¹⁹⁰

He mentioned Delius yet again to Taylor in another of his London letters giving news about his latest opera, *Fennimore and Gerda* (1909-10), a work of which Universal Edition eventually published the vocal score with Warlock's translation of the libretto (UE 1921):

Delius has gone to Norway and from there will travel to Germany later on.¹⁹¹ His opera "Fennimore", founded on Jens Peter Jacobsen's¹⁹² fine novel "Niels Lyhne"¹⁹³ is to be produced for the first time in Frankfurt-am-Main in November.¹⁹⁴ There's no art-chauvinism nonsense there at any rate.¹⁹⁵

The next reference to Delius is a purely factual one about the publishers, Universal Edition, in a letter written to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch:

Universal have acquired all Delius' works except the Concertos for violin and cello which Augeners have, and the "First Cuckoo" which belongs to Tischer in Cologne. Recent and forthcoming publications include the choral Requiem, "North Country Sketches" (arr. piano 4 hands), "Dance Rhapsody" (arr. piano 4 hands), "Summer Garden" and "Song of the High Hills" (arr. piano 2 hands), a cello concerto and the incidental music to James Elroy Flecker's play "Hassan"¹⁹⁶ which is to be produced in London for a run early next year.¹⁹⁷

In October 1922 he wrote again to Taylor from London, this time to tell him the good news that the long-awaited book on Delius (first mentioned as early as April 1914¹⁹⁸) was in the press and would, he hoped, be out in January. The publisher, John Lane, had offered him £25 for the book which appeared in 1923 receiving favourable reviews.

¹⁸⁹ Albert Sammons, 1886-1957, English violinist, leader of the Beecham Orchestra. He gave the first performance of the Delius Violin Concerto which was dedicated to him.

¹⁹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.1.1919.

¹⁹¹ Delius wrote to Warlock on 17.7.1919: "...we shall go either to Germany (if we can) or to Norway for a few weeks for Mountain air". Carley, op. cit., pp.218-219.

¹⁹² Jens Peter Jacobsen, 1847-85, Danish novelist and poet.

¹⁹³ 1880.

¹⁹⁴ It was actually given on 21.10.1919.

¹⁹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 23.8.1919.

¹⁹⁶ 1920-3.

¹⁹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

¹⁹⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 10.4.1914, London, BL, Add MS 58127.

In the last of the letters in the Warlock-Taylor correspondence there are only two more references to Delius, the first of which confirms his disenchantment with the former's music in the last years of his life.¹⁹⁹ It seems as if he was trying finally to exorcise this early obsession - at least to Taylor who had been one of the first to see it manifested in the early Eton days. Or was it part of what he saw to be the slow dissolution and disintegration of everything around him - the negativity of the depression that continually haunted him and the belief that he had nothing more to say as a composer? Whatever his public support and loyalty to Delius appeared to be, this letter to Taylor shows what his private thoughts were at the beginning of 1929, the year of Beecham's famous Delius Festival:

Delius, sad to relate, has been completely paralysed and blind for some years. Some people seem to like his piano concerto - it is often given at R[oyal] C[ollege of] M[usic] students' concerts - but it is a most ungrateful work for the soloist, and, I think, both dull and noisy...

Delius, I think, wears very badly. His utter lack of any sense of construction, coupled with the consistent thickness of texture and unrelieved sweetness of harmony (even at moments where sweetness is the most inappropriate thing in the world) get on one's nerves, and make one long for the clean lines, harmonic purity and formal balance of the Elizabethans and Mozart - or else the stimulating harshness and dissonance of Bartók, and the Stravinsky of Le Sacre du Printemps.²⁰⁰

But whatever Warlock may have thought privately about Delius it did not prevent him from suddenly turning up unexpectedly at Grez with a party of friends in April 1929. Included in this group were Anthony Bernard, E.J. Moeran (nicknamed "Old Raspberry" on account of his ruddy complexion) and the young composer, William Wordsworth (1908-1988).²⁰¹ Eric Fenby (b.1906)²⁰² who had voluntarily offered at the age of 22 to go to Grez to act as the blind and paralysed Delius' amanuensis, records this incident fully:

¹⁹⁹ He had voiced similar criticisms to Gray in 1924: "...and as for the chamber music of Delius, the less said about it the better. Anyway, I can't hurt the poor old man's feelings by writing about it". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Gray, 16.7.1924, London, BL, Add MS 57794.

²⁰⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

²⁰¹ English composer; descendant of the poet of the same name.

²⁰² English organist, composer and teacher; amanuensis to Delius from 1928.

...I burned with curiosity to meet that young man who had done so much for Delius since he was little more than a schoolboy - Philip Heseltine. Delius had made scant reference to him when I had enquired about him, and I gathered that there had been some slight estrangement between them, so I dropped the subject.

Imagine my surprise when, one morning going down to lunch, I discovered that Heseltine and several other people had arrived unexpectedly. They were not at their full strength, they told us, for they had missed 'Old Raspberry' on the way; he would probably be coming along later in the day!

Delius, extremely sensitive at all times to his physical disabilities, and pathetically so in the presence of strangers, was furious, and refused to see Philip. Finally, after some gentle persuasion on the part of his wife, Delius agreed to be carried downstairs, and the whole party stayed to lunch. Conversation was not easy, for the others, excepting Anthony Bernard, appeared to be entirely unmusical, and it was natural that we should want to talk about music. There were, however, occasional flashes of brilliant observation from Heseltine. I envied him his splendid command of words, and liked the way he looked you full in the eye whilst addressing you...I shall never forget him for it.

I could see that Delius was still ruffled and not at his ease, and I was relieved when they had taken him away to rest, and I was sauntering down the garden path with Heseltine, leaving Mrs Delius to amuse his friends. We chatted affably enough, but by the time we had reached the pond I found myself wondering whether this could possibly be the same Heseltine who had written that glowing book about Delius and his work, for whenever there was an opening to attack the music he had once championed, he thrust his critical rapier in, hilt and all. I knew nothing at the time of the reactionary phase through which Heseltine was then passing in respect of Delius's music, and it astonished me greatly to hear him say that out of Delius's enormous output, three of the major works only would live - *Sea-Drift*, *A Village Romeo and Juliet* and *Appalachia*....

...I agreed with him that *Sea-Drift* and *A Village Romeo and Juliet* were great masterpieces, but I would not have placed *Appalachia* in their company....

(I remember how, after the performance of *Appalachia* at the Delius Festival later that year, we were coming down in the lift together at the Langham Hotel, after having escorted Delius safely across from the Queen's Hall, and Heseltine saying, 'Well, Fenby, what do you think of it now? Wasn't it magnificent? It's a superb work!')²⁰³

It is perhaps significant that from this discussion on Delius the conversation turned to the other composer in Warlock's life, Bernard van Dieren,

...for whom, both as composer and man he had the warmest admiration. Did I know his music, and had I heard the last quartet which van Dieren had dedicated to him? He would send me a score, for it was a 'superlatively fine work'....²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Fenby, *Delius as I knew him*, Bell & Sons, London, 1936, p.59.

²⁰⁴ Fenby, *ibid.*, p.61.

After tea Heseltine asked me to take him up to the music- room. He could not believe that 'old Fred' (Delius) was trying to work again, and when he saw what had been done he exclaimed, 'My God, how you both must have slaved at this!'

It was now getting dark, so he proposed that the party should leave, and walk over to Marlotte to see his Uncle Joe (Joe Heseltine). 'No visit to Europe is complete,' said he, 'unless one has seen old Joe's pictures'....

Our rowdy friends had not been gone more than a few minutes when 'Old Raspberry' drove up in a taxi; but we pushed him in again and directed the driver to Marlotte. Delius had had enough for one day.²⁰⁵

In the 1929 New Year's Honours list Frederick Delius was created a Companion of Honour. This honour and the resulting publicity caused a renewed interest in his music and Beecham, who had always been an ardent supporter of the Delius cause, decided that the time was now ripe to organize a festival of his music during October and November of that year. Though critical of Warlock, the shrewd Beecham knew that he was the best man to assist him in this undertaking:

I enlisted the aid of Philip Heseltine in the task of organization, the writing of biographical matter, programme notes and any other supplies of information deemed essential to enlighten the prospective audiences...he knew far more about the composer and his music than anyone else in England and possessed a skilled and facile pen, together with a capacity for fiery energy, when his interest was aroused.²⁰⁶

His interest was indeed aroused. Together with Barbara Peache,²⁰⁷ he made a quick visit to Grez around the end of April or the beginning of May for the purpose of finding some of these early, unperformed works for the festival.

In May 1929 Warlock wrote to Fenby at Grez telling him that he intended suggesting to Beecham that:

²⁰⁵ Fenby, *ibid.*, pp.61-63.

²⁰⁶ Beecham, *Frederick Delius*, Hutchinson, London, 1959, pp.200-201.

²⁰⁷ Jelka Delius wrote to Warlock (in May? 1929) saying: "Please give my love to your friend Barbara; I am afraid she must have bored herself here; had I but known that she was *your great friend*, I should have taken her to my heart at once. Well that is for another time". Carley, *op. cit.*, pp.349-350. Fenby, however, gives the impression that Warlock came alone: "Within a fortnight Philip Heseltine was back again...after supper [he] suggested that I should walk to Moncourt and sit and drink with him. When I hesitated, he looked at me appealingly and said, 'For God's sake, Fenby, do come, I cannot bear to be alone!'" Fenby, *op. cit.*, pp.63-64.

the interest of the programmes would be greatly increased by the inclusion of some early and unknown works....²⁰⁸

He had also not forgotten to send Fenby the promised copy of van Dieren's 4th String Quartet, for the letter begins with the hope that he will enjoy the enclosed score.

This letter is important in that it illustrates two points: first of all it shows Warlock's almost encyclopedic knowledge of Delius's output, including little-known and even unperformed and (as was the case with *Cynara*) unfinished works. It also puts up a good argument against those who make too great an importance of his later "disenchantment" with Delius's music. The old loyalty and enthusiasm still shines through undimmed by the passage of time.

This letter to Fenby is also interesting in respect of two references it contains: commentators tend to give the impression that the two works, *Air and Dance* and *Cynara* were discovered at the same time, the latter quite by chance. This correspondence with Fenby shows that the *Air and Dance* must have been known for some time if it had already been recorded by Anthony Bernard by 7.5.1929 and that Warlock knew of the existence of the almost completed orchestral song, *Cynara*, before his second visit to Grez a short while after the unexpected April visit with his friends.

In fact this letter causes quite a deal of confusion. Tomlinson writes as follows:

1929 May PH returned to Grez to discuss the Delius Festival planned for October. Searching for early works worth performing, he discovered the MS of *Air and Dance*. This piece for strings had been written in 1914 or 1915 but never performed. PH copied the score, returned to London and persuaded Beecham to record it on May 7. In a letter²⁰⁹ to Edward Clark²¹⁰ PH conjectured that this was perhaps the first instance of a work by a major composer heard on disc before being performed publicly.²¹¹

²⁰⁸ Letter from Warlock to Eric Fenby, 8.5.1929, in the possession of Robert Beckhard and reproduced in facsimile in the *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, July 1987, no.39, p.9.

²⁰⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Edward Clark, London, BL, Add MS 52256.

²¹⁰ 1888-1962, English conductor and administrator, husband of composer, Elizabeth Lutyens.

²¹¹ Tomlinson, *Peter Warlock Handbook*, Vol.2, Triad Press, Rickmansworth, p.86.

However, as the *Air and Dance* were recorded on 7.5.1929 by Anthony Bernard²¹² (as stated by Warlock in his letter to Fenby and not by Beecham as Tomlinson claims), Warlock must have found the parts some time before his second visit to Grez in May 1929. Here is the full text of the letter to Fenby, the first paragraph of which shows that, although he might now be reacting against the music of Delius, his admiration for van Dieren had in no way diminished:

I am extremely pleased to find in you one more addition to the increasing number of enthusiastic admirers of the work of Van Dieren. I send you a score of his latest string quartet, in the hope that you will enjoy it no less than no. 3. It is a wonderful work.

The "North Country Sketches" and "Air and Dance" were brilliantly played in the recording studio yesterday. Bernard's handling of the orchestra was quite masterly. The new piece was most enthusiastically appreciated by all who heard or played it: it will be a big success. It is time that many other works of Delius which are lying in his cupboard should be given a hearing, for there is undoubtedly a great deal of good stuff among his manuscripts.

I am seeing Beecham on Monday, à propos of the programmes of the six-day Delius festival he proposes to give in the autumn, and I shall suggest to him that the interest of the programmes would be greatly increased by the inclusion of some early and unknown works (dated, of course) which, apart from their intrinsic merits, would give people an opportunity of tracing the composer's musical development from one period to another.

If you have the leisure to examine some of these scores, I should be exceedingly grateful for some information about them, as to which, in your opinion, would be the best worth performing.

I have definite and pleasant recollections of a suite called "Florida", dating from 1886, but there are many works which I know only by name, such as the tone poem, "Hiawatha" (1888), "Petite suite d'orchestre" (1889), "Idylle de printemps" (1889), Suite for small orchestra (1890), Suite for orchestra in three movements: (a) "La Quadroöne" (b) "Skerzo" (c) "Marche caprice" (1890) Three symphonic poems: (a) "Summer Evening", (b) "Winter night", (c) "Spring morning" (1890), Tone-poem: "Sur les cimes" (1892) and "Sommer i Gurre" for voice and orchestra (1902). And, if I remember rightly, there is a beautiful prelude to the opera "Irmelin" which might be performed separately.

I have written to Mrs. Delius on this subject, and it would be as well if you discussed the matter with her before mentioning it to Delius himself.

²¹² *The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music*, New York, 1936, p.130, gives the following information about this recording: "Once announced as recorded by the London Chamber Orch. conducted by Anthony Bernard for British Brunswick, but never released". "According to Fenby, the records were not issued because of trouble over the scratch orchestra which had been assembled for the recording". Carley, op. cit., p.351.

"The late lark" (Henley) ought certainly to have its first hearing at the festival: and are there completed versions of "Cynara" (1906-7) and "Poem of life and love" (1919), or are these only fragments? If you would be so kind as to give me any news of these things, it would be most helpful - provided, of course, that my suggestion is acceptable at all.²¹³

Perhaps one of the most important results of the second visit was the resurrection of the almost completed score of the setting of Ernest Dowson's poem *Cynara* which dated from 1907. Only the last four lines still remained to be set and these Delius dictated to Fenby in time for the festival. When the work was eventually published in 1931 Delius added an eight bar coda based on the opening. By this time Warlock was dead and Delius dedicated the work to his memory.

Warlock's last letter to Taylor tells of these discoveries during his visit to Grez:

I send you a preliminary prospectus of the Delius Festival which Beecham is giving during October - a magnificent gesture on his part, and the biggest tribute ever paid to a living composer in this country. It will be interesting to see whether the music gains or loses by this extensive treatment....

I was over at Delius's home at Grez-sur-Loing lately. The old fellow gets no worse, though he gets no better either, and is naturally very weak. Going through a pile of his old pencil sketches, I came across an almost-completed full score of a song for baritone and orchestra - a setting of Dowson's "Cynara" - planned on very big lines, and containing some excellent music. I knew he had once attempted this poem, but had no idea he had got so far with it. He had completely forgotten it - it is more than twenty years old - but it was copied out and played to him, and he managed to dictate the last few bars of the music. This, sung by John Goss, will be one of the few novelties of the festival.²¹⁴ The others are a charming light piece for string orchestra, "Air and Dance", composed in 1915, which will probably win more immediate popularity than anything Delius has written;²¹⁵ and a setting for voice and orchestra of Henley's "Late Lark",²¹⁶ which was the last work Delius was able to complete in his own hand.²¹⁷

If anyone doubted the success of the venture it was certainly not Beecham.²¹⁸ To quote his own words:

²¹³ Letter from Warlock to Fenby, 8.5.1929, see footnote 208.

²¹⁴ It was given its first performance by John Goss on 18.10.1929 in Queen's Hall with Beecham conducting the B.B.C. Orchestra.

²¹⁵ It was given its first performance on 16.10.1929 at the Aeolian Hall with Beecham conducting.

²¹⁶ It was given its first performance on 12.10.1929 by the tenor, Heddle Nash, 1894-1961, in Queen's Hall with Beecham conducting the Orchestra of the Columbia Gramophone Company.

²¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.9.1929.

²¹⁸ Beecham listed the programmes of all the concerts in his biography of Delius (Beecham, op. cit., pp.201-204) while the Delius Society printed all Warlock's

The success of the Festival was unquestioned and at none of the six concerts was there a seat unoccupied.²¹⁹

Delius and his wife were shattered by the news of Warlock's death and Jelka wrote a heartfelt letter to his mother in January 1931:

I am thinking of you and all you must have lived through since the great sorrow came - constantly - It is a terrible loss to us. It is a sort of consolation to me that he was really happy last year in the activity about the Delius festival, where he really was, next to Beecham, the soul of the thing. He wrote to me constantly then about the progress of his activities. I have kept all his letters and cherish them all the more now.

We shall always love dear Phil as the best of friends, ever helpful, ever supremely intelligent and lovable, and we shall sorrow for him and miss him with you.²²⁰

Edith Buckley Jones was obviously devastated by her son's death. In his last letter to her, written two days before his death, he had gently declined her invitation to spend Christmas at Cefn Bryntalch:

I would very much rather come and visit you at some time other than Christmas. It is a season of the year that I dislike more and more as time goes on, and the Christmas atmosphere and festivities induce for me an extremity of gloom and melancholy which makes one very poor company at such a time. I find it very much better to remain more or less alone and devote myself to some quiet work. This year, too, some stuff of mine that I have never heard is being sung at Westminster Cathedral and at the Brompton Oratory on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day and I would like to attend the performance.²²¹

Preserved together with this letter in the British Library is an undated postcard (illustrated with a reproduction of a drawing of a cat) which may have been included in this letter or possibly posted in an envelope at the same time. This last message must have been particularly heart-breaking for her coming as it must have so soon before or, possibly, even after his death:

programme notes as part of a Journal devoted entirely to the "The Published writings of Philip Heseltine on Delius", *The Delius Society Journal*, August. 1987, no.94.

²¹⁹ Beecham, op. cit., p.205.

²²⁰ Tomlinson, *Warlock and Delius*, Thames, London, pp.27-28.

²²¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 15.12.1930, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

With all my love, dearest Mother, and all that good wishes and affection
can do to bring you joy this Christmas tide!

From your devoted son
Phil²²²

Her dignified and moving reply to Jelka's letter shows how very real her grief was:

I have long felt I wished to answer your most kind and sympathetic letter on the death of my own dear Phil, but somehow, I just felt I could not, & even now, I cannot believe the awful tragedy has really happened & that my dear boy has gone, with all his wonderful talents silenced for ever, & it seems all so needless he was all the world to me, & I feel quite heartbroken. I know you and Mr Delius sorrow with me, as he loved Mr Delius and his wonderful music...I cannot believe it is of Phil I am writing it seems as if it must be an evil dream. Forgive an incoherent [sic] letter from Phil's most sorrowing Mother....²²³

²²² London, BL, Add MS 57961

²²³ Melbourne, Grainger Museum, University of Melbourne, letter from Edith Buckley Jones to Jelka Delius, 3.1.1931. Related documents found with the letters of Percy and Rose Grainger and Frederick and Jelka Delius.



17. Bernard van Dieren

CHAPTER 6

WARLOCK AND VAN DIEREN

Your music...is nothing short of a revelation to me. I have been groping about aimlessly in the dark for so long...and at last you have shown a light, alone among the composers whom I have met....¹

Whereas the name of Delius is almost, if not quite, a household name, there cannot be many musicians, let alone laymen, who know anything about the Anglo-Dutch composer, Bernard van Dieren or his music. It is not even easy for those who would like to know more about him. Little of his music is available in print and, of his entire output, only two of his songs (*Dream Pedlary* and *Take, O take those lips away*) have been commercially recorded² on disc and even that record has been deleted.³ The long-promised *Symposium* on van Dieren has yet to be published. This was to have consisted of a long article by Cecil Gray (edited by the singer, John Goss, after his death and then again by the composer's son after the death of Goss) as well as some of van Dieren's own literary writings together with tributes from distinguished contemporaries (including Osbert (1892-1969)⁴ and Sacheverell Sitwell (b.1897),⁵ Jacob Epstein, Arthur Bliss, Constant Lambert and John Barbirolli).

In an excellent article on van Dieren, Denis ApIvor discusses the subject of the composer's wife and her virtual suppression of any "unfavourable judgments about her husband":

...there were other dimensions than indolence involved in Gray's reluctance to undertake a van Dieren biography. In the post-war period one of them may have been commercial reluctance on the part of publishers; but more important was the fact that Frida van Dieren displayed an intense sensitivity

¹ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 8.6.1916, quoted by Tomlinson, *Warlock and van Dieren*, Thames, London, 1978, p.8.

² In 1965 by the tenor, Sir Peter Pears, on Argo ZRG 5439.

³ Three tape cassette recordings are at present (1990) available: Piano music played by Eiluned Davies (Whitetower Records BMS 402 and 405) and 15 songs sung by Sofie van Lier (soprano) with Paul Prenen (piano) (BV Haast Records D51).

⁴ English author and poet.

⁵ English author and poet; he published a book on Liszt (1934).

towards unfavourable judgments about her husband, whether expressed publicly or privately; such judgments on an artistic level might have been supportable, but grave offence might have been caused by revelations of van Dieren's dependence on Heseltine. Carrying coal-sacks on his back and supplying game-birds from the Welsh hills was one thing; but handing over sums of money and devoting all his posthumous royalties to van Dieren, though he had a son of his own, were another. Suffice it to say that at an early stage van Dieren was declared *persona non grata* at Cefn Bryntalch...Gray himself had experienced some uncomfortable episodes when money lent for urgent living expenses was seen to have disappeared into the purchase of books in Charing Cross Road to meet van Dieren's bibliophilic interests.⁶

Other articles appeared from time to time but the definitive biography and appraisal of his music has still to be written. In the meantime Fred Tomlinson's publication, *Warlock and van Dieren*,⁷ provides a mine of useful and clearly presented information. Besides an account of the relationship between these two men, there is a comprehensive, dated catalogue of van Dieren's compositions, arrangements and literary works as well as a bibliography.⁸

The lack of full, accurate information on van Dieren begins with confusion as to his exact date of birth. Most sources of reference give the year as 1884 when it was, in fact, 1887. Tomlinson points out the strange and interesting coincidence that "the two composers who had most influence on Warlock should be given wrong dates in many reference books".⁹ Delius had, for some reason or other, imagined the year of his birth to be 1863. When Warlock was writing the notes for the Delius Festival in 1929 he discovered that Delius had in fact been born in 1862.

Bernard van Dieren was born in Rotterdam, his mother being of French extraction and his father a wine merchant who died bankrupt in 1904. His initial training was as a scientist, his first post being a research assistant in a laboratory. He was highly

⁶ ApIvor, D., "Bernard van Dieren: search and rescue one hundred years on", *The Music Review*, 1987, pp.258-259.

⁷ Thames, London, 1978.

⁸ Apart from Warlock's letters to Taylor, much of the information on van Dieren has been obtained from the chapter on him in Gray, *A Survey of Contemporary Music*, O.U.P., London, 1924, pp.221-239, Tomlinson, op. cit., from ApIvor's articles in *The Composer* and *The Music Review* and also from the chapter on him in Sorabji's book, *Mi Contra Fa*. (For full details see bibliography).

⁹ Tomlinson, *A Peter Warlock Handbook*, Vol.3, Triad Press, Rickmansworth, 1977, p.88.

intelligent and considerably talented not only in the scientific and literary field but also at drawing and at playing the violin which he learnt as a boy at school. He began to compose at the age of twenty and succeeded in having some songs and a violin piece published locally. By this time he had made up his mind to study composition and music history seriously.

In 1909 at the age of twenty two he moved to London, where he spent most of his life together with Frida Kindler, one of a talented musical family whom he married the following year. There he carried on with his composing and, although largely self-taught, spent a year travelling about Europe in 1912, studying for a time in Germany. However, he found it difficult to earn a living and to devote time to composing, so for some years he acted as correspondent for a number of European newspapers and periodicals, including the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*. For part of the war he was on secret service in Holland, employed as a cypher expert by the Intelligence Department.

He spent most of his life plagued by ill-health as a result of an appendicitis operation in 1912 which left him a chronic sufferer from kidney stones necessitating numerous operations in England, Germany and Holland. Because of these frequent bouts of ill-health he had to spend a great deal of time in bed, often in great agony. His wife, Frida, was a talented pianist, a one-time pupil of Busoni,¹⁰ and supported the family until her own ill-health put an end to this. She was also the sister of the noted cellist, Hans Kindler (1892-1929).¹¹ Frida was also nearly ten years older than her husband, a fact which he was evidently at great pains to conceal, claiming the year of his own birth as 1884, a date which Warlock printed in *The Sackbut* in 1920 and again in the entry which he wrote for the *Dent Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians* of 1924.¹²

¹⁰ Ferruccio Benvenuto Busoni, 1866-1924, Italian composer, conductor and pianist.

¹¹ Principal cellist of the Philadelphia Orchestra 1914-21, took up conducting, founding the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington DC in 1931 where he remained as its conductor till 1928.

¹² Hull, A.E., (editor), *Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, Dent, London, 1924, pp.122-123.

For most of his life, apart from a year when van Dieren worked for the Philips Electrical Company, the couple had to rely more and more on the support and goodwill of their friends. In this respect they were fortunate in having a band of loyal and devoted supporters who not only assisted them materially but also did their utmost to promote performances of his works and to secure for him the place they felt he deserved in English music. Foremost among these were Warlock, Gray and, later, the singer, John Goss, who did so much to promote his music.

Unfortunately it is not within the scope of this study to present a fuller biographical account of van Dieren nor to give a critical resumé of his work, since the main aim in this chapter is to consider his influence on Warlock as documented in the correspondence with Taylor. It might, however, prove helpful to give a brief description of the main characteristics of van Dieren's style so as better to appreciate such influence. In an article in the fifth edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Eric Blom succinctly sums up his style:

The style of van Dieren's earlier works is nearly always distinguished by great polyphonic complexity gained by the independent development of melody. Contrapuntal devices are largely employed in conjunction with a scheme of harmony that is both modern and individual, and, while allowing the composer a wide scope, demands a strictly logical treatment. In the later works the harmonic basis becomes gradually simpler, while the workmanship is concentrated in a still higher degree upon organic unity and balance of form. Emotional values, though by no means absent, are severely restrained and subordinated to technical subtleties that make great demands on the hearer's musicianship. It was therefore not unnatural, though a great vexation to him and a grief to his friends, that his work never became known outside a small circle. It still demands attention, for it represents a unique personality, with defects and difficulties not easy to accept, but worth making the effort to face.

Van Dieren set several languages to music and had a fine taste for the literature of each, but his treatment of words in any of them was somewhat tortuous and unvocal. It is in his instrumental works, particularly the chamber music, that he is most convincing, even though there never easily approachable.¹³

¹³ *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Macmillan, London, 1961, p.703.

His staunch ally, Warlock, had this to say about him in the 1924 *Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*. With just a touch of cynicism Warlock makes a not-so-lightly veiled attack on the critical opinions of the music world:

His position in the music world is somewhat paradoxical; for while his methods of expression are sufficiently novel to earn him the title of "revolutionary" from those who must needs find a label and a category for every composer, his art is too firmly based upon the best traditions of the past to win him a welcome in those circles where the term *iconoclast* is considered the highest possible compliment. The letter of his music offends neo-classicists, while its spirit repels some "ultra-moderns". Those whose conception of personal style in art demands the reappearance in each new work of the same elements that were apparent in its predecessors will certainly be baffled by the apparent multiplicity of van Dieren's methods. He has not, like Schönberg or Debussy, evolved a strictly personal system of expression only to become himself enslaved by it. He adapts his style to his conceptions, or rather each fresh conception conditions and creates its own appropriate style. Pre-eminently a contrapuntal writer whose methods are the reverse of impressionistic, his harmonic basis has become gradually simpler; and all his works reveal a concentration upon organic development and unity.¹⁴

It was the sculptor Jacob Epstein who in June 1916 introduced Warlock and Gray to van Dieren in the Café Royal, a place described by Gray as "a meeting place of Character, Wit and Fashion" with a history "largely that of the figures, eminent, eccentric or infamous, who sat at its marble tables".¹⁵ The next afternoon the two enthusiastic young men visited van Dieren in his Hampstead home where he played them some of his music, the first they had heard. Such was the impact of this occasion that both Gray and Warlock wrote independently to him afterwards, the latter probably that same evening. Warlock's letter of 8.6.1916 marks the beginning of a second important musical influence in his life:¹⁶ a new obsession which was to propel his musical creative energies for the next fourteen years and to eclipse to a large degree the influence of Delius:

I was so utterly overwhelmed by your music this afternoon that all words failed me...I feel I have to write and tell you - inarticulately enough - what a profound impression my visit to you has made upon me. It has brought me

¹⁴ Hull, op. cit., pp.122-123.

¹⁵ Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1924, p.11.

¹⁶ C.W. Orr claimed that van Dieren had "a considerable influence on Philip both then and afterwards...In fact I came to suspect that many of his opinions were little more than echoes of the older musician's pronouncements". Orr, op. cit., p.1.

to a turning point, opened out a vista of a new world; it has brought to a climax the dissatisfaction and spiritual unrest that has been tormenting me for months past, in the last few days more acutely than ever....

Your music - (those fragments of the Shakespeare Sonnets and the Symphony that you played today) - is nothing short of a revelation to me. I have been groping about aimlessly in the dark for so long, with ever growing exasperation - and at last you have shown a light, alone among composers who I have met; for neither Delius nor any other has even so much as suggested a practical solution of the initial difficulties of musical composition....

Is it too much to hope that, even without the establishment of a new conservatorium, you may set some of the younger generation in this country upon the right path? It always seems incongruous that a mature composer should be expected to spend his time instructing any but a chosen few of quite exceptional promise - but in England there is no teacher to whom we can look with any respect, and our need for such a one is even greater than ever it has been in the past.¹⁷

Elated by this new musical discovery, he wrote from London to Taylor soon after this meeting to tell him of this revelation. His account has something of an air of secrecy about it. Nowhere in this letter does he actually mention the name of van Dieren but refers mysteriously to him as this "magician" and the "Messiah of modern musical education". It is almost as if he feels it necessary right from the outset to build a certain mystique around his new discovery:¹⁸

At the moment I am in a state of terrible elation and excitement. Miracles are not something of the past by any means. If I had come upon traces of the philosopher's stone, I could not be more enthusiastic...Is it not, therefore, an outstanding dispensation of destiny that at this critical moment when, as far as creative work is concerned, I am up against a hopeless brick wall, and, in another capacity, I am trying to start a progressive musical movement which may prove of great significance in rousing the younger generation to a sense of the importance of today's music - is it not almost miraculous that I should come across a composer, of works more "advanced" even than Schönberg but at the same time of an amazing new beauty and strangeness that makes an instant appeal, almost reducing one to tears of joy - who, while detesting all the accepted "systems" of composition as much as anyone, yet has evolved a method of instruction to embryonic composers which cannot fail to help them bring out whatever nature has implanted within them? I regard him almost as a magician...please forgive my incoherent enthusiasm. I am, of course placing

¹⁷ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 8.6.1916, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.138-139.

¹⁸ Some even quipped that "van Dieren" was a creation of Warlock's. Vaughan Williams is reputed to have asked whether "van Dieren" was "another of Heseltine's warlockian tricks along the lines of the resurrection of Prosdocius de Beldemandis". ApIvor, "Bernard van Dieren: Search and Rescue One Hundred Years on", *The Music Review*, November 1987, v.47, no.4, pp.253-266.

myself entirely in his hands, and I hope to be able to acclaim him, from personal experience, as the Messiah of modern musical education!¹⁹

As regards the "progressive musical movement" referred to above, Gray listed the objectives as follows:

Firstly, the launching of a new musical journal; secondly, the formation of a society for the publication of pianola rolls of new and interesting works on the same lines as those of the present gramophone societies; thirdly, the renting of a large studio or small hall where concerts of the best contemporary music could be given every week, free, also a series of lectures; fourthly, the yearly publication of a musical anthology representative of all that was best in contemporary music; fifthly, the writing of a history of music on wholly new lines; sixthly, the inauguration of a school for the teaching of composition; and, lastly, the presentation of a fully-fledged opera season at a West End theatre.²⁰

Both men jumped at the opportunity of involving van Dieren in these plans to further the cause of contemporary music. Their first move was to commission him to write an opera and Warlock's poet-friend from his Oxford days, Robert Nichols, was pressed into producing a libretto in a fortnight. Van Dieren began work on this opera, *The Tailor*, immediately and by 1917 had produced a sketch of the piece.

Filled with enthusiasm and energy they were determined not to let the grass grow under their feet. Two months later they were planning both publication and performances of van Dieren's music, Nichols being one of those approached for a contribution towards the publication of the so-called "*Chinese Symphony*".²¹

Although Gray was unable to persuade the trustees of his own income to part with any money for the proposed opera season, they eventually agreed to give him enough to sponsor a concert of van Dieren's music in the Wigmore Hall on 20.2.1917 at which the composer conducted his *Overture* and *Diaphony*. Here is the

¹⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.6.1916.

²⁰ Gray, op.cit., p.129. Warlock wrote to Taylor on 5.6.1916 less fully about this same scheme. In this letter he mentioned proposals for the launching of a musical journal, a scheme for producing pianola rolls of modern works, the securing of a large studio or room for concerts of "all the best in contemporary music" and the publication of music "by young composers who have never before appeared in print".

²¹ Op.6 (1914).

relevant extract from Warlock's letter to Taylor written in London just before the concert:

We have had already two rehearsals and there will be two more on Monday - at the Wigmore Hall at 10 and 2. The orchestra is superb - never have I heard such playing from wind-instruments. And the scoring is nothing short of miraculous. The longer of the two works is a Diaphony, on three Sonnets of Shakespeare, for 5 violins, 3 violas, 2 cellos, 1 C[ontra]-B[ass], flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, horn, trumpet and baritone solo. This takes 50 minutes to play. The other is a kind of Carnival Overture, for 2 violins, 1 viola, 1 cello, 1 C.B, flute, oboe, cor anglais, clarinet, 2 horns, trumpet, bassoon, harp and tympani. All through this work one has the singular illusion of a large body of strings playing - the contrapuntal texture of the music enables each instrument to have a real singing part - an unbroken line of melody, and one gets thus a marvellous orchestral cantabile, as rich and warm as any that could be evoked from a full band in ordinary harmonic music. Even in the large Queen's Hall, where we had the first rehearsal, the richness and sonority of the little orchestra was quite amazing.

But you must hear all this for yourself: this music is epoch-making, and if you miss this performance, it will, I know, be a lasting regret to have done so.

The "programme and book of words" will be a veritable bomb for everybody!!²²

These programme notes were written by Gray, Warlock having produced the advance publicity in the form of a manifesto, under the pseudonym Prosdocius de Beldamandis, and later described by Gray as "somewhat aggressive and pontifical".²³

...he issued a flood of mysterious and sensational manifestos, copies of which were sent to every artistic and social notability we could think of, including fashionable society beauties. I, for my part, was responsible for the programme, the foreword to which excited even more violent critical hostility than the music itself, which is saying a great deal.²⁴

According to ApIvor these programme notes, which Warlock predicted would be a veritable bomb, "contained other matter so ludicrous as to offend even the well disposed".²⁵ In his article ApIvor perceptively points out that in some ways the over-

²² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 16.2.1917.

²³ There is a copy of this roneoed manifesto which Warlock sent to his mother in London, BL, Add MS 57961. It is dated 18.2.1917 and sent from 2 Anhalt Studios, Battersea, London.

²⁴ Gray, *Musical Chairs*, Home & Van Thal, London, 1948, p.112.

²⁵ Tomlinson, *Warlock and van Dieren*, Thames, London, 1978, p.12.

enthusiastic championing of van Dieren's music by Warlock and Gray had an adverse effect on the London public and critics:

Trouble soon began for the composer, as though to penalize him for his good luck in finding Gray and Heseltine as champions of his work. His prestigious introduction to the public, at a Wigmore Hall concert featuring his *Diaphony*, was marred by the frankly offensive tone of the introductory propaganda and programme notes, and their attack on other composers from Brahms to Stravinsky, and the launching of van Dieren as a "genius", rather than as a new composer deserving of serious interest, alienated the critics. The war, his foreign origins and unknown status - even, perhaps, the suspicion that he was an adherent of the international Busoni *entourage*, resented in the more orthodox London circles - all mitigated against him; moreover, Heseltine had enemies, anxious to denigrate any of his activities. From then on van Dieren was something of a marked man.²⁶

Referring to this concert Gray almost seems to delight in the fact that it caused something of a stir:

Seldom has critical and enlightened opinion achieved a more impressive unanimity than on that occasion. Practically without exception the representative leaders of musical opinion of every tendency and persuasion, from extreme left to extreme right, burst out into a solemn howl of execration....²⁷

To understand why Warlock was so enraged by the reception the works received in the press one only needs to read the two reviews selected here. This is what the critic of the *London Times* had to say. Incidentally, it looks suspiciously as if this critic only stayed for the first half of the concert:

Two of Mr. Bernard van Dieren's works - a "Diaphony" and an overture for chamber orchestra - were performed in the Wigmore Hall yesterday. They were apparently on the same plan, and it will be enough to describe the former.

As Schönberg was the harmonic crank, so Mr. van Dieren is the contrapuntal...The principle of Mr. van Dieren's method is not difficult to understand. Your theme is treated logically enough, so logically that it is not to be turned aside by any discrepancies of context...just as Schönberg does not trouble about counterpoint, so Mr. van Dieren accepts any harmony. A good many of the chords are quite intelligible in themselves, but in their context they make to our uninitiated ears nonsense, perhaps from the lack of those "sequences, climaxes, and other properties" of musical craft upon which the "foreword" poured a somewhat lofty contempt.

²⁶ ApIvor, op. cit., p.256.

²⁷ Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, p.141.

A voice, Mr. George McDonald's,²⁸ sang, at intervals in the hour and 10 minutes of the "Diaphony", two and a half sonnets of Shakespeare...His voice rose and fell at the proper declamatory moments, and he must be complimented on the skill with which he found what we must assume to have been the right notes...that is all that could be made of a first hearing; it is improbable that many of those in the room would wish for a second....²⁹

The review in the *Musical Times* was even less complimentary but at least this particular critic seems to have stayed for the whole concert:

We have to confess that we were so dazed by the new music that we cannot pretend to offer a criticism. The "Diaphony" went on without a pause or a cadence for nearly an hour, and to such beginners as ourselves it seemed that the players again and again missed their entries, but we are assured that this was not so. Now and then the voice emerged weirdly with the Sonnets....

The Overture, too, was very long, and although somewhat more intelligible than the "Diaphony", was -puzzling and dull...Perhaps some experience of van Dieren's earlier efforts...might lead us on, but at present we are unconverted and inclined to blaspheme....³⁰

The fact that almost all the London critics condemned the concert and that the takings amounted to a mere £5 compared with the expenses of £110, sounded the death knell of a second concert planned for April. Warlock, who always liked a good fight, replied to his critics in an untitled article in the March edition of *The Palatine Review*. It contains a few well-chosen, cutting phrases such as "mediocrity instinctively recognises genius as its worst enemy" and, referring to the music critics, wrote rather sardonically:

When the van Dieren concert was given, not one critic in London had ever heard a note of the composer's music: yet; although all were given a fortnight's notice of the impending concert, not one asked for any information about him beforehand, or manifested the slightest interest in his work. One who was specially invited to come and hear some of it any day he liked was unable to undertake the quarter-mile walk which this visit would have involved. During the concert, two groups of critics gibbered and giggled so incessantly, that neither they nor their immediate neighbours could properly hear the music; and scarcely one reporter stayed for the second item on the programme...the gossip column of a penny illustrated was honest in expressing concisely what all wrote in periphrasis - that the music was "all futurist and funny".³¹

²⁸ *Diaphony* was dedicated to George Macdonald.

²⁹ *The Times* of London, 21.2.1917.

³⁰ *Musical Times*, 1917, p.166.

³¹ *The Palatine Review*, March 1917, no.5, pp.25-29.

It is from this time that van Dieren's music begins to show its influence on Warlock's own compositions. In July 1917 he wrote to Taylor from Cornwall and enclosed a copy of his setting of *The Water Lily*, a poem from his friend Robert Nichols' anthology, *Ardours and Endurances*:

I enclose a small song - one of a set I am doing from Nichols' wonderful book just published - by far the finest volume of poems issued by any of the younger men. May I dedicate these settings to you or are they too bad?³²

The set was eventually published in 1923 with the title *Saudades*, a Portuguese word meaning a sense of sad and aching nostalgia for the days gone by. The set comprised three songs, one of which, *Heracleitus*, written in Ireland, was dedicated to Taylor. The song, *The Water Lily*, mentioned in the letter above and originally intended as number three of the set was later dropped. Copley describes it as:

A "through-composed" setting with a thick van Dieren-like accompaniment and a rather pallid and dreary vocal line (3/4. Very slow: veiled, as though in a dream). There is no key signature and the song meanders through a medley of tonalities...the song is not without several incidental subtleties of word setting, but Warlock was probably justified in not including it in the *Saudades* as published. The word "omit" appears in Warlock's hand on the manuscript".³³

In his Preface to the first printed edition of this song Tomlinson wrote:

Here I must disagree with Dr. Copley, who assumes this song was not good enough for inclusion in the set. This is a mature composition owing much to van Dieren's influence. Its serenity, however, makes it totally unsuited to the despairing mood of the rest of the *Saudades* and there is some evidence that Warlock planned a group of settings of Robert Nichols poems.³⁴

In the same letter to Taylor, Warlock added that he was also experimenting with Celtic folk-songs (eventually to appear as the *Folk Song Preludes* for piano):

...endeavouring to do for them what Grieg did for the Norwegian (in his op. 66 and other later collections), Béla Bartók for the Hungarian, in his children's pieces, and van Dieren for the Dutch, in some very interesting

³² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1917.

³³ Copley, *The Music of Peter Warlock: A Critical Survey*, Dobson, 1979, p.64. After the word *omit* Warlock added "This song to be separate from the others". London, BL, Add MS 52906.

³⁴ Thames, 1972.

recent arrangements - that is, broadly speaking, to set each tune in a short and straightforward manner....³⁵

Taylor must have discussed certain aspects of van Dieren's music with Warlock for in an undated letter from Anhalt Studios, Battersea, Warlock adds the following postscript:

I quite understand your view of van Dieren and to a certain degree I agree with you: when one is actually making propaganda one has to be much more violently partisan than one really is. Out of the town atmosphere, van Dieren's music is unthinkable! But as for "beauty" - what is it? I have been struggling for a definition and, so far, I have come to this conclusion only:- that Beauty happens: it is simply an inseparable accident attendant on the equilibrium of ideas and forms. Conscious quest of beauty can only end in rape - or nothing at all. Amenissimen.³⁶

In August Warlock had moved to Dublin where he stayed for a year. During this time he produced a number of songs and a piece for small orchestra, *An Old Song*, all of which showed van Dieren's influence to a greater or lesser degree. Even from that distance Warlock was doing everything in his power to help van Dieren financially. He tried to direct some of his allowance to van Dieren in order to help him with his medical expenses but his mother, who from the start did not care overmuch for van Dieren, proved difficult about this.

It was in a letter to Taylor from Dublin that he let off steam about the conductor, Eugene Goossens, not making any effort to help advance the cause of van Dieren's music:

...Vandieren's [sic] stupendous String Quartet (which Goossens knows very well and, when Cecil Gray or I are present, lavishes extravagant praise upon) lies unheeded and unheard - and Vandieren himself lies, neglected and unhonoured, at the gate of Death! Goossens has now possessed for nearly two years an orchestral work of Vandieren's [sic] which is wonderful - full of strange, poignant beauty and emotion. I copied the full score for him myself and he promised to do his utmost to secure its performance, that very winter - 1916.³⁷

³⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1917.

³⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.4.1917.

³⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.4.1918.

During this period Warlock gave his famous illustrated public lecture, *What Music Is*,³⁸ in Dublin in May 1918. He wrote to Taylor two days later giving a full account of the occasion which included "four exquisite arrangements of Dutch melodies by Van Dieren". Later in the letter he added:

I am copying out for you the ten Dutch melodies by van Dieren, which you will love. Alas, none of his works are published yet - but if you are interested enough in the six piano pieces³⁹ I played you in London on the pianola to want to study them, I will gladly have a copy made for you.

The MS of these *Dutch Melodies*, presented by Taylor to the library of the University of Cape Town,⁴⁰ were copied into a music manuscript book (29.5cm x 23.5cm) in Warlock's most beautiful and fastidious handwriting. The Italian titles of the ten movements as they appear in the Cape Town manuscript are:

- I Andantino (Berceuse)
- II Semplice ma con solemnite
- III Languroso - con mesto
- IV Leggiero - giocoso
- V Tempo Maestoso - chiaro - semplice
- VI Poco vivo - dolce
- VII Andante sostenuto
- VIII Andante. Lantando quasi come flauto
- IX Tempo di Marcia, assai vivace
- X Un poco lento. Pesante

When O.U.P. published them in 1927 twelve movements appeared and the work was given a new title, *Netherlands Melodies*. According to the composer they were based on tunes he had remembered from his childhood days. He had this to say about them in a letter to Warlock:

...One I discovered later was a German folksong appearing in the 'Liedersratz'!!! One is an obscene speechsong of unknown origin (heard by a sergeant-major in a brothel and then by me...) The tune you mention I heard a military band play when I was about ten years old.⁴¹

³⁸ See Appendix A.

³⁹ 6 *Sketches* (1910-11), published by Universal Edition in 1921 as Op.4a.

⁴⁰ Cape Town, UCT Library, TPA 781.4 7265.

⁴¹ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 9.9.1926, quoted by Tomlinson, op. cit., p.15.

Ten Dutch Melodies
I.

BERNARD. VAN DIEREN.

Andantino (Benevol)

18. MS of van Dieren's *Ten Dutch Melodies* in Warlock's hand (UCT Library, Manuscripts and Archives. TPA 781.4 VAN 7265)

It is at this point that the so-called "infamous letter" saga took place. Whilst Warlock was in Ireland he asked Taylor to try to find a London publisher for van Dieren's music. This letter is the prelude to the whole incident. Writing from Dublin Warlock quotes verbatim an extremely amusing incident from one of van Dieren's letters. Although an extremely lengthy passage, it is here quoted *in toto* as it provides a picture of one side of van Dieren's personality, at the same time being an excellent example of witty writing about a musical poseur:

But if you really want to do someone a good turn with regard to publishers, you would earn a triple blessing of the composer and his disciples if you would take with you and play the ten Dutch Melodies of van Dieren. These exquisite works are of so delicate a nature that the mere dumb manuscript, left with a not over-intelligent or sympathetic publisher, might easily fail to convey the frail and subtle beauty of the music: but if you were to play them, they would have the best of all possible chances. When you are in London, do please go and visit van Dieren...he would be delighted to see you, and you could have an interesting talk over his works. He is at present a little better than usual in health, I am glad to say - though his best would seem to most people a desperate condition. His struggle against death is veritably Promethean. How often, when he is enduring the most horrible torments of pain, must he consider how much easier it would be to die - a mere relaxation of the will would be enough to break the thread at times. But he continues living and suffering in order to bring down more music into an ungrateful, heedless world. So clear is his mind, so definite his inspiration that he needs only the time and the physical strength required for the labour of committing his thoughts to paper. There are, now, but rarely any preliminary sketches, and still more rarely any alterations: he has been writing his new (3rd) string quartet in bed, directly into a fair-copy score, without any rough notes whatever! And then people accuse his music of being laboriously calculated! The other day I received a letter containing a marvellous description of how a singer and a string quartet came to his house a while ago to read through his second quartet and some songs with quartet accompaniment. This is so inimitably comic and vivid in his own words that I must copy them for you - it is all so typical of how "cultured musicians" receive the master-works for which (theoretically!) they are always clamouring: and incidentally, affords yet another endorsement of my dictum that there is no greater enemy of music than the music profession⁴² - especially the soi-disant "advanced" section thereof.

Here is van Dieren's narrative:-

..."Mr Murray Davey had been invited to sing the part in the first place. He turned up but apparently did not understand that he was expected to sing, as he was not invited for his all-round intelligence. He was rather drunk and talked more than the whole company together. When I asked him to

⁴² See unpublished letters from Warlock to Taylor dated 8.11.1916, 25.4.1918, 9.8.1918 and the Dublin lecture, *What Is Music*, where Warlock expresses the same view. "On the contrary, I believe that at present the Art of Music has no greater enemy than the specialist, the professional musician". Jones, R., Preface to *The First Book of Songs*, Peter Short, London, 1600.

sing he started off on a long story about his opinions concerning my music which apparently begins always quite beautifully but then goes off into most incomprehensible chaos so that Mr M.D. cannot do anything but take his head in his hands and shake it in despair. As if this were not enough, he gratuitously made loud criticisms after each piece played - the Villon music⁴³ for instance was much too dissonant and much too sad!! etc - the Baudelaire⁴⁴ was entirely out of harmony with the spirit of the poem (I discovered since that this gent has composed the work himself for string quartet, piano and Murray Davey) und so weiter. I did not reciprocate his somewhat misconceived position as a guest on false pretensions by abusing mine as host and therefore politely ignored as much of his effusion as I could and slightly argued some points in the most academic manner. He then made use of a short interval to address every one of the musicians and ask for support or otherwise...The ladies of course had great opinions of me, and Goossens performed again his special miracle of agreeing with everybody and disagreeing with everybody's opponents. That this and other judgments were considered ones was amply proved by the following monologue delivered after the musicians had departed, to the stupefied ladies, by this hirsute bass and faithfully recorded by my better half⁴⁵:-

Mr M.D. "of Covent Garden and the Grand Opera Paris and London Concerts etc etc " (very drunk and highly conscious of his irresistible charms) rambles off:- "First I thought, on reading it through, que cette song etait most beautiful but comme je desirais to sing it and as I savais not play it sur le piano I took it to my friend Poldowsky [sic] - Lady Dean Paul⁴⁶ you know! Now she is a composer elle même and she knows everything about modern harmonies, pour être sur, she writes them herself. She played it through and moi, je listened avec attention. When it was over nous nous regardons et je say: "Irene what do you think of it" and she answered "Murray I don't understand" and moi je reponds "Irene, neither do I" - "but" she said: "Murray let us try it again" (most magnanimous! note of victim) and we played it again and I said "Irene, I am just as far as I was" and she answered, "Murray so am I" - and mesdames je vous jure que nous avons, un whole afternoon, essayé de jouer et comprendre this music neither Lady Dean Paul Poldowsky, a modern composer herself you know nor I - M.D. of C.G., G.O.P. and L.C.⁴⁷ etc, etc - could make anything of it, and nous avions to give it up dans parfait despair. The fact is that these harmonies"...etc...etc...etc. Here the maestro enters and offers M.D. of C.G. and the G.O.P. etc a sixpenny cigar which the bugger accepts and smokes. Still I enjoyed it, and had the consolation that in the meanwhile I had listened to Eugene Goossens Junior who, on the stairs and at the front door - without witnesses - paid me the warmest and vaguest compliments, accompanied by his silent gestures of a somewhat enigmatical character, and his marvellous mimicry of significant looks into a hypothetical distance. Also he asked me to dispose of him at any time for similar performances. They have however not yet taken place...."

Really I think that if van Dieren had written no music, he might have made a name as a literary humourist! His little character sketch of Goossens is a masterpiece! I have not seen or heard such a perfect exposition of the

⁴³ *Ballade, Dame du ciel, regente terrienne*, for voice and string quartet, words by Francois Villon (1917).

⁴⁴ *Requiem, Sois sage, ô ma Doleur*, for voice and string quartet, words by Charles Baudelaire (1917).

⁴⁵ i.e. his wife, Frida.

⁴⁶ Poldowski (Lady Dean Paul, born Irene Regine Wieniawska) 1880-1932, Polish composer, English by marriage.

⁴⁷ Abbreviations of titles used at the beginning of the paragraph.

"musician's" attitude towards music since Frederic Austin made his pontifical utterance to Cecil Gray⁴⁸:- "SPEAKING AS A COMPOSER, you know, I do not consider the work of Schönberg WORTHY OF MY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION"!!!!!!⁴⁹

Besides the humorous content there is also a rather dark and cryptic postscript to this letter:

I have just had a most astounding communication through a mediumistic friend (who is entirely unmusical) concerning van Dieren and the immediate future of music: of this more anon.

Warlock's dabblings in the occult coupled with certain predictions had convinced him that van Dieren was dying although he lived in fact another eighteen years. His next letter to Taylor carries on in this self-same urgent and mysterious tone with something of the cloak-and-dagger about it:

Please keep strictly to yourself anything I may have said in former letters about certain communications and predictions. These have developed into a very serious and important matter which I will tell you fully one day. At present, however, you would be rendering me a very great service if you would go as soon as ever you can to visit the Master...He may be too ill to see you but you will see his wife. Say I sent you to inquire about him and do anything he may want with regard to his works. I fear he has but a few more weeks to live. Please let me know how you find him and send me any messages he may give you. He is probably too ill to write. I have not heard from him for some time and I am very anxious in view of these particular predictions, which I again beg you most strongly to keep entirely to yourself. I must see him again before he dies - so that I shall probably have to cross over to England very soon (though don't mention this to him either; the whole matter is very complex and singular - I dare say these references surprise you and seem confused, but I will explain all before long)....⁵⁰

Taylor reacted promptly and visited van Dieren as requested. In his next letter Warlock expressed his gratitude at the same time writing angrily about publishers and professional musicians:

⁴⁸ This remark ensured Austin's immortalisation in a collection of Warlock verses entitled *One dozen Cursory Rhymes dedicated to the British Music Society & the Society of British composers* (London, BL, Add MS 57967):

Whether it be true or not that Mr. FREDERIC AUSTIN
Has as much creative talent as a Jew has foreskin,
I can testify that one day he exclaimed with considerable animation,
"Speaking as a composer I do not think SCHÖNBERG'S music worthy of
my consideration". (A FACT!)

⁴⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.6.1918.

⁵⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 2.7.1918.

I am very glad you went to see van Dieren: I have had no news of him for some weeks and I was getting anxious about him...I do not know the third string quartet⁵¹ but the second is a colossal work:⁵² Gray thinks it is van Dieren's best work of all he has written,

I did not know it was W. Rogers you were going to visit in London: he is a perfectly frightful individual, I think, and has already had the Dutch tunes and turned them down, so it is sheer humbuggery if he pretends now that he is "considering" them. This kind of man is infinitely worse than the publisher who is open and honestly nothing but a business man...Rogers "composes" himself too!! That emasculated offspring of a wet dream and a virgin's menstree called Anthony Bernard once entertained van Dieren and myself by first asking van Dieren (a) whether he had studied orchestration (b) whether he liked Bach, and then sitting down to the piano and piping euniquely⁵³ a song by W. Rogers Esq which, since nobody praised, he was compelled to praise loudly himself at the close of the performance.

There is nothing more loathsome, to my mind, than the attempts so frequently made nowadays, in every art, to wean the public from love of the hopelessly vulgar by presenting them with the hopelessly dull. It is the cult of the "genteel" returning, and of this Rogers is a very flagrant example in music. Incidentally, he is not very rich as publishers go and would probably not pay van Dieren anything like their real value for the Dutch tunes. Naturally that kind of person would find any definite statement or theory of the function of music profoundly disturbing. Being a publisher and, what's more, a composer into the bargain, he wishes to be approached with deference. Propaganda of "the right kind" for his mind would be; "Please Mr Rogers I've got a manuscript...I'd be so grateful if you would be so good as to cast your eye over it sometime or other and tell me if it's any good at all: I think it's wonderful, but of course I don't know anything about it - it may be all rot, you know, but I would like you just to glance at it - during lunch or any old time, You'll be able to tell in a minute...etc, etc." I never met the buggger myself: he came once with Bernard to my studio and Gray interviewed him and realized that he was quite hopeless. I saw Bernard fairly frequently at one time: he is a most disgusting hypocrite, with no ideas or views of his own and an entire incapacity to grasp, much less to controvert, anyone else's. In one's presence he agrees with everything one says, and even goes out of his way to fawn and flatter one: but the things he says about one to other people when one is not there!!! These are the very worst types of professional musicians...There is only one answer for people who say that one is wrong without being able to add how or why or where one is wrong: and that answer is: Try the bellows, my good sir - there is nothing like the bellows! Which, if you ever see W. Rogers again, I should be grateful if you would say to him with my compliments.⁵⁴

At this stage perhaps a word about the "bellows" would be helpful: Taylor wrote a paragraph on their significance in the article about the young Warlock in the

⁵¹ Op.15 (1919), dedicated to Frederick Delius.

⁵² Op.9 (1917), dedicated to Cecil Gray.

⁵³ Not a misprint but a clever play on two words, "eunuch" and "unique".

⁵⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.7.1918.

Composer.⁵⁵ This paragraph, omitted in the final printed version, still exists in the original typescript although Taylor tactfully avoided any elaboration:

The now well known Puckish streak in Philip's make-up kept friends and enemies alike in a constant state of alert. A case in point is *bellows*. Mystified victims (mainly music critics) received at regular intervals pairs of bellows the significance of which...must necessarily remain veiled in obscurity. But for the sake of the record, let me add that I am now among the very few who possess the key to this cryptic act, and am positively the only one who had a hand in its creation. But all I can state is that it was begotten of a somewhat ribald story told me by the author of *The Promenade Ticket*, A.H. Sidgwick, and that I in turn passed it on to Philip to his immense and lasting delight.⁵⁶

On the very day that Warlock wrote his letter with all its almost prophetic comments about music publishers, Rogers wrote to Taylor about the van Dieren Dutch pieces which he had taken to him. As it had a crucial effect on Warlock's subsequent letters and actions, this so-called "infamous letter" is extensively quoted here:

I took these little pieces home, because I have been so busy at my office that I have very little time for looking things over here, and as it happened, I showed them at separate times to John Ireland, Frank Bridge, Anthony Bernard, and Roger Quilter. I made no comment or expression of opinion to any of the above four, but they all feel exactly as I do about van Dieren's work.

First, that his workmanship is shockingly bad.

Second, that the harmonic scheme is in bad taste, especially so because it is impossible to hear the melodies in the midst of the errors of harmony.

Third, because the whole scheme is quite the opposite of what one understands by "the modern spirit", and is more in the musical class of the mediocre Germans of the middle of the nineteenth Century.

One of the four said at once. "This is the work of a sick man".

I write all the above quite frankly, because it is no use to beat about the bush in such matters. I appreciate your kindness both to Van Dieren and myself, in suggesting that we get together, and I hope my decision in this case will not deter you from making any other suggestions which occur to you.

I feel sure that we are not mistaken in Van Dieren's case. I know that great talent has often been misunderstood, but the fact should not make one timid, especially when one sees clear evidence of inferior musicianship.

⁵⁵ Taylor, op. cit., pp.9-10.

⁵⁶ Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection, BC76 C3.11.

Please forgive all this avelanche [sic]....⁵⁷

To say that Warlock went berserk when the letter was forwarded to him is to understate his reaction. His single-minded loyalty to and admiration for van Dieren unleashed a veritable, at times almost incoherent, torrent covering a wide range of topics with colourful imagery drawn from sources as diverse as "buggery" and war, Christianity and Warlock's disillusionment with materialism. As he leapt to van Dieren's defence, his vivid imagination, fired no doubt by his recent dabbings in the occult, saw Rogers as the Antichrist, music as "a fair lady in distress" and he and his friends as "the very few champions that remained to fight her battles against an insidious and cunning horde of monsters". His ten page reply in miniscule handwriting is the longest of all his letters to Taylor and a substantial part is quoted here. Although it does not shed new light on the relationship between Warlock and van Dieren, it gives valuable insights into Warlock's tenacity of purpose when aroused whilst also illustrating his own brand of logic. It also shows his tremendous skill with words which flow with an easy eloquence even though at times the writing possesses an almost hysterical, paranoid quality:

I am very grateful to you for those letters. If they do not add much to one's previous knowledge of the writer and his associates, they at least give one the satisfaction of having from one's enemy's own mouth a more eloquent statement of the case against himself than one could have framed in his own words...I feel that in those letters we have the concentrated essence of the great poison that has for some while past been tainting music as well as the other arts, the chief force against which we and all who care for the true welfare of art will have to contend with all our strength during the next few years...Rogers' use of the phrase "the modern spirit" is very significant: the whole crux of the matter lies there...I have written a good deal about these tendencies to you before at one time and another, but these letters bring the matter to a head - they act upon me like a trumpet-call to battle....

What Rogers defines as "the modern spirit" in music is in reality the spirit of the Antichrist. This is a word which is very much misused and misunderstood. It has of course no necessary connection with the Christian religion as understood today, nor with the historical Jesus. From your reading of Blake, James Pryse and others you will know what the Christ principle really is - the crown of human endeavour, spiritual attainment. Antichrist, however, is not the mere negative-opposite of Christ. Polarity and equilibrium are necessary to life, light is balanced on the darkness, darkness is the necessary complement of light. Failure to recognize this fundamental fact is the underlying weakness of all systems of moral values

⁵⁷ Part of the Cecil Gray papers, London, BL, Add MS 57794.

manufactured on this side of good and evil...This is a very important point and gives the key to the whole situation. It is not the mere neglect or negation of art that is art's worst enemy : it is as Blake said "a pretence of art" that destroys art.⁵⁸ This is the monster we are out to slay - the perversion of the very function of art...It is when this true purpose is forgotten, when such things as these are done in the name of art, in the name of a spiritual principle of which they are themselves the embodied refutation that the supreme blasphemy takes place, that - relatively speaking - evil arises....

...The spirit of the present era is materialism: it is everywhere rampant and, despite all the seeming contradictions, as yet still dominant everywhere. It is a necessary phase for humanity to pass through...Now the "modern spirit" being essentially materialism, how is it possible that any art can spring from it? Materialistic art - that is art that is in sympathy with and an expression of a materialistic age - is a contradiction and a lie. Art is the reconciliation of opposites, spirit and matter, an expression of spiritual things in material terms - this is the quintessence of art. But when no spiritual things are known ? How can art exist? The answer is that it can not exist, and that if there exist something in these conditions which is called art, this is a counterfeit, a monstrous perversion and a lie....

...Let us now think particularly about music, reverting to the letter from Winthrop Rogers. The new device is also a very old one but is still effective: and that is, to disguise oneself as the enemy in the hope of conquering him by fraternization - thus destroying the equilibrium established by the conflict...I have often reiterated to you that the worst enemy of Music is the music profession⁵⁹...Rogers' letter is a magnificent corroboration of that dictum...One suspects at once that something indecent has occurred when one discovers a composer-publisher round whom petits maîtres revolve like satellites about a planet...Rogers is a very good example of this confusion which is the very root of all evil in art: one may take him as a symbol, a figure-head which sums up everything that is most insidiously, virulently hostile to the interests of art at this critical period which is the climax of the old order out of whose subsidence the new will gradually arise. Rogers is by no means the only, perhaps not even the best example in England. But he is a very clear and definite embodiment of the modern spirit and in smashing him and all his crew we shall be striking a good blow on behalf of Music. It will not be so difficult as it may seem to you at first. But to recur for a while to the letter itself: observe the intense personal animosity behind it...note too what this implies: he and his crew feel something behind van Dieren: their hostility is a high tribute to his power which, even in its mildest manifestations, can move them to such an outburst. Mediocrity always recognizes genius - in its own interests of self-defence. No mediocrity's work would prompt a letter of such intensity and feeling. And then observe that, as happened after the concert, this instinctive, unreasoning hostility, as of a wild beast to a man, entirely overmasters the reasoning faculties of those in whom it is aroused: with the result that when they try to express it in terms of reasoned criticism, they come utterly to grief. Their criticisms simply do not apply to the works in question (save for that very penetrating remark, for which I will credit Rogers with far keener critical acumen than any of his colleagues, about the

⁵⁸ "A pretence of Art to destroy Art; a pretence of Liberty to destroy Liberty; a pretence of Religion to destroy Religion". Blake, W., *Jerusalem* (1804-20), chap.2, Plate 43, lines 35-36. Warlock had used this same quote in two other letters written a few months earlier: in a letter to Delius, 15.5.1918, and in a letter to Gray, 15.6.1918. Both letters are quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.175 and 195.

⁵⁹ See footnote 42.

"modern spirit" - for the most part they do not even make sense in themselves. The force of hatred that animates this man has made him inarticulate almost. (It is possible also that he remembers with some bitterness the association of certain definite ideas with van Dieren and feels that at all costs, whatever the nature of van Dieren's music, those ideas must be defeated). But what sense is there in the phrase "errors of harmony" from a partizan of "the modern spirit"? Why, it's a positive joke! And then remember it was Rogers' colleague Quilter who introduced and welcomed to London the prodigious "futurist" Leo Ornstein!!!!⁶⁰ "Errors" of harmony, from such a man! Though I must say I am just a little surprised and grieved at the inclusion of Quilter's name among this crew. He is a man of far greater refinement and intelligence than most musicians, and although as a composer he had very little to say and has already said it several times over, that little was at first of a rare and exquisite quality and the best lyrics that he wrote ten or more years ago remain the sole examples of modern English music that one can hear over and over again with undiminished pleasure...As for the other "meistersinger" - well, I do not expect that if one blew up the house of Rogers with all its attendants and hangers-on, that any stray works of genius would perish with the dross....

The order of Rogers' accusations is also significant. First of all comes workmanship. (Incidentally this is the biggest joke of all to anyone who knows van Dieren's work.) It is very characteristic of "the modern spirit" to care nothing at all whether anyone has anything to say, so long as he mouths and gibbers in the approved fashion: the means entirely eclipses the end in importance!

"Bad taste"...is the criticism of the slaves of fashion jealous of the free. As for its being "impossible" to hear the melodies (etc) - one begins to wonder whether Mr Rogers was really sober when he read the pieces, since the only possible explanation of this judgment would seem to lie in the fact of his having contemplated the MS upside down - seeing that the pieces in every case consist of a plain tune - always in the treble part - accompanied by straightforward 4-part harmony! This is the kind of criticism that make argument impossible and necessitates more forcible weapons...The phrase "This is the work of a sick man" is also very contemptible, especially as everyone knows that van Dieren has lain for years at Death's door and it is apparently pretended that this fact was discovered by some miraculous process of divination from his work...I too hope that Rogers' "decision in this case will not deter you from making any other suggestions which may occur to you" - more especially the suggestion⁶¹ I made for him in my last letter!...Rogers has got to be smashed, and - what's more - Rogers shall be smashed. As a preliminary move I have written a very full account to Delius, who is shortly coming over to England - partly to acquaint him with this very characteristic illustration of the state of music in England, partly to warn him of the true nature of Rogers seeing that the latter might easily scent profits in some of the numerous new works Delius is bringing over with him (indeed I once heard Bernard express a keen desire that Rogers should secure some of his new songs), and partly because Delius has now a very considerable amount of influence and is not afraid to lay bare the naked truth about the enemies of art. I can assure you that Mr Rogers will bitterly repent him of his attitude towards van Dieren before we have finished with him.⁶²

⁶⁰ See chapter 10.

⁶¹ i.e. the bellows.

⁶² Unpublished letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 9.8.1918.

Taylor, whether he liked it or not, was now becoming embroiled in this whole Rogers saga. The original "infamous letter" with indignant marginal notes and comments in Warlock's minutest handwriting was sent to Gray, with an instruction to keep it "carefully for future use", but there is no evidence as to whether it was ever shown to van Dieren or if he even heard of its contents. Judging from the following unpublished letter⁶³ which van Dieren wrote to Taylor, a month after the Rogers reply, he had certainly not heard of it by that date; his references to Rogers are far too mild. But it is interesting to note distinct echoes of Warlock's remarks when he writes to Taylor saying that he is aware of the reactions of his critics as a result of the fear they have that his music "might exercise a charm on them". This was doubtless a possible explanation which the two men had at some time discussed together. Here is the complete text of this two page letter which is written on white folded notepaper (27cm x 18cm):

My dear Mr Colin Taylor,

Thank you very much indeed for your kind letter and for the trouble, it appears from it, you have taken on my behalf.

I was highly pleased to know that the limping skeleton of my string quartett [sic] movement⁶⁴ had not only not frightened you but that your sympathetic intentions had prompted you to make the effort of in your imagination filling it with flesh and blood and that you found it repaying the trouble taken.

I am unfortunately too familiar with the reversion of the powers in which people, from hostile intentions, divest the (well presented) work, in thought, from what they fear might exercise a charm on them they 'a priori' have made up their minds to be 'non est inventus' were it only to be able to say they found it what they expected it to be. Incidentally this is a very human procedure, specially suitable for musicians. They believe they admire the old composers because their music does what they expect it to do. So the method is convenient enough as it works either way and much in demand as it requires no skill for handling, nay "a child can learn it in a few hours" as the claim for patent machines has it, and this makes it "a most handy contrivance for the workman or amateur" (to retain for a moment the style of the ironmonger's price list).

⁶³ Unpublished letter from van Dieren to Colin Taylor, 17.8.1918, Cape Town, UCT Library, BC76 A4.153.

⁶⁴ The string quartet referred to in the letter is no.3 (Op.15) completed in 1919 and dedicated to Delius. The score and parts were later published by O.U.P. in 1928.

My vast experience on this subject makes me the more grateful for your appreciation if it is possible to be so more than I would be even if there were not this to act as a foil.

It is most kind of you to make the heroic attempt of rousing a publisher from his profound slumber and I shall of course be pleased to see Mr Winthrop Rogers, who has up to now not manifested himself to me in any form or shape.

I do hope you may find again a few minutes to let me hear from you; I shall be always looking forward to it.

Believe me, with kind regards
Yours very sincerely
B. van Dieren

The whole Rogers affair seems to have had one good effect at least: now roused for battle, Warlock suddenly became incredibly productive. He wrote again to Taylor telling him, amongst other things, that he had:

...written ten songs in the last fortnight...such activity has hitherto been a thing unknown with me....⁶⁵

Still believing the strange predictions that van Dieren was about to die, he asked Taylor to find a publisher for these latest compositions so that the proceeds could be used to assist van Dieren. This is another example of the incredible generosity and loyalty Warlock showed towards his friends:

In other circumstances, however, circumstances are far from being rosy. I am very much afraid van Dieren is dying - and my belief rests on communications both from the secret source of which I have hinted to you before and from the Maestro himself. His last letter was very distressing: he has had a bad relapse and now at last his heart, which hitherto has seemed able to stand almost anything, has finally given way and is found to be much impaired. And as if this were not affliction enough for one man, this crisis of health has exactly coincided with the worst pecuniary crisis that has yet arisen. The poor man has spent more than his little all on doctors and druggists, and now he is practically penniless. You will get some idea of how literally true this statement is when I tell you that his precious violin and viola are in pawn and Steinway's are threatening to take away his piano unless the bill for its hire be paid immediately - although up to two years ago they had always loaned the instrument free, gratis and for nothing, in consideration of Mrs van D's having played on their pianos at all her recitals. The other day he sent me a pathetic telegram for a few shillings. It is too monstrous and horrible that the greatest artist of his generation should be reduced to such a condition in this vaunted era of culture.

⁶⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 22.8.1918.

Now since it is a case of all contributions, however small, being most thankfully received, it has occurred to me that my ten songs, which are all light and simple like the two I enclose, might be turned to some account - despite my resolve to have nothing to do with publishers for the present. But still, the case is a desperate one and calls for desperate remedies. I therefore fling myself upon your kindness and beg you to tell me (1) whether such songs as the two I send you are saleable (2) and if so who is the most likely publisher to purchase them, (3) etc, etc - especially (3)! In fact, if you would go so far as to send them, with your recommendation, to some publisher with whom you are on friendly terms, I should be eternally grateful to you. Perhaps they are quite unsuitable, but still - one must try every expedient for raising money...Forgive me for plaguing you thus, but you see what necessity prompts me to do so, and you will realize, I know, that I cannot with a clear conscience neglect even the smallest opportunity of doing what little I can to relieve the stress of a friend to whom I owe such added joy and understanding of music as van D. has given me...

As Taylor was still in the army, stationed at Newhaven, he was unable to oblige, so Warlock, who had returned to London to see both van Dieren and Delius, decided to visit the publishers himself. Still smarting about the Rogers affair, he decided that here was the opportunity to take his revenge. He gives an amusing account of this in his next letter to Taylor:

Again, as you see, I am settled in London...I wanted to see van Dieren, who took an alarming turn for the worse in August and has been ever since in a most precarious state, and Delius who has established himself in London for the next six months. The relation between these two is singularly interesting:⁶⁶ I shall tell you about it fully when we meet.

Meanwhile, I have had a most excellent revenge on Rogers...I sent him a book of seven of my recent old English lyrics...under the name of Peter Warlock, asking if he would care to publish them. Some days later I received...a note asking me to call...which I did...Rogers having not the faintest notion who I was!!...in the end [he] offered to publish all seven songs...isn't it an excellent joke?...Later on, I want to crown the affair by presenting some actual works of van Dieren as P. Warlock's - they will probably be much admired and accepted for publication!⁶⁷

In this letter, next to the sentence beginning "I sent him a book of my recent old English lyrics...", Taylor made the following pencilled comment in the margin: "The

⁶⁶ Delius did not prove as enthusiastic about van Dieren's music as Warlock hoped: "...Delius asked him to continue playing from a score which was on the piano. This was a work of van Dieren, a setting, if I remember rightly, of some Shakespeare Sonnets, and it soon became evident to me that Delius was taking very little interest in the music as it went on. Instead, he kept up a running commentary of adverse criticism such as: "Not very original, this", or "Rather a banal passage, don't you think?" and so on, and eventually poor Philip gave up his attempts to persuade Delius that a new musical star had arisen in the shape of this unknown Dutch composer". Orr, op. cit., p.1.

⁶⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 29.10.1918.

songs that 'made' him". These included *As Ever I Saw*, *The Bailey beareth the Bell Away*, *My Gostly Fader*, *Lullaby*, *Take, O take those lips away* and *Whenas the Rye*.

Having re-established himself in London, Warlock lost no time in renewing his campaign on behalf of van Dieren's music. Whilst the latter was undergoing another operation he copied out scores and sets of parts which he sent to some important musicians: the composer-pianist, Busoni, and the conductors, Adrian Boult, Albert Coates (1882-1953)⁶⁸ and Geoffrey Toye as well as the young Arthur Bliss (1891-1975)⁶⁹ who was later to become Master of the Queen's Music and whom Warlock described in a letter to van Dieren as:

a rich enthusiast who gives Sunday evening chamber concerts at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, and seems eager to devour every piece of modern chamber music he can lay hands on.⁷⁰

He also managed to persuade Delius and Busoni to recommend van Dieren's *Six Sketches for piano*⁷¹ to Universal Edition who eventually published them in 1921. In a letter dated 17.10.1921 Warlock briefly mentions this fact to Taylor. Tomlinson records that only ten copies were sold in three years.⁷² In the same letter to van Dieren Warlock describes the comparatively happy ending of the Rogers affair:

...Rogers immediately took up six more songs to send off to the printers, but, wishing to print them in various keys, sent for Anthony Bernard to come and transpose them, so that he might hear in which key they went best. Anthony, whom I had not seen for months and whom I had no chance of warning, appears to have recognized my handwriting and given the show away! However Rogers has taken it very well and has promised faithfully to keep the secret: and indeed it is as much to his own interest, as regards the sales, as to mine that he should do so. I hear that Gervase Elwes, John Coates and Muriel Foster⁷³ are studying the songs with enthusiasm, and I received a word of approval and kindly encouragement from no less a personage than (I tremble to write his exalted name) Frank Bridge!!!⁷⁴

⁶⁸ English conductor and composer who settled in Cape Town in 1946.

⁶⁹ English composer and conductor.

⁷⁰ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 14.11.1919, quoted by Tomlinson, op. cit., pp.18-20.

⁷¹ 1910-11.

⁷² Tomlinson, op. cit., p.18.

⁷³ 1877-1937, English mezzo-soprano.

⁷⁴ 1879-1941, English composer and teacher.

Now however that the secret is out, as far as W.R. himself is concerned, I shall have the satisfaction of telling him, as I told Anthony Bernard today, that whatever is good in the workmanship of these little tunes is due to prolonged study of the works of one B.van D....⁷⁵

The six songs published by Rogers in 1919 were *Love for Love*, *Mourn no moe*, *Sweet Content*, *Dedication*, *There is a lady sweet and kind* and *My little sweet darling*.

At this time Warlock also agreed to check the proofs of van Dieren's book on the sculptor, Jacob Epstein, which was due to be published by John Lane.⁷⁶ Warlock was soon to discover that van Dieren, ill and frightened at the thought of losing the much-needed fee, had told Epstein and the publishers that the work was finished when it was, in fact, still in a very incomplete state. Here, once again, Warlock showed his incredible kindness and generosity, by not only sorting out the problems with Epstein and the publishers but also by correcting the MS as it arrived bit by bit. His task must have been enormous if van Dieren's panicky instructions to him in an undated letter are anything to go by:

Need I say what I want you to do with the M.S...Correct the grammatical mistakes, and orthographical faults, substitute synonyms here and there where a word is unnecessarily repeated in too close proximity, rearrange the position of the words in the sentences where it is clumsy, or unidiomatic or too involved. Where the sentences are so long as to become too much for human breath and too vast for the field of human vision cut them up into three or more of the length English prose requires...give it some of the colour of your own incomparably racy English and weed out what is obviously translated from the Tibetan language.⁷⁷

Van Dieren was not unappreciative of his loyal friend's tremendous kindness and of his remarkable talents as a composer. When these latest songs appeared in print, he wrote a letter, sometime towards the end of 1919, in which he paid tribute to Warlock's music in beautiful and sensitively chosen words:

For days I have been taking up the two "Warlock" songs, and after reading through them I felt a warm tear somewhere behind my eye running down to

⁷⁵ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 14.11.1919, quoted by Tomlinson, op. cit., p.20.

⁷⁶ Van Dieren, *Epstein: Illustrated with 50 Reproductions in Collotype*, John Lane, The Bodley Head, London, 1920.

⁷⁷ Letter from van Dieren to Warlock, undated, c.16.11.1919, quoted by Tomlinson, op. cit., p.21.

my heart. They are no monuments for our children to stand before in awe, but they are so sweetly sad and so infinitely loveable...I know this music and what one must have felt before one can write it. There are things that come out of one as the precious substances out of the wood ooze out of the wounds made on the tree's trunk, your melody that "weeps so gaily and smiles so sad" makes you the dearer to me. I feel your absence more than ever, I miss your good face and miss your good company....⁷⁸

Warlock's reply is equally eloquent and contains his famous and oft-quoted remark about his own songs:

I was greatly touched and not a little flattered by your kind words about my songs. You understand everything so wonderfully, even the most insignificant things in their minutest details. I could wish for no higher praise nor for a juster appreciation of my little melodies. Sometimes I feel that this exiguous output of tiny works is too futile to be continued - though I have neither the impulse nor the ability to erect monuments before which a new generation may bow down. And then when I think of some of the "monumental" composers in present-day England alone, I feel that I would rather spend my life trying to achieve one book of little songs that shall have a lasting fragrance than pile up tome upon tome on the dusty shelves of the British Museum.⁷⁹

The year 1920-21 saw Warlock editing his new periodical, *The Sackbut*, which had as one of its aims the inclusion of all the arts, not purely music. The issues included a great variety of things ranging from a drawing by Augustus John to "some interesting poems"⁸⁰ by the South African poet, Roy Campbell. Needless to say the works of van Dieren were featured and the ninth issue included piano reductions from four of his works reproduced in Warlock's own exquisite handwriting.⁸¹ Van Dieren had himself been asked to contribute an article but was prevented from doing so on account of his ongoing illness. As Warlock was relieved of the editorship soon afterwards nothing of his ever appeared. Part of the policy of *The Sackbut* was also the promotion of concerts and at the first of these (18.10.1920) van Dieren's *String Quartet no. 2* (Op.9, 1917) was given its first performance.

⁷⁸ Letter from van Dieren to Warlock, undated, late 1919, quoted by Tomlinson, *ibid.*, p.21.

⁷⁹ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 24.1.1920, reproduced in facsimile, *ibid.*, pp.23-24.

⁸⁰ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 28.2.1921, quoted by Tomlinson, *ibid.*, p.24.

⁸¹ *The Sackbut*, March 1921, v.1, no.1, pp.404-410, contained two articles on van Dieren: "Quotations from the works of van Dieren" and an unsigned article, "Benard van Dieren: A List of his Principal Compositions."

Warlock then returned to Wales where he began working hard at composition again, sending on a number of songs to van Dieren for comment. As a result of criticisms and comments he received, Warlock revised parts of his major work, the song-cycle, *The Curlew*. He also dedicated the first of the songs in the *Saudades*, *Along the Stream*, to van Dieren, writing:

I hope you will forgive me for printing your name over the enclosed - but my justification is the command to 'Render unto Caesar...etc!'⁸²

During the following years Warlock continued to promote van Dieren's cause as much as he could, at the same time enlisting the services of numerous other musicians. These included the singer-musicologist, Gerald Cooper (1892-1970),⁸³ the singer, John Goss and the conductor John Barbirolli (1899-1970)⁸⁴ who also gave the first performance on 25.1.1925 of Warlock's *Serenade* for Delius's sixtieth birthday.

Another source for the promotion of van Dieren's music opened up in 1923 when O.U.P. expanded their catalogue with a new series, the Oxford Choral Songs. Hubert Foss, head of the music department and a friend of Warlock, not only included a number of Warlock's songs and transcriptions in the early catalogues but also published a dozen of van Dieren's songs in 1925. Another friend, the composer E.J. Moeran, assisted the cause by including the first public performance of the String Quartet no. 4⁸⁵ in a chamber concert he had organised.

One of the especially interesting items in the Colin Taylor Collection is a piano reduction of the slow movement of this Fourth Quartet reduced to short score in Warlock's own hand. It consists of three pages of manuscript (two sheets 36cm x 26cm). It was given to Taylor by van Dieren when he visited him in 1931 and has in

⁸² Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 20.9.1923, quoted by Tomlinson, op. cit., p.26.

⁸³ English musicologist and tenor.

⁸⁴ English conductor.

⁸⁵ Op.16, 1923.

the top right hand corner the following inscription: "presented to Colin Taylor in memory of our mutual friend Philip. B.van Dieren 1931".⁸⁶

There are not many references to van Dieren in the last few Warlock letters to Taylor. In a letter from Eynsford he mentions that:

Oxford Press...by the way, are issuing very shortly twelve marvellous songs by van Dieren, whose 4th string quartet (in which a double-bass takes the place of the 'cello) has lately been twice performed in London.⁸⁷

He also makes reference to the concert which the singer, Goss, had organized:

Van Dieren is, I am glad to say, at last receiving something like his proper need of recognition. The exquisite "Serenata" for chamber orchestra was performed by Anthony Bernard's band last week; this is another "Siegfried Idyll".⁸⁸ The Spenser sonnet for voices and chamber orchestra⁸⁹ was given a week or two before - and on the 14th of this month a complete concert of his work takes place.⁹⁰

By the mid-twenties Warlock was again writing numerous reviews and articles. Included among these is an article on van Dieren for the *Dent Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians* and also a *Musical Times* review of the van Dieren concert organised by Goss in the Wigmore Hall mentioned in his letter to Taylor. In this review he could not resist a few digs at the critics. He never forgave them for what they had written about the first van Dieren concert he and Gray had organized back in 1917. At the same time he did not lose the opportunity for making some typically extravagant comments about the music:

The general opinion of Van Dieren's work may be aptly summarized by saying...that it is divided, those who do not know his works disputing the judgments of those who do. At the risk of being told that I am arousing further prejudice against van Dieren, I am bound to say that a hearing of several works which I have known intimately on paper for a long time only confirms my opinion that Van Dieren is one of the two or three composers now living who are destined to be numbered among the masters.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection, no catalogue number.

⁸⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.6.1925.

⁸⁸ *Siegfried Idyll* (1870) by Richard Wagner.

⁸⁹ *Sonetto VII of Edmund Spenser's "Amoretti"* for tenor and eleven instruments, O.U.P., 1925.

⁹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925;

⁹¹ *Musical Times*, 1926, pp.44-45.

When O.U.P. showed no interest in publishing any further songs by van Dieren (the twelve they had published in 1925 had not sold at all well) he implored Warlock to help him find another publisher "for a few songs...at whatever terms".⁹² The ever-helpful and loyal Warlock went cap in hand to Curwen, the very firm that had treated him so badly over *The Sackbut* some years earlier and managed to persuade them to publish two songs which van Dieren had set to words by the poet, Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864).⁹³ Not only did he have success with Curwen but he also managed to talk Hubert Foss at O.U.P. into publishing another dozen songs, the scores and parts of String Quartets Nos. 2, 3 and 6 and two works for piano, the *Tema con Variazione* (dedicated to Arthur Bliss) and the *Netherlands Melodies* which had originally sparked off the Rogers saga.

From his sick-bed the grateful van Dieren sent Warlock a copy of his 6th String Quartet, which he dedicated to him, accompanied by a note which said "at least I have this means of demonstrating my artistic regard and human affection...."⁹⁴ Warlock's reply from Eynsford a few days later is full of delighted appreciation:

You have given me intense pleasure and, indeed, have done me too much honour in dedicating to me that superlatively lovely quartet. I cannot thank you adequately, nor express my pride at having my name associated with such a work...Of all your works that I know, there is none that I love better - and I had formed this opinion before I knew that you intended to honour me with the dedication.⁹⁵

Even in 1930, that difficult last year of his life, Warlock was continuing tirelessly in his efforts on van Dieren's behalf. In a final attempt to have the early opera, *The Tailor*, performed, he managed to find some people prepared to put up the money to stage it for a fortnight's run in London. However, as a result of various hitches and problems, these plans failed and the performances never materialised.

⁹² Letter from van Dieren to Warlock, 20.7.1926, quoted by Tomlinson, op. cit., p.29.

⁹³ English writer and poet.

⁹⁴ Letter from van Dieren to Warlock, 10.9.1928, quoted by Tomlinson, op. cit., p.30.

⁹⁵ Letter from Warlock to van Dieren, 14.9.1928, reproduced in facsimile in Tomlinson, *ibid.*, p.30.

Bernard and Frida van Dieren were the last people to see Peter Warlock alive on the night of 16.12.1930. The next morning he was found gassed in his flat in Chelsea. At the inquest⁹⁶ on 22.12.1930 van Dieren gave evidence saying that he had known Warlock for about fifteen years and that he and his wife had been with him on the night of December 16th from about 10.40 p.m. to 12.15 a.m. They had had a drink together and then went to Warlock's flat. In answer to the coroner's questions van Dieren said that when they left him he had been perfectly all right, normal and sober and that he had apologised for the fact that he had not even a bottle of beer in the house to offer them. They then had had a quiet talk.

When asked if he could throw any further light on the matter, van Dieren said:

The only thing I could possibly think of is that he might in the early morning have suddenly awakened, felt miserable for some reason or other, and done something which he could not really have contemplated...I can say that when I left him he was in a state of mind in which that should have been the very last thing I could have expected.⁹⁷

In the unpublished typescript of the proposed book on van Dieren, Gray described van Dieren's reaction to Warlock's death:

Van Dieren, I believe, took it to heart more than any of us. In fact it is not going too far to say that he was obsessed with the tragedy until the end of his own life...It is characteristic that for a long time he would not admit that it had been suicide, but stoutly maintained that it was perfectly explicable as the result of an accident....⁹⁸

In April 1931 van Dieren wrote these very moving words in an unpublished letter to Taylor. It is particularly interesting to read his account of that last visit, his comments on Warlock's personality and the plans for a literary tribute:

I need hardly tell you how much you have been in my thoughts these last few months. When reading through Philip's papers, I was reminded of you every moment. Your manuscripts had a place of honour and the tone of your correspondence showed how you were one of the few for whom he deeply cared....

⁹⁶ For a full account of the inquest see Gray, op. cit., pp.290-295 and *The Times* of London, 23.12.1930.

⁹⁷ Gray, op. cit., pp.291-292.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Tomlinson, op. cit., p.35.

You can understand what I have suffered - I loved Philip like a brother, a son and a friend all in one. And I admired and loved him for his brilliant gifts. He became ever more dissatisfied with life, and it was impossible to help him at all. Never have I been able to convince him that praise or encouragement was more than a somewhat ironic kindness. He was inclined to regard all I ever said to him as a laborious edifice of charitable deception and I could not make him believe differently. The disharmony between his ideals and life as it revealed itself to him became so unbearable that to endure existence was an ever present pain to him. I was with him till past midnight of his last day and felt terribly unhappy about him. But when I left I am certain he had no thought of anything irrevocable. As for us it is impossible to reconstruct it all, he must early the next morning in an imperative return of his depression have acted automatically.

It was a most terrible shock, and God only knows how I lived through all the subsequent horrors of the inquest and the clashes of friends' and family's interests that converged on me. He had several years ago made me his sole heir and executor and the family solicitor informed me of this a few minutes before I had to go into the witness box!

And while I suffered under the irreparable loss of so dear a friend and the terrible tragedy of his whole life, I have had to fight tooth and nail against opposing interests - because only by accepting his will could I deal with his papers and the artistic side of the matter, and it has brought me much misery ever since.

Still I don't like to think how it all might have gone if he had been intestate, so I had no choice....

...The Oxford University Press want to publish a memoir which they have asked me to edit, and I am having much difficulty with that.⁹⁹ I have invited Gray, Lambert, Moeran, Evans and Terry...to contribute to it. I wonder whether you would write me an article about his early years? A couple of thousand words?

Cecil Gray intends to write a full biography later on and I mean the earlier publication to be more in the nature of a tribute by those who knew him personally....

And naturally I should very much appreciate it if you would lend me the letters you mention in your cable. It was most kind of you to suggest it...And not only of course can you tell us much about his early beginnings but I should be very happy if you could add to it a tribute to his later work which you know pretty fully. There were many exquisite things and technically he had reached an amazing degree of perfection...I am sure that we might have expected very much more from him still. It is all too heartbreaking.

But at the same time, for those who watched the whole development of his life, the end seemed inevitable. Whatever might have been done for him could only have been done very many years ago, and I fear that just those who had the power to direct his later development could not have been expected to have any notion that they were not perhaps doing the best for him.¹⁰⁰ You, who have known him so young and to whom he was so devoted must have understood that as well as I could and will know how

⁹⁹ This project never materialised.

¹⁰⁰ Taylor has pencilled the name "Delius?" in the margin of the letter.

hopeless it is when there occurs such a discord of individual dispositions and formidable conventions.¹⁰¹

Van Dieren's obituary of Warlock, published in the *Musical Times*,¹⁰² struck just the right note coming as it did straight from the heart. His sensitive writing about his friend and loyal supporter's personality could not have been better expressed.

Perhaps the words which van Dieren understood better than anyone else were written to him on the same day as the inquest by Winifred Baker,¹⁰³ a nurse who had loved Warlock for a number of years and was herself the dedicatee of two of Warlock's songs:¹⁰⁴

I am glad that you, with your quietness and your long friendship, were with Philip on that last evening. I had seen him on the Friday before his death & he was more depressed and unhappy than I had ever seen him before and, in some way, remote so that I seemed to be able to do nothing for him - he was, as it were, out of one's reach and I was overwhelmed with pity for his loneliness.

I can feel almost gladness now that it is over - that he has at last found peace and quietude he so loved and never - or seldom - could find in the world....

The Warlock-Taylor-van Dieren story ends with another unpublished letter from van Dieren to Taylor.¹⁰⁵ Taylor was planning his visit to England at that time and van Dieren wrote to say how much he was looking forward to seeing him and the Warlock correspondence which he had promised to bring with him. Aware of the importance of this and, indeed, of all Warlock's correspondence, van Dieren wrote:

I am as keenly as ever looking forward to your promised visit and to seeing the letters you will bring. I certainly know how you feel about them having myself gone through the same sensations. Much that did perhaps not strike one at the time they were written has now when one sees the whole life before one a deeper significance. Now one realised perhaps how sincerely and fully every page translated a mood, and how painfully true all they said was.

¹⁰¹ Unpublished letter from van Dieren to Colin Taylor, 12.4.1931, in the possession of Hugh Taylor.

¹⁰² *Musical Times*, 1931, pp.117-119.

¹⁰³ Letter from Winifred Baker to van Dieren (22.12.1930) quoted in Tomlinson, op. cit., p.36.

¹⁰⁴ *Dedication* (1919) and *The Sick Heart* (1925).

¹⁰⁵ Unpublished letter from van Dieren to Taylor, Cape Town, 6.8.1931. UCT Library, BC76. C2.2.1.

Maida Vale 6144

35^A St. George's Road,
West Hampstead, N.W. 6.

6 August 1931

My dear Colin Taylor,

I was glad to hear from you.
I would have written long before now, and
in fact kept your letter lying by me on
my desk, but I have had a dreadful
time and somehow never came to anything.

I am as keenly as ever looking
forward to your promised visit, and
to seeing the letters you will bring.
I certainly know how you feel about this
having myself gone through the same
sensations. Much that did perhaps
not strike me at the time they were
written has now when one sees
the whole life before one a deeper
significance. How one ~~knows~~
realised perhaps at the time

how sincerely and fully every page
translated a mood, and how
painfully true all my said was.

I shall not be away from London
I believe. Anyway it will be easy to
get in touch with each other as I shall
leave instructions in case I do more.
Your letter does not make it quite clear
whether in the last weeks of September
you are coming to London, or whether
you shall be here long before then.

I send this letter to Surrey and hope
for the best. If I do not hear in time I
shall write again.

It will be good to see you again and
talk about the many interests we share.

My very best wishes,

Yours very sincerely

Bernard van Dieren

CHAPTER 7

WARLOCK WRITES ABOUT HIS OWN MUSIC

It is very kind of you to be always wanting to play my little works to people...I am most grateful that you should like them sufficiently to think it worthwhile....¹

When, in 1964, Colin Taylor wrote his article on the young Warlock he was, in his characteristically modest way, most insistent that he had had no real influence on Warlock the composer:

I cannot recollect Heseltine showing the least sign of the creative urge while he was at Eton, and as our periods there were drastically limited, there was little chance of stimulating it. However, apart from playing, he insisted that I also improvised to him (this persisted throughout life) but whether this could possibly have generated or awakened a latent desire to "make up" something on his own, is anyone's guess. But of one thing I am absolutely sure, namely, that I had no hand whatsoever in his subsequent development as a composer. The occasional and insignificant alterations he would make in his manuscripts as a result of my criticisms amount to little, if anything. Piano figurations were his constant bugbear. Chordal progressions got dismally glued to the centre of the keyboard. It was here that I could help a little, though, as it happened, rather disastrously perhaps, for now, many of his song accompaniments took wing to such a degree, and became pianistically so exacting,² as to preclude the universal acceptance that the works in question deserved.³

Modest words indeed, for a study of the correspondence makes it abundantly clear how much Taylor helped and encouraged Warlock over many years. True, he may not have been responsible for the emergence and formation of Warlock's own particular style, but the fact that compositions were constantly shown or sent to him

¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.12.1907.

² Hubert Foss wrote of Warlock's compositions: "That he could not play what he finally wrote on paper is of no concern: there he joined the great company of honest composers who use the piano when composing...He played over his own songs with great (if inaccurate) pains, and when he came to a difficult passage he played on, but slower. Others were neither allowed nor expected to follow the composer's lead. As performances by professionals approached, their technical comments and advice were unavailing. The critic part of his mind stepped in, at once. The sounds he wanted were written down...they had to be played and sung to please him". Foss, *"Peter Warlock" (Philip Heseltine)*, Chapter IV of *British Music of Our Time* (edited A.L. Bacharach), Penguin, London, 1951, p.67.

³ Taylor, op. cit., pp.9-10.

for comment meant that he valued Taylor's criticisms especially. Even when Taylor had moved to Cape Town he still continued to send him his latest published compositions and transcriptions, often hot off the press. Also it must not be forgotten that the two men met quite often during the ten years between the end of Warlock's schooldays and Taylor's departure to Cape Town. On some of these occasions he would doubtless have looked at his former pupil's compositions and made some comments and perhaps a few criticisms. Unfortunately as none of Taylor's letters with comments about the songs survive, the reader has to reconstruct the picture entirely from Warlock's side of the correspondence - his requests for criticism of what he has written and his subsequent reaction to Taylor's comments in a following letter.

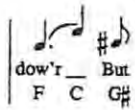
Warlock's first serious effort at composing were two songs written sometime in 1910 towards the end of his time at Eton: *The wind from the west*⁴ and *A lake and a fairy boat*,⁵ both largely influenced by Quilter and Delius, his two musical models at the time. He continued composing songs after he finished school, some of which were destroyed, others existing only in manuscript until 1972 when they were resuscitated and edited by Fred Tomlinson and published by Thames, London.

In a letter written to Taylor from Cologne Warlock writes for the first time about one of his own compositions: *A lake and a fairy boat*, which he had sent together with an early setting of Shelley's poem *Music when soft voices die*. Taylor evidently reacted most favourably to these early efforts, suggesting that the young Warlock take them to Cecil Forsyth:

Ever so many thanks for your very nice letter...and also for looking at my scores. It was kind of you to suggest that I should take them to Mr Forsyth - it would interest me very much but I am afraid I shall not have time to do so at present...In the Hood song I have made an alteration: 7 bars before the end the voice part should be thus:

⁴ Poem by Ella Young, 1867-1956, English poet. The references in the poem to "the West...the country I love the best" no doubt appealed to Warlock and his affection for Wales.

⁵ Poem by Thomas Hood, 1799-1845, English poet.



I have lately written three more songs, one to words by my friend, Nigel Bannerman.⁶

These Bannerman settings have not survived but one entitled *Past Love* is mentioned briefly in the letter to Taylor quoted below. Warlock wrote to Taylor from Wales saying that he would be trying to "do a little composition for practise [sic]"⁷ and his letter of the next month is full of enthusiasm about the songs he had been writing during the holidays. It is a particularly important and interesting letter for in it he describes, albeit rather apologetically, his early method of composing:

My "composition" is rather ludicrous: the only way I can produce anything at all is to strum chords at the piano until I light upon one which pleases me, whereupon it is imprisoned in a note-book. When a sufficient number of chords and progressions are congregated, I look for a short and, if possible, appropriate poem to hang them on to. This found, more strumming has to ensue, until there is about the same quantity of music as of poem. Then the voice part is added, and the whole thing passes for a "composition"! I should call it a "compilation"! Four more of such have been evolved since I sent you the last two: these are (1) "A Dirge" : (Shelley) voice part on two notes! (2) "Past Love", a poem by my friend, Nigel Bannerman, (3) "Oh, breathe not his name" (Thomas Moore) - pure consomme! - and (4) "Jadis" (Ernest Dowson) which contains some very "modern" chords that I can scarcely think of, even now, without a piano!! However, I can quite honestly disclaim all responsibility for their appearance in the world! I sent eight songs to Delius (at his request - he little knew what he was in for!) ...but beyond acknowledgment on a postcard, I have heard nothing further from him: I expect his disgust was, literally, too great for words!⁸

It seems rather ironical that ten years later Warlock should write the following harsh and critical words about a similar method of composition in an article for the *Musical Times*:⁹

...The fact remains that a great deal of music, especially at the present time, is either extemporized at the keyboard or else is built up of fragments discovered, more or less fortuitously, at the pianoforte and afterwards unskilfully glued together.

⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.12.1911.

⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.1.1912.

⁹ Heseltine, "A Note on the Mind's Ear", *Musical Times*, 1922, pp.88-90.

What makes it even more ironic is the cynical footnote to this sentence: "Notable examples may be found in the work of Cyril Scott".¹⁰ It is difficult to excuse a provocative remark like this even if Warlock was perhaps trying to exorcise the ghosts of the memories of his own earlier youthful attempts at composing. In fact he seems to have had such an aversion to the music of Cyril Scott that it invariably elicited from him the unkindest of remarks. It seems amazing that he was able to get away with printed comments such as this:

Last, but not necessarily least, must be mentioned Cyril Scott, who continues to develop the harmonic style of Joseph Barnby¹¹ in the spirit of Oscar Wilde.¹²

Although appearing somewhat critical of his own early efforts at composition, after having shown his songs to Taylor, Warlock was confident enough to send them to Delius and then on to various publishers. When he found a lack of interest on the part of the publishing houses, he evidently destroyed some of these songs.

Gray dismisses these early compositions as consisting:

...chiefly of songs in which the interest was almost exclusively harmonic, with complex blocks of chords for the piano through which a mournful and sluggish voice part drifted, like the waning moon through a bank of clouds. It was, indeed, very moony stuff altogether: clotted dream music...the predominant influence that of Delius.¹³

Also commenting on these early songs, Copley writes that:

...the young composer had acquired a considerable harmonic vocabulary of the sensuously chromatic sort (via late Wagner, Delius, and some of the other English late-romantics - for instance Bax¹⁴) but that his accompanimental textures were, as yet, overloaded and ponderous, and his voice parts (he stipulates a tenor voice in each case) sprawling and ungratefully written.¹⁵

¹⁰ 1879-1970, English composer, pianist and poet.

¹¹ 1838-96, English organist, conductor and composer.

¹² Heseltine, "The Condition of Music in England", *The New Age*, June 1917, no.1292, v.21, no.7, pp.154-156.

¹³ Gray, op. cit., p.140.

¹⁴ Arnold Bax, 1883-1953, English composer of whose music Warlock was a great admirer (see chapter 9); Bax stayed for a short time with Warlock at Eynsford in 1926.

¹⁵ Copley, op. cit., p.55.

On his return to Germany in 1912 there was a spate of creative activity sparked off perhaps because of the extreme dullness of his piano lessons and the consequent need to exercise his imagination and creative gifts. Soon after he returned to Cologne after the Christmas holidays he wrote to Taylor about some further songs which he had just composed:

I am almost ashamed to inflict any more rubbish upon you, but I am sending you a little ditty that I have just finished, in the hope that you may look at it, and give me your opinion about it, for although I know it is just a strumming-product, the production is to me a pleasant pastime, and I should very much like to know if you think it a waste of time if one can do no better! This completes a little set of seven "Sketches", which I think would go well together.

Do you think any publisher would accept any or all of these trifles? I should hardly venture to ask, only you once advised me to send "The Wind from the West" to a publisher, which I never did because I am entirely ignorant as to how to set about it. Also the words by Dowson and Ella Young are copyright, which makes it awkward. I have not heard a word from Delius about the songs...but I expect he is very busy....

Had all the songs survived, this projected set of seven *Sketches* would have been made up of the following pieces:

- (1) *The wind from the west* (Ella Young)
- (2) *A lake and a fairy boat* (Thomas Hood)
- (3) *Music, when soft voices die* (Percy Bysshe Shelley)
- (4) *Past love* (Nigel Bannerman)
- (5) *Dirge* (Percy Bysshe Shelley)
- (6) *O breathe not his name* (Thomas Moore)
- (7) *Jadis* (Ernest Dowson)¹⁶

Delius eventually replied about six weeks later and, like Taylor, was very encouraging about Warlock's early efforts at composing. His comment on a persistent E flat is probably a reference to the 1911 song, *The Wind from the West*:

Your songs are beautiful. In one or two I have made slight alterations - only a suggestion, mind - you come back so persistently to E flat in one of them.

¹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.12.1912.

And then presumably in reply to Warlock's query about his method of composing at the piano:

It is of no importance whether you write at the piano or not as long as you feel you want to express some emotion. Music is nothing else.¹⁷

In a letter to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch (written the day before departing for Chadlington to begin cramming for the Oxford entrance examination) Warlock wrote to thank him for some more help on his songs. It is interesting to note his musical independence emerging, even at this early stage, when he gives his firm reason for declining one of Taylor's suggestions:

Thank you so much for your nice letter and corrections of my songs; I am very grateful to you for your advice, and have made alterations accordingly, though I could not bring myself to alter the B natural to B flat! because, as a matter of fact, those major 7ths were the first jottings which led to the song being evolved! I have made a fair copy of six songs (the ones I mentioned, omitting "Wind from the West") and despatched them to Elkin: they will probably visit many more firms, but the various answers will be amusing to one who has never tried before! I am afraid if I sent less than six, there would not be enough to make the printing worth while, as I think they are all too short.¹⁸

As Warlock expected, the songs were rejected outright by the publishers Augener, Elkin and Breitkopf. This seemed to have put something of a dampener on his urge to carry on composing for he wrote from Chadlington to Taylor saying:

...nothing further has been perpetrated, nor, I think, will be, for the present at any rate.¹⁹

Not long after, however, Warlock informed Taylor in another letter from Chadlington that he had decided to send him some of the remaining songs which he had not yet seen. The author referred to was Warlock's boyhood friend, Nigel Bannerman:

I am sending you by the same post as this a miscellaneous collection of music - the Moret prelude ..the Schönberg, Delius' lovely "In a Summer

¹⁷ From an undated letter from Delius to Warlock quoted in Gray, op. cit., p.46.

¹⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.3.1912.

¹⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.5.1912.

Garden"...and my own stuff which I have been sending round. There are three songs out of the six which you have not seen, and I have altered the others a good deal, but I fear they are still unsingable! Do you think even such a tiny collection as these six ought to be divided up? I must apologize for the utter "hogwashedness" of nos. 4 and 6, bad as I know the rest to be! The words of 4 are appalling: do you remember the author? In defence of him, however, I must add that he is not in the least like his "poetry"!²⁰

Two other songs, no longer in existence, dating from these early years, are mentioned in a letter written to Taylor from Didbrook. It seems that Warlock was apparently planning to put together three songs as a group:

I have revised my two "Kensington Rhymes" as much as I can: do you think it would be worth sending them to Miss Spencer for inspection? If so, I should be most grateful if you would send them on, especially as the two you sent her before were so exceptionally mangy. I thought one might group the two Kensington Rhymes with one of the Moore songs - "I have a garden" - (which Miss Spencer already has), calling them "Three Songs of Childhood"; the Moore song is very quiet and would provide a contrast. The other Moore song which you sent Miss Spencer - "Oh, breathe not his name" - could either be consigned to the flames, or become a companion to another Moore song which I have nearly finished. I hope you will forgive me for bothering you with my paltry MSS. Do you think the "Kensington Rhymes" tunes fit for publication, and if so, whom should I try?²¹

One of the two Moore songs referred to is in all probability a revised version of *A Child's Song* dating from 1910, one of his earliest efforts at composition. It eventually appeared as *I have a garden* in an O.U.P. series of songs for unison voices and piano in 1925. Copley rather dismisses the piece because, according to him:

...despite its oriental flavour, it cannot be regarded as a particularly characteristic or successful setting.²²

Some months later, prompted by a reference to his songs in one of Taylor's letters, he writes rather disparagingly from Didbrook about his recent compositions:

What songs of mine did you refer to? Are they the two Kensington Rhymes, or the others you sent to Miss Spencer before? In either case, I implore you to burn them as soon as you get them back: I have not written anything whatever for the past eight months, and have quite firmly resolved not to write another note until I feel I have something to say - which will probably be never.

²⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.6.1912.

²¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1913.

²² Copley, op. cit., p.198.

I cannot feel any of the absurd little ditties I have written hitherto, and I cannot bear to think of their horrible little insincerities trying to impose on other people.²³

It is not until almost four years later that Warlock makes further references to any of his compositions in his correspondence with Taylor. In a letter from Cornwall a sudden surge of re-awakened interest bursts through his writing:

I enclose a small song - one of a set I am doing from Nichols' wonderful book just published²⁴ - by far the finest volume of poems issued by any of the younger men. May I dedicate these settings to you or are they too bad?²⁵

These 1917 settings of his Oxford friend, Robert Nichols's poems have unfortunately not survived though their titles are mentioned in a letter to Nichols from Cornwall:²⁶ *Change, At Braydon, Deem you the roses* and *Blackbird*. A choral setting, *Canticle from "Danae"* to words by Nichols, also dates from this year.²⁷ It too was destroyed.

It was during this period that the nationalist revival in music first began to have an influence on Warlock's compositions. Just as in Europe composers such as Grieg and Bartók (not to mention van Dieren with his *Dutch Melodies*) were rebelling against German influence in music and exploring their respective folk-music, English composers like Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)²⁸ and Gustav Holst were busy rediscovering the heritage and treasures of their own country. It was therefore inevitable that at some stage or another Warlock would be intrigued by the possibilities of introducing such elements into his own compositions. Later in this same letter there is the first of many references in the Taylor correspondence to the *Folk Song Preludes* for piano.

²³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1913.

²⁴ Nichols, R., *Ardours and Endurances, also A Faun's Holiday and Poems and Phantasies*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1917.

²⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1917.

²⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Nichols, 20.7.1917, London, BL, Add MS 57795.

²⁷ This was to be a companion piece to *The Full Heart*. Unpublished letter from Warlock to Nichols, 20.7.1917, London, BL, Add MS 57795, mentioned in Copley, op. cit., p.290.

²⁸ English composer, conductor and organist.

I am also experimenting with Celtic folk-songs, endeavouring to do for them what Grieg did for the Norwegian (in his op. 66 and other later collections), Béla Bartók for the Hungarian, in his children's pieces, and van Dieren for the Dutch, in some interesting recent arrangements - that is, broadly speaking, to set each tune in a short and straightforward manner but without the usual idiotic harmonic restrictions that faddists like Cecil Sharp, V. Williams and Co. like to impose upon themselves.

This letter ends with a postscript which needs some explanation:

My César Franck rag-time which I sent you is to be played next week by the rag-time band at Selfridges - violin, piano, 2 banjos and the most marvellous assortment of "kitchen utensils" you have ever seen!!

Warlock is here referring to a piano piece, *The Old Codger*, a send-up of the main themes from César Franck's Symphony in d²⁹ in the currently popular "ragtime" style of which Scott Joplin (1868-1917)³⁰ was one of the chief exponents. He described the piece as *no. 6 of Bulgy Gogo's Contingencies* and dedicated it to Taylor.³¹ It is marked Andantino-Allegretto ($\text{♩} = \sqrt{xy}$) and is given further chatty instructions worthy of Percy Grainger: "Rather slow but very sure. Like a barn-dance; or perhaps a cab-horse".

Sometime in that same year (1917) Warlock wrote a set of four pieces, the so-called *Cod-pieces*,³² under one of his favourite pseudonyms at that time, "Prosdocius de Beldamandis Junior", a learned 15th-century doctor of music and mathematics. The title itself is full of double-entendre: a cod-piece was an ornamented flap or bag concealing the opening in the front of men's breeches in the 15th century as well as being a colloquial word for the penis. *The Old Codger* reappeared as the fourth of these, extended from its original 52 bars to 77. Gray refers to it as follows:

²⁹ 1886-88.

³⁰ Black American composer and rag-time pianist.

³¹ The dedication stuck. In an undated note (c.1970) to Kay Haslam, S.A. College of Music librarian, he signs himself Colin Taylor, THE OLD CODGER. UCT Library, Manuscripts and Archives, correspondence file.

³² London, BL, Add MS 48303. The four *Cod-pieces* are: 1. *Dance*. 2. *Oriental* (for a Tahiti Timbuctoo scene) 3. *Beethoven's Binge* (*Der Beethoven-Bummel*) (or the Bard unbuttoned vide Sir George Grove *passim*) and 4. *The Old Codger*. An earlier version of this last piece, slightly different (BL, Add MS 52912), is described as no.6 of *Bulgy Gogo's contingencies* and was dedicated to Colin Taylor. For a full description of these pieces see Copley, op. cit., pp.217-221 and Copley, "Warlock's Cod-Pieces", *Musical Times*, 1963, pp.410-411.

Of more interest and value among his compositions at this period was an elaborate parody of César Franck's most noble symphony in D minor - a witty and sacrilegious production...The themes of the symphony are only slightly distorted, but in such a way that the *Père Séraphique* of the music is made to appear like a saint with a halo over one eye, a red nose and a hiccough. It is a perfect little masterpiece in a genre too seldom practised...Some years later he scored it for jazz band, and in this form it was actually played....³³

When next Warlock wrote to Taylor it was from Ireland making brief mention of his earliest surviving orchestral work, *An Old Song*, which he probably began writing in Cornwall:

The "Old Song" is to be part of a "A Celtic Triad", together with a Dirge and a Cornish Rhapsody. The tune is Gaelic but the piece, for me, is very much the Cornish moor where I have been living. The tune should emerge, as from afar, chiming in with one's thoughts while walking. The curious way in which it seems to end on the supertonic gives the impression that it fades away into the distance, unfinished. One stands still, attentive to catch another strain, but there is only the gentle murmur of wind - and only fragments remain in the memory - and a mood half-contented and half-sad. But, needless to say, the piece was not constructed around such a definite programme. No. 3 of the Gaelic Tunes presents a different aspect of the same melody but here everything is light and evanescent - over in a few seconds. The character of the setting would be entirely changed if the tune were repeated. No. 2, however, could be lengthened. I have a three-verse version of this tune for voice and piano.³⁴

The "three-verse version" referred to is another lost song, an arrangement of a Gaelic folk-song, *Mo rùn gael Dileas* (*My faithful fond one*), used in the second of the *Folk Song Preludes* for piano.

Gray describes the orchestral piece, *An Old Song*, as:

An exquisite little miniature, written for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and strings, full of delicate atmosphere and haunting fantasy. Some wit has described it, "On hearing the second cuckoo in spring", and there is certainly sufficient of the Delian influence to justify the joke...³⁵

Copley also writes at some length about this work:

An Old Song...is the composer's earliest surviving orchestral work, being also the most substantial of his Celtic enthusiasms. It was originally

³³ Gray, op. cit., p.142.

³⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.8.1917.

³⁵ Gray, op. cit., p.158.

intended as part of a *Celtic Triad*, together with a *Dirge* and a *Cornish Rhapsody* later destroyed. It is based on a Scots folk-song... "There was anes a May ("And werena my hert licht I wad dee")....

Its Delian ancestry is manifest in the very opening bars, and is underlined by a very Delian orchestral layout, viz. one each of flute, oboe, clarinet (B flat) and horn (F), with strings including violins divided into four parts, and 'cellos divided into two parts throughout...

An Old Song was published in 1923 after slight revision of the scoring, and was dedicated to the late Anthony Bernard. Performances have been very few, for a chamber orchestra made up of players of great individual sensitivity is required to do it justice, and the conductor has considerable problems of balance - not to mention the constant fluctuations in the pulse-rate to contend with.³⁶

Another reference to compositions now lost or destroyed appears in one of Warlock's Dublin letters to Taylor. There is, however, no information to assist in discovering what their titles were:

As you were kind enough to like the five little tune-trundles I sent you a while ago, here are two more - there have been several others but, for one reason or another, they are now, like "ille Toad-in-the-Hole", no longer to be found. The Irish tune is a rebel song - a reminiscence, I fancy of 1798³⁷ but to-day more popular than ever: one hears it daily in the streets! How long, one wonders, will it be before anything so fine is heard from the lips of our English errand-boys!³⁸

In a letter written from Dublin a few weeks later Warlock makes some very perceptive and interesting observations about the kind of songs Taylor had referred rather deprecatingly to as "potboilers".³⁹ He wonders too what qualifications he has for criticising his former teacher's compositions. Perhaps for the first time in any of these letters there is the briefest of hints, coupled at the same time with a genuine modesty, that he may, after all, possess some slight gifts as a composer:

But this is only my private and personal view, plainly stated, since you asked for it: I don't know why you should ask for it since, as a matter of plain fact, you know a great deal more about composition than I do. Except in moments of conceit, I don't regard myself as a composer at all - as yet. Perhaps, at the age of 35...! But the more clearly I see the foundation

³⁶ Copley, *The Music of Peter Warlock: A Critical Survey*, Dobson, London, 1979, p.224.

³⁷ This was the year of the Irish rebellion.

³⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.9.1917.

³⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.9.1917.

principles of music and of composition, the further off do I seem myself from the possibility of attaining anything whatever.⁴⁰

At the beginning of October in 1917 Warlock wrote to Taylor from Dublin expressing sympathy on hearing that the latter's close friend, Hugh Sidgwick, had been killed in the War. In the letter he refers to an extract from the poem, *Heracleitus*, by the Greek poet, Callimachus,⁴¹ which Sidgwick had quoted in his dedication to Taylor in his book, *The Promenade Ticket*:

. . . ἐμνήσθη δ' ὁσσάκις ἀμφοτέρωι
"Ἡλιον ἐν λείσχη κατεδύσαμεν . . .

[I wept as] I remembered how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky⁴²

I am dreadfully grieved to hear of Hugh Sidgwick's death: it is terrible - and I know how deeply you must feel it. There are so very few friends who can stand the test of even a few years, but each one of those few is like a part of oneself....

That you found a little sympathy in my tunes pleases me more than anything that could be said about them. Yesterday brought back to mind the lovely little Greek poem on the death of a friend, which if I remember rightly Sidgwick quoted in the dedication of his "Walking Essays"⁴³ to you - and immediately it seemed to fit itself to music, so I am sending you the outcome which I hope you may like.⁴⁴

This song shows the van Dieren influence strongly. Besides having no key signature or bar-lines, there seem to be no definite tonal centres. The voice part, with its strange instruction "the voice murmuring to itself", is highly chromatic and extremely difficult while the accompaniment is markedly contrapuntal in style. The piano accompaniment includes a short unidentified quotation in inverted commas after the words "long, long ago at rest". When the song eventually appeared in print in 1923 (as number three of the *Saudades*) it was dedicated to Taylor, the full dedication in fact being "To C.T. in memory of A.H.S."

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ fl. c.260 B.C., Greek poet.

⁴² Cory, William, *Ionica*, George Allen, London, 1891.

⁴³ Sidgwick, H., *Walking Essays*, Edward Arnold, London, 1912. Warlock here incorrectly referred to a later book by Sidgwick. On the typescript copy of this letter Taylor has circled the words *Walking Essays* and added the title of the correct book, *The Promenade Ticket*, Cape Town, UCT Library, BC 76 C1.2.51.

⁴⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.10.1917.

To Colin Taylor:

Heracleitus.

Poem translated from the Greek of Callimachus by William Cory.

Peter Warlock.

Slow. tempo very free—the voice murmuring softly to itself.
(♩ = about 80)

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

Piano. *mp*

news to hear and bit - ter tears to shed; I wept as I re - mem - bered how of - ten you and

pochiss. rit.
sfz
a tempo
tenuito

rit molto

I Had tired the sun with talk - ing and sent him down the sky.

rit molto
pppp

Later that year Warlock referred again to this setting of *Heracleitus* when he wrote to Taylor from Dublin. The following extract shows Taylor not only as an early campaigner for the performance of Warlock songs but also how convinced Warlock was of the validity of what he was composing even in those early years. It also reveals just how anxious he was that only those who would be sympathetic to what he was trying to say in his music should see his compositions:

It is very kind of you to be always wanting to play my little works to people and I am most grateful that you should like them sufficiently to think it worth while. But you mustn't waste precious time, if you have an appointment with Elwes, playing him my stuff which he will certainly dislike. And even if he didn't, "Heracleitus" would sound so horrible from the hands of an ordinary accompanist, who would doubtless "fill up" and "correct" in accordance with his own superior knowledge, that I would prefer not to thrust it upon anyone who is not prepared to "read between the notes" and understand. Elwes is a great artist: I wanted to get him for the performance of van Dieren's Diaphony⁴⁵ but was assured by a friend of his that he would never touch it, so reluctantly desisted. I have a great horror of submitting any MS of mine to the judgment of anybody who will be likely to regard it through the spectacles of technical prejudice. Anyone who is likely to be perplexed by the mere surface sounds will certainly not be able to discover any meaning in a work and had much better not see it at all.⁴⁶

Warlock seems to have changed his mind several times with regards to this particular song. A number of variants exist (the British Library copy⁴⁷ is different from the printed version) and Warlock apparently also left some manuscript corrections to the published version.⁴⁸ In a further extract from this letter Warlock requests Taylor to make some changes in his MS copy of *Heracleitus*:

While on the subject, will you please make the following corrections in your copy of "Heracleitus":



("My dear old Carian guest, a handful of grey ashes long, long ago at rest....")

(no change in the voice part)

⁴⁵ The disastrous Wigmore Hall concert of 20.2.1917.

⁴⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.12.1917.

⁴⁷ London, BL, Add MS 52906.

⁴⁸ Copley, op. cit., pp.155-156.

In the first chord C sharp replaces an E (R-H) and the A is no longer tied over. From "handful - - at rest" the redundant doubling of the voice part in the piano is cut out which gives greater weight and effect to the voice.

At the word "awake" the semiquavers should be played thus:-



(the first group 2 and 3, the second 5, played very distinctly, without ped. or the lower E flat held over in your MS).

There is yet another reference to this song in a letter written to Taylor some twelve years later from 35 Warrington Crescent, London. The comments at the end of the second paragraph are particularly important as they show the immense care he took over his work:

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

Musical criticism lost a very possible redeemer in Hugh Sidgwick. It so happened that I was at the moment revising some songs with a view to offering them for publication, including the "Heracleitus" which I sent you when Sidgwick was killed - and a certain passage in his book most happily suggested the right alteration I was vainly looking for (though I am afraid he would not have approved of the song as a whole). So I am sending you the corrections: it may seem ridiculously fussy but I can't bear to have imperfect copies of such little works as I do write lying about.⁴⁹

The final reference to *Heracleitus* comes in a letter written in October 1921. Here Warlock writes to Taylor about his plans to have the song printed abroad together with two others, presumably *Along the Stream* and *Take, O take those lips away* (1st version, 1916-1917), the two other companion pieces of the set, *Saudades*. They were eventually published by Chester in 1923.

I am having three songs published in Vienna, including "Heracleitus" which is dedicated to you in memory of Hugh Sidgwick - whose admirable Promenade book, I am glad to say, has just been republished.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.1.1919.

⁵⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

As has already been noted, Warlock was very much caught up in the whole world of Celtic culture as a result of his stay in Cornwall and the year spent in Ireland. In this same letter he also referred to a projected opera which in fact never materialized:

...at last after years of fruitless search I have hit upon the ideal subject I was looking for, and an almost ready-made libretto, recently published at Oxford, on the old Irish tale of "Liadain and Curither"⁵¹ - a love-story worthy to rank with Tristan and Isolde or Pelléas and Mélisande, and I feel as yet over-bold in undertaking to set it to music. It will probably take me years, but it would be worth spending half a lifetime over: it will be a purely psychological drama, without any action or excitement on the stage: there are only two characters and a chorus behind the scenes and an orchestra of 25.

Two other references to this opera exist in other Warlock correspondence: the first in a letter to Robert Nichols:

I've found an ideal subject (and on an almost ready-made text too) for an opera, on the old Irish legend of 'Liadain and Curithor'. I'm beginning work with great enthusiasm.⁵²

The second appears in a letter of the same period written to Delius:

I have begun to sketch an opera, which is practically a monodrama, on the tale of Liadain and Curither - a lovely subject, wholly admirable for music, with an almost ready made libretto.⁵³

Together with the following letter Warlock sent Taylor a copy of a new composition, *Along the stream*, which was destined to become the first of the three *Saudades* when they were finally printed:

I am sending you another and, I think, much better song I have just done - the first of a little group from Cranmer Byng's⁵⁴ lovely collection of Chinese

⁵¹ A 9th-century poem about the Cork poet, Liadain, and her poet lover from Connaught, Curither. It has been described as "the finest love poem in Irish literature". Knott, E., and Murphy, G., *Early Irish Literature*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1966, pp.3-4.

⁵² Letter from Warlock to Nichols, 14.12.1917, quoted in Gray, op. cit., p.168.

⁵³ Undated letter from Warlock to Delius quoted in Gray, *ibid.*, p.181.

⁵⁴ Lancelot Alfred Cranmer-Byng, 1872-1945, English poet and author.

Lyrics - "A Feast of Lanterns"⁵⁵ (which, incidentally, contains the best essay on Poetry I have ever read.)⁵⁶

This song was dedicated to Bernard van Dieren and is almost a pastiche of his style, full of contrapuntal chromaticisms in the accompaniment and with a cruelly taxing vocal line. Copley writes that "the music has been called oblique, exploratory, tentative, illusive, even contorted...."⁵⁷

There are further references to the *Folk-song preludes*⁵⁸ for piano in another of the Dublin letters to Taylor. Here Warlock reveals more of his merciless self-criticism and agony when composing as well as his admiration for Taylor's gifts as a composer. From the details given here it is apparent that there were a number of other movements which Warlock later discarded: one in A major/F sharp minor, one based on the same tune as the one used in *An Old Song* (F major 3/4), and an "Irish Elegy" in B flat major.

Two more Celtic tunes for you. I think these seven should be grouped together in a set thus:-

- (1) A maj - F sharp mi (no. 1 in your MS)
- (2) the Love-Song E maj (2 verses as in corrected MS I sent you after the first)
- (3) F mi, 6/8, as enclosed (no. 3 in your MS (F maj. 3/8) to be omitted: it is no good as it stands and the tune is better treated in "An Old Song")
- (4) Dirge. E flat mi, as in your MS
- (5) F major, 3/4 (as in additional MS sent you)
- (6) E major, 4/4, as in corrected version enclosed.
- (7) The Seagull of the Land-under-wave (possibly (1) and (7) might change places)

The Irish Elegy (B flat major) is, I have come to the conclusion, very bad and should be omitted. Please tell me what you think of the arrangement as a set: I am afraid there can be no idea of key relationship but I think there is sufficient contrast between each one. I am rather afraid of doing too many as there is an inevitable sameness about many Celtic tunes that would lead to monotony. I have abandoned several tunes for this reason. Do tell me frankly and in detail how these new ones strike you: they have cost me a great deal of trouble and anxiety, but I think they are hitherto the best. If you approve of the set, I shall send it to Chester and see if he will

⁵⁵ Cranmer-Byng, *A Feast of Lanterns: an Anthology of Chinese Poems*, John Murray, London, 1916.

⁵⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.12.1912.

⁵⁷ Copley, op. cit., p.61.

⁵⁸ The original MS of the seven *Folk-song Preludes* mentioned in the letter of 8.11.1917 is in London, BL, Add MS 54390.

print it: but please criticize every point you don't like - however small - as I am anxious to let nothing mediocre appear under my own name, especially as I shall never make a penny out of publishing music. Everything that is even suspicious must be sternly suppressed! Heavens, how ill assorted are fate's gifts! If only I had a little of your facility and rhythmic freedom and ability to write for the piano - and if only you had as much time and leisure for music as I have! Then we should both work wonders! As it is, there are long periods when music recedes quite away from me and I bury myself deeper and deeper in other studies, of necessity - but there is no joy like working day and night at a composition, even if one keeps only a couple of bars at the end of it all!⁵⁹

Five of these *Folk-song preludes* were printed by Augener in 1923 as follows:

- (1) Very slow (d, 4/4)
- (2) Allegretto rubato (E, 3/4)
- (3) Maestoso; alla marcia funebre (e flat, 3/4)
- (4) Fairly slow, but evenly flowing in strict time (g, 6/8)
- (5) Largo maestoso (b, 2/2)

Some of the folk-songs, either Welsh or Irish, on which these pieces were based, have been identified by Copley and Ian Parrott (b.1916).⁶⁰ Here are the relevant details of this original MS:

- (1) The tune of this prelude has not been identified; the last page, crossed out, still exists in the MS.
- (2) No. 2 of the printed set (*My faithful fond one*)
- (3) No. 4 of the printed set (*A Welsh tune: Tros y Gareg*)
- (4) No. 3 of the printed set (*A Highland tune: O cuckoo in the grove*)
- (5) Lost or destroyed
- (6) Lost or destroyed
- (7) No. 5 of the printed set (*Seagull from the Land-under-Waves*)

Taylor lost no time in his efforts to interest a publisher in these piano pieces and a grateful Warlock wrote to him from Dublin in November 1917. In this letter he mentions a proposed further set which, in fact, never materialized:

Thanks ever so much for playing my tunes to Schott's. It was good of you - though I should have been very much surprised had they accepted them. It will do no harm to hold them back for a more auspicious period: in spite of my previous remarks, there will be a second set of seven or so for piano, as well as those for small orchestra of which you have the first.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 8.11.1917.

⁶⁰ English composer and teacher.

⁶¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.11.1917.

Warlock was never really convinced that these were some of his better pieces. He wrote to Gray soon after their composition referring to them in these words:

I have lately made a great many experiments with Celtic tunes without approaching a solution of the problem of their adequate - I had almost said legitimate - treatment. As far as I can see at present, it is unsatisfactory to use more than fragmentary quotations from them in a composition; they do not seem suitable as themes for treatment - they are somehow too proud as well as too perfect, complete and rounded for that. But on the other hand, any attempt to make little works which coincide with the structure of the melody - extending nothing, curtailing nothing - formally analogous in method to Grieg with his Norse tunes and Bartók with the Hungarian - seems foredoomed to failure...I myself wrote a piece on the *Seagull of the Land-under-Wave* which was so bad that I could never play it in the fading light without exuding brine most copiously! One thinks one is hypercritical as regards one's self, but relax the screw only a little and, Oh Lord, the things that come out! I finally presented the *Seagull* and a number of other pieces to Colin Taylor to move the bowels of the old ladies of Newhaven⁶² with. He did; and his own also...If it is a sin to profane the scriptures, it is still worse to profane what never ought to have been written down at all - for it is only decadence that justifies or even renders necessary the pencil and notebook as adjuncts to the ear and the understanding. And oh, how miserably we have gone astray!⁶³

A postscript to a letter written to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch in 1921 reveals that it was, in fact, lack of money which eventually forced him, against his better judgment, into allowing them to be printed some years later. His comments recorded here are cynical to say the least:

Do you happen to have kept the MS of some Scotch and Irish tunes I sent you from Ireland? I can't remember them and have no copy but recollect that they were sloppy enough to bring in a few pounds if published now - and I am so hard up that I leave no stone unturned which may have cash concealed beneath it.⁶⁴

Taylor duly returned them as requested and there is a brief acknowledgement of their safe arrival in Warlock's letter from Cefn Bryntalch:

I ought to have written before to thank you for sending back the surviving MS of my little piano pieces. I am keeping five of them which I shall offer, slightly retouched, to a publisher....⁶⁵

⁶² Colin Taylor was stationed there at the time.

⁶³ Gray, op. cit., p.184.

⁶⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

⁶⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.2.1922.

Copley succinctly sums up the shortcomings of the work:

Considered as a whole, the five Preludes must be regarded as a rather laboured production. The textures are sometimes very thick and clotted, and the harmonies often sound contrived rather than inevitable. And as with a number of the early song accompaniments, very big hands are required to cope with the widely spread chords.⁶⁶

In the *Musical Times* of October 1923 the reviewer, Harvey Grace (1874-1944),⁶⁷ hardly enthused about these newly-published pieces:

Where is the Peter Warlock who delighted us all with such spontaneous songs a few years ago? He is not the same in the *Folk-song Preludes* by a composer of the same name, just published by Augener. There is an overdose of grinding discord and complication for mere complication's sake. As an example of the latter I cite a bar in no. 2, wherein the right hand plays three quavers (one of them dotted) against four, while the left hand has a dotted crotchet and two dotted quavers. The tune treated is simplicity itself, yet we have such a difficult bar as this suddenly thrust in, in addition to a lot of chromatic chords. Some occasionally effective passages do not make amends for the crabbed and overwrought character of the pieces as a whole. We can only sigh for the return of the old Warlock.⁶⁸

The following paragraph of Warlock's letter of November 1917 tells something of a *Chinese Ballet* which had been written either in 1916 or early 1917:

Last week I amused myself greatly by re-writing my Chinese Ballet (which I think you have seen) in response to an urgent message from Allinson,⁶⁹ demanding the MS (which is, of course, stored away inaccessibly in London) for some prospective production. I felt guilty of indulging in a real debauch, filling page after page with the bastard offspring of Chappell-Boosey and Puccini! If it were literature, it would certainly not be passed by the censor. And the villain dies by an act of God in a paroxysmal chord for the horns, *tutta forza*, with the direction:- RAISE THE BELLS!!⁷⁰

This *Chinese Ballet* was written to a scenario by his painter friend, Adrian Allinson, who also designed the scenery and costumes. Allinson had spent a holiday together with Warlock and some other friends (including "Puma" and Eugene Goossens [1893-1962]⁷¹) in 1915 in a rented "bungalow on Crickley Hill overlooking the Vale

⁶⁶ Copley, op. cit., p.228.

⁶⁷ English organist, composer and writer on music.

⁶⁸ *Musical Times*, 1923, p.710.

⁶⁹ Adrian Allinson, 1890-1964, English painter.

⁷⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.11.1917.

⁷¹ English conductor, violinist and composer.

of Evesham"⁷² Copley also agrees with the composer's views on the dubious merits of the work:

A glance at this piano score (which gives sporadic indications of instrumentation and includes a unison male voice chorus of Temple Priests) leads one to confirm Warlock's own estimate of the general value and style of the music. Its 266 bars which play - so the composer declares - exactly for 10 minutes might, indeed, have been churned out by the yard, as his letter suggests...Of more value are the couplets in which the composer comments ironically on the plot⁷³ as it unfolds.⁷⁴

Gray also writes rather disparagingly of this ballet:

Another stage work⁷⁵ that he wrote about the same time was a Chinese ballet, with scenario by Adrian Allinson, the painter, who was also to be responsible for the costumes and decor. This work still survives in manuscript...It is of no significance, and was never intended to be anything but a pot-boiler. It failed even as such, for it was never produced.⁷⁶

Together with his first letter of the new year, 1918, Warlock sent Taylor a greeting (with the inscription: "A happy new year!") in the form of the MS of a new song, *I asked a thief to steal me a peach*, a 21-bar setting of a short poem by William Blake (1757-1827),⁷⁷ referred to rather casually in the postscript thus:

Please keep any of my MSS you may have and don't let them out of your hands - unless you know any one who w[oul]d like to let off the Blake as an encore!⁷⁸

Tomlinson in his Preface to the first printed version of this song⁷⁹ describes it as "pure Warlock - like *Hey, trolly lolly lo* and *My ghostly Fader* - no one else could have

⁷² Copley, op. cit., p.23.

⁷³ Copley mentions that Warlock had at some time contemplated writing a Revue during his time in Eynsford. Only one stage-direction survives: "Enter villagers, muttering, they throw s**t at the Rectory windows". Copley, op.cit., p.249.

⁷⁴ Copley, ibid., pp.222-223.

⁷⁵ The work exists in London, BL, Add MS 52904 in piano score only and is signed Huanebango Z. Palimpsest, one of Warlock's many curious pseudonyms. The word palimpsest refers to a manuscript which has been used twice or three times over when the original writing has been erased.

⁷⁶ Gray, op. cit., p.142.

⁷⁷ English poet, painter and visionary.

⁷⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.1.1918.

⁷⁹ Thames, 1972.

written it". In his Preface to the later Volume 1 of *Peter Warlock Songs* he expands this comment:

I asked a thief to steal me a peach could hardly be further in mood from the immediate predecessors.⁸⁰ However, it should be noted that not all was gloom and grisliness during those first few months in Ireland. *An Old Song*, the *Folk Song Preludes* and a rewrite of *A Chinese Ballet* all date from that time...[It] is the first song which can be said to be unmistakable Warlock.⁸¹

Copley draws attention to the so-called "gigue-figure" in the piano accompaniment, pointing out rather neatly and wittily that this "is sometimes used by Warlock when setting texts of delicate (or, more properly, indelicate) dalliance".⁸²

Two MSS versions of this song exist, the copy sent to Taylor dated 31.12.1917 and an undated copy with considerable revisions, entitled *A poem with a moral*.⁸³ It also has at the end a cryptic message to an unknown recipient: "Come now, tell me now, what's wrong with the penis?"

Warlock's letter of June 1918 to Taylor is particularly interesting in that it was written shortly before the tremendous burst of creative energy in August when he wrote ten songs within a fortnight. Here he describes his present lack of inspiration continuing in a rather negative vein and at some length about his recent Cornish Christmas carol, *Kan Nadelik*:

As for me, I cannot write a note of music - I am utterly desiccated: I shall have to shut up entirely for a good while in this department, though I have a good deal to do in others. It is good of you to want to help me in the matter of publishers, but I am resolved to do nothing rash that I might regret some years hence. I have no illusions about the value of such little works as I have already done: and I do know that the work I hope to do some day will be of such a very different nature that I would rather preserve absolute silence towards the world at large until I feel myself ripe for a real achievement. I am very thankful that Schott's did not print those Celtic tunes which I now recognize as extremely feeble - and I hope, if you still have the MS, you will never associate it with my own name. Strangely enough, the little orchestral fragment⁸⁴ which you have - an earlier work - does not displease me except in so far as it remains a solitary fragment in a

⁸⁰ *The Saudades*.

⁸¹ *Peter Warlock Songs* Vol.1 (1911-1917), Thames, London, 1982.

⁸² Copley, op. cit., pp.65 and 261.

⁸³ Copley, *ibid.*, p.65.

⁸⁴ *An Old Song*, 1917.

heap of ruins: it is too frail to stand alone and it is impossible to companion it. I do not really believe in this tenuous kind of art: when one is really ripe, all is superabundant. At present I like the second of the Cornish carols but it would prove a stumbling-block to most choirs and chorus-masters who imagine there exists a "thing-in-itself" called choral technique, fixed and inviolable, and are always talking of what will or will not "come-off" - that which will not do so being anything that presented any kind of new difficulty to be overcome. This policy of extended laziness is almost universal among choral-societies: and furthermore, they would raise imagined difficulties in the matter of singing in Cornish - though it is just as easy to sing one set of sounds as another, provided they are clearly and phonetically transcribed. The music of these carols is inseparably associated with the actual Cornish words: any translation would pervert the whole character of the works. A limited language like Cornish has a very particular connotation, as a pure language-idea apart from what is said - and this language-idea had a large share in the conception of the music. A literal translation might be supplied - not to be sung, however - but the actual sense of the words, rendered in English, does not materially differ from that of many other carols....⁸⁵

Warlock refers again to this same carol a month later in a letter which shows him anxious to have Taylor's comments on the work. Amazed by Balfour Gardiner's reaction to the carol, he takes the opportunity of demolishing the concept of labelling music and of the very term "style" itself:

By the way, do tell me if you like the second Cornish carol: I should be greatly interested in your view of it. It seems to me a very simple and unpuzzling composition, but I sent it to Balfour Gardiner and he seemed to think it was a kind of essay in the style of the sixteenth century!! I was flabbergasted! Is there anything 16th centuryish about it? - and, first of all, what is 16th centuryishness in music? I suspect always the people who speak of music by century-labels: one knows that when they come to the 20th century, they would explain themselves by adding:- "Oh, like Debussy and Strauss, you know the kind of thing" or if they wished to be considered cultured they might pair off van Dieren and Ornstein, who would no doubt sound exactly the same to their ears. And incidentally, what is style? Is there any such thing? For myself, I am convinced that, as such, style does not exist, it simply does not exist, save as a disembodied fetish in the minds of people who, having no ideas of their own, imagine that they can strike them, like sparks, off this said fetish: "technique" is its twin-brother-fetish. One knows that Monteverde [sic]⁸⁶ proceeded from the chord of the dominant seventh to that of the tonic, one knows that Handel did too, and even a few others - why, Strauss himself has done it! But what essential similarity in the various composers does this stupendous fact bear witness to? Oh, Lord what a lot of work there is for a good pair of bellows!⁸⁷

In his biography of Gardiner, Stephen Lloyd gives some more background and detail about Gardiner's reaction to these carols:

⁸⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.6.1918.

⁸⁶ Claudio Monteverdi, 1567-1643, Italian composer.

⁸⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.7.1918.

Gardiner's opinions never lacked candour and with all honesty he had openly admitted to Heseltine that, while he wanted to offer some useful comments on the carols, he felt less fitted than most musicians to pass judgment. "This sort of stuff...makes the same impression on me as a lot of 16th Century stuff that is declared, without a dissentient voice, to be excellent", is what he had actually written on 6 July [1918]. He had detected a hardness in the settings but at the same time added that they would be a joy to hear sung well. Gardiner and Heseltine's musical tastes did not run parallel courses anyway, for although they shared a deep respect for Delius's music, Gardiner was far less enthusiastic about van Dieren's work which exerted a powerful influence on Heseltine from 1916...On 12 August 1918 Gardiner wrote to Heseltine: "On my first two attempts to read van Dieren's Symphony⁸⁸ I suffered acute mental distress". He was struck by its freedom, resource, and beauty of outline in the polyphonic parts, but was critical of much of the orchestration. "He uses combinations that I cannot imagine I shall ever bring myself to tolerate", he complained.⁸⁹

In an undated letter to Gray of the same period, Warlock also writes of these Cornish carols:

I am writing with great enthusiasm two Cornish hymns; it is probably the first time the old language has ever been musicked deliberately (assuming that the folk-songs - of which Cornwall seems to possess practically none - generated spontaneously) but it is wonderful for singing purposes, containing many sounds almost unknown in English (except in Cornish-English dialect) which have a real musical value of their own. The hymns, which are set for a cappella chorus, bear no resemblance to the clotted and sepulchral works of which I was guilty some eighteen months ago, being for the most part vierstimmige....⁹⁰

The details of these two carols are as follows:

Cornish Christmas Carols (Kanoow Kernow), words by Gwas Myhall, for mixed voices:

- (1) *Benneth Nadelik ha'n Bledhan Nowedh* (*Carol for Nativity and the New Year*), translated F. Tomlinson, Thames, 1973.
- (2) *Kan Nadelik* (*A Cornish Christmas Carol*), translated Trelawny Dayrell Reed, Winthrop Rogers, 1924.

It is the second of these two settings which Warlock is here writing about. This is a work conceived on a large scale with the following detailed and dramatic instructions at the beginning:

⁸⁸ The *Chinese Symphony* for five solo voices, chorus and orchestra.

⁸⁹ Lloyd, op. cit., p.113.

⁹⁰ Gray, op. cit., p.183.

To be sung fairly fast, with sudden alternations of hardness and sweetness, of rude heartiness and tenderness touched with awe.

Copley draws attention to the quotation from the traditional carol, *The First Nowell*:

...with accompanying harmonies markedly similar to those through which van Dieren had transmuted artless Dutch melodies into things both rich and strange.⁹¹

As has already been noted, August 1918 was, in a way, one of the most significant months in Warlock's composing career. It was during this month that he saw the so-called "infamous letter" Rogers to Taylor harshly criticising van Dieren's *Dutch Pieces*. It almost seems as if Warlock's anger and rage over the whole affair suddenly sparked off a period of artistic productivity. A mere thirteen days after his monumental letter to Taylor attacking Rogers (and much else besides) he wrote these famous words:

The present is a most critical and eventful period for me. During the last few weeks the solution of a psychological problem that has obsessed and baulked me and stifled me now for nearly three years has been revealed and I am sensible of a tremendous liberation of spirit. One is prone to effervescence in the celebration of such occasions, and I have written ten songs in the last fortnight - they are probably more fizz than actual stuff, but still such activity has hitherto been a thing unknown with me - and it is a great relief.⁹²

He then unfolds to Taylor a typically selfless and generous plan: aware of van Dieren's precarious financial position, he requests Taylor to try to find a publisher for these recent compositions so that he can help van Dieren with the proceeds. He also asks Taylor for a critical assessment of the songs:

I...fling myself upon your kindness and beg you to tell me (1) whether such songs as the two I send you are saleable (2) and if so who is the most likely publisher to purchase them, (3) etc, etc - especially (3)! In fact, if you would go so far as to send them, with your recommendation, to some publisher with whom you are on friendly terms, I should be eternally grateful to you. Perhaps they are quite unsuitable, but still - one must try every expedient for raising money. Please tell me candidly how these strike you. If you like them, I'll send on some of the others. Forgive me for plaguing you thus....

⁹¹ Copley, op. cit., p.188.

⁹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 22.8.1918.

P.S...The chief danger in writing very simple ditties is unconscious plagiarism. Please tell me if there is any flagrant example in the pair I send you. This worries me.

In fact Warlock had nothing to worry about. There had been, as he put it, "a tremendous liberation of spirit". It was in these songs that he had at last found his own individual voice as a composer. From now on there appears a new confidence in his writing, a more self-assured belief in his own ability. Gone is the self-conscious imitation of Delius and van Dieren. As Copley so clearly puts it:

In place of laboured complexities of harmony and texture, ease, economy, and a certain inevitability and rightness in the use of constructional devices are to be noted. For with these settings of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century texts, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century musical influences had come to the fore, and from now on he had a mature style at his command.⁹³

By August 1918 Warlock was back in London. He had grown tired of "the dead, stagnant atmosphere of Ireland"⁹⁴ and convinced that van Dieren was dying had returned to see him. When Warlock wrote to Taylor from Maida Vale in London he had an amusing story to relate about his visit to Rogers:

...I have had a most excellent revenge on Rogers for his insulting letter about van Dieren and his insulting remarks about myself. I sent him a book of seven of my recent old English lyrics (including the two I sent you) under the name of Peter Warlock, asking if he would care to publish them. Some days later I received (or rather P. Warlock received) a note asking me to call at 18 Berners Street - which I did in my own proper person (without beard and other appendages), Rogers having not the faintest notion who I was!! For at least an hour and a half he talked most amiably to me about this, that and the other thing, and in the end offered to publish all seven songs in an album, paying me a royalty of 5d or 6d on every copy sold...isn't it an excellent joke? - and what would he say if he discovered it - what, indeed, could he say?...And just as I was leaving, he remarked that he had shown my MSS to Quilter who had expressed great admiration and a desire to meet the interesting new composer!!!....

By the way, if you still have by you a little score of mine called "An Old Song" for 12 instruments, could you please send it me?⁹⁵

It was only when Rogers showed the manuscripts to Anthony Bernard, one of Warlock's friends, who recognised the handwriting, that the secret was out. In the

⁹³ Copley, op. cit., p.67.

⁹⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor from 35 Warrington Crescent, Maida Vale, London, 29.10.1918.

⁹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 29.10.1918.

typescript copy of this letter next to the sentence: "I sent him a book of seven of my recent old English lyrics..." Taylor has made a pencilled comment in the margin: "The songs that made him".⁹⁶ How very true this was.

The titles of all ten songs written in that momentous August in Ireland are unfortunately not known, nor the two which Warlock chose to send to Taylor on 22.8.1918. The seven songs accepted by Rogers for publication are as follows:

- (1) *Take, o take these lips away* (2nd setting)
- (2) *My gostly fader*
- (3) *As ever I saw*
- (4) *The Bayley Berith the Bell Away*
- (5) *Break of Day*
- (6) *Lullaby*
- (7) *Whenas the Rye*

In the letter quoted above Warlock was under the impression that the seven songs were to appear together in one album. However, they were eventually printed separately in 1919, *Break of Day* by that time having been replaced by another song, *Dedication*.

Gray writes perceptively, if in rather flowery language, about this sudden transformation of style and new-found mastery:

I remember well my astonishment and delight at seeing those first published songs...astonishment, not because I ever doubted his potentialities or their ultimate efflorescence, but because they represented such a sudden and decisive advance on anything of his that I had hitherto seen. I still think that he never wrote anything better than these early Winthrop Rogers songs, particularly *As ever I saw*, *Lullaby*, *Take, O take*, but above all, those two exquisite miniatures, *My gostly Fader*, and *The Bailey beareth the bell away*...The peculiar quality which distinguishes...the two songs specially mentioned from all other music that I know lies in the union of a vein of medieval mysticism with an acutely modern sensibility. The spirit of the ancient poems is perfectly caught, but there is never a trace or suggestion of archaism.⁹⁷

The critics were no less enthusiastic. As William Child wrote:

⁹⁶ Cape Town, UCT Library, BC 76 C1.2.67.

⁹⁷ Gray, op. cit., p.203.

Peter Warlock is a composer new to me. His three songs [*My gostly fader, As Ever I Saw* and *The Bailey beareth the Bell away*] are remarkable pieces of work. The words of the first are from a 15th century rondel attributed to Charles d'Orleans.⁹⁸ Those of the second and third come from early English sources, viâ the Harleian MSS.⁹⁹ All are very quaint, so much so that it seems inadvisable to print them in their archaic form - a form which calls for explanatory footnotes, and so is suitable for the reader rather than for the hearer. Mr. Warlock (is it a nom de plume? - if not, it ought to be) has caught the spirit of the words perfectly. All are first rate, but the palm must go to 'As Ever I Saw' which is as delightful a modern-antique as ever I heard.¹⁰⁰

Part of Warlock's letter of February 1922 has already been quoted above (in connection with the *Folk Song Preludes*). In this letter written to Taylor (by this time in Cape Town) he goes on to write about some other recent compositions:

I ought to have written before to thank you for sending back the surviving MS of my little piano pieces. I am keeping five of them which I shall offer, slightly retouched, to a publisher as soon as my last batch of "Little Peterisms" is ready. I have sketched half a dozen of these and tomorrow Philip Wilson is coming down for a few days so that between us we may be able to make them fit for the Enoch Ballad Concerts¹⁰¹ - Enoch having actually asked me to send them something "in a simple style"! These at least are simple to the point of sheer imbecility. Augeners have in the press two extremely vulgar drinking songs of mine - or as I describe them "Two true toper's tunes to troll with trulls and trollops in a tavern" - entitled respectively "Captain Stratton's Fancy" (RUM), poem by John Masefield,¹⁰² and "Mr. Belloc's Fancy" (BEER), poem by J.C. Squire.¹⁰³ Curwens accepted the former months ago before I found them out for the stinking swindling swines they are, but as the agreement was not actually signed I had the satisfaction of being able to snatch the MS from the very jaws of their press and send it to Augeners who will no doubt do much better with it. I am only sorry they have got my "Corpus Christi Carol" as it seems to have achieved some success at the Oriana Christmas concert, under Kennedy Scott, being encored. I didn't hear it - in fact I haven't left Wales since I came here five months ago and don't want to - but I am told it sounded well; though it is annoying to find that the description on the printed page "an old English carol set for contralto and tenor solo and chorus" has made people think it is merely an old tune arranged, whereas all the material - such as it is - is my own! Since I last wrote to you I have

⁹⁸ French courtly poet. During his exile in England he also earned a reputation for his English poems.

⁹⁹ London, BL, Harley Manuscripts, Press-marks: 1-7661, collected by Robert (1661-1724) and Edward Harley (1689-1741), 1st and 2nd Earls of Oxford.

¹⁰⁰ *Musical Times*, 1919, p.626.

¹⁰¹ Two of these songs, *Hey, trolly lolly lo* and *The Bachelor*, were dedicated to Philip Wilson.

¹⁰² 1878-1967, English poet.

¹⁰³ Sir John Collings Squire, 1884-1956, English poet. "The verse of *Mr. Belloc's Fancy* originally appeared in the first issue of *The New Statesman*. Squire later included it in a volume of his parodies, giving it its title. It was not always understood that this is a deliberate parody of Belloc, with its Latin tags, antisemitism and the rest". Tomlinson, Preface to Vol. III of *Peter Warlock Songs 1920-1922*, Thames, London, 1984, p.4.

finally completed my book on Delius, a number of articles for various musical papers, and a short work for chorus and orchestra. Not much, you will think, for four months work but I am incredibly slow and neither musical nor literary composition seems to become any easier as time goes on. Forgive me all this jaw about my own small activities; but when one lives in a house where no one knows or cares a damn what one is doing or trying to do, it is pleasant at times to prattle about one's stuff to some sympathetic friend.¹⁰⁴

The significance of the name *Peterisms* is concisely explained by Copley, Taylor having supplied him with all the relevant information:¹⁰⁵

For generations born since the First World War, the point of Warlock's grouping certain of his songs (especially those of a lighter sort) under the heading of *Peterisms* has been lost. It appears that a well-known firm of brewers had created an errand-boy character, who, from time to time, gave tongue to amusingly perky sayings (in their advertisement) which were headed *Peterisms*. These appealed to Warlock's sense of fun, and he adopted the title as a suitable collective noun to cover some of his more frivolous items.¹⁰⁶

Warlock often grouped his songs into sets even though these were not song-cycles in the true sense of the word. In fact, even though he liked to group his songs thus, his publishers often ignored the group titles and published the songs separately anyway. The name, *Little Peterisms*, was originally given by Warlock, in a kind of slightly disparaging way, to four songs printed separately by Augener in 1922:

- (1) *Good Ale* (Anon. 15th Century)
- (2) *Hey, trolly loly lo* (Anon. 16th Century)
- (3) *The Bachelor* (Anon. 15th Century)
- (4) *Piggesnie* (Anon. 16th Century)

It was only in 1923 that the title *Peterisms* was used officially by Warlock for a group of three songs published by Chester. This was followed the next year by a second set of three more *Peterisms*, published this time by the O.U.P.

Enoch & Sons of Great Marlborough Street were a London firm of music publishers who had asked Warlock to send them something "in a simple style". This must have

¹⁰⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.2.1922.

¹⁰⁵ Unpublished letters from Copley to Taylor dated 1st and 17th August, 1964, Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection.

¹⁰⁶ Copley, *The Music of Peter Warlock: A Critical Survey*, Dobson, London, 1979, p.91.

been the song *Milkmaids*¹⁰⁷ a superb example of Warlock's art, as it is the only work of his which they published (1923).

The two "extremely vulgar drinking songs", which appeared in 1922. were enthusiastically greeted by Harvey Grace:

There is no wit, but plenty of robust humour in three songs by Peter Warlock, *Good Ale*, *Captain Stratton's Fancy*, and *Mr. Belloc's Fancy* (Augener). *Good Ale* is a setting of a famous old drinking-song of the 15th century by an anonymous toper whose enthusiasm for our national beverage is quite disarming. Mr. Warlock gives the words a folksong-like air and an admirably direct accompaniment. An uproarious stroke occurs at the end, where the time is changed to 2/4 *prestissimo* and the drinker's impatience becomes amusingly frantic. The composer seems to have felt some of these high spirits in the mere writing of the score, for he couldn't refrain from adding *Hey* to the *Prestissimo*! Sung with the right bibulous enthusiasm (and to the right sympathetic audience) this song would bring down the house. But the singer must choose his occasion with care. In *Captain Stratton's Fancy* we have Mr. Masfield singing the praises of a less noble liquor - rum. *Mr. Belloc's Fancy* is a setting of a parody by J.C. Squire - a piece of nonsense glorifying in Bellocian style beer and Sussex. In both - especially the latter - Mr. Warlock has written rattling good tunes and appropriately full-blooded accompaniments.¹⁰⁸

Captain Stratton's Fancy has always enjoyed a great deal of popularity, having the distinction of being one of the earliest Warlock song to have been recorded.¹⁰⁹ It is sad to relate that, despite its popularity it earned only £3 in royalties in four years. It was as a result of such small royalties that Warlock later preferred to sell his songs outright.¹¹⁰ Copley has observed that:

...its popularity...has overshadowed many of Warlock's finer and more subtle works, and there is an undoubted tendency, in some circles, to deprecate it in consequence.¹¹¹

The reason for Warlock's attack on the publisher, Curwen, the "stinking swindling swines", was because he was still smarting from the way they had treated him over

¹⁰⁷ Words by Dr. James Smith, 1605-1667, from a collection of poems, *Wit Restored*. Warlock only set five of the nine stanzas.

¹⁰⁸ *Musical Times*, 1922, p.640.

¹⁰⁹ By Peter Dawson, 1882-1961, Australian bass-baritone.

¹¹⁰ Tomlinson, *Sociable Songs*, Thames, London, 1982, p.5.

¹¹¹ Copley, op. cit., p.83.

the whole *Sackbut* affair when in July 1921 Curwen relieved him of the editorship, leaving him considerably out of pocket.

In the printed copy of *Mr. Belloc's Fancy*, (high key edition in G) given by Warlock to Taylor in 1922 there are some interesting pencilled notes, worthy of Percy Grainger (1882-1961),¹¹² in the composer's hand.¹¹³ The last verse (bar 40) begins with "With immense heartiness!" and the accompaniment at bar 49 contains the instruction for the pianist "Keep the pace up! Chords very crisp and hard". As there are two alternative notes given in the voice part at the beginning of bar 58, it is useful, once again, to have Warlock's own preference expressed in this particular copy "Top note whenever possible!" In view of the doubt expressed by Copley as to the exact date of the composition of this song,¹¹⁴ the Cape Town copy is important in that at the end of the last bar Warlock wrote "P[hilip]. Cefn Bryntalch November 1921".

The setting of the carol, *Corpus Christi*, dates from 1919 and is dedicated to the Bishop of Oxford, the Right Rev. Thomas Strong. Strong was Dean of Christ Church (1901-1920) during Warlock's brief spell as an undergraduate, later becoming Bishop of Oxford (1925-1937), and must obviously have been held in some regard by the rebellious young undergraduate. Strong had a keen interest in music (he was an honorary Oxford D.Mus.) and was one of those who recognised the abilities of the young composer, William Walton (1902-1973),¹¹⁵ whilst he was still a chorister at Christ Church, using his influence to enable him to become an undergraduate at the unusually early age of 16. It is intriguing to think that Warlock possibly heard the young Walton singing in the Christ Church choir during his year at Oxford.

¹¹² Australian-born composer and pianist.

¹¹³ Cape Town, UCT Library, TPB 780.3 62/449.

¹¹⁴ Copley, op. cit., p.85.

¹¹⁵ English composer.

It is very interesting to note that Constant Lambert once wrote that the two works that Warlock himself thought most highly of were the carol, *Corpus Christi* and the song-cycle, *The Curlew*.¹¹⁶ *Corpus Christi* is described on the first printed edition as "an old English carol set for contralto and tenor soli and chorus of mixed voices". On a later edition (bearing the footnote "copyright renewed 1949") this has been changed to "an old English carol set for soprano (or Mezz Sop) and tenor soli and chorus of mixed voices". Presumably this was an alteration requested by Warlock, probably at the same time as he made the later string quartet version.¹¹⁷ On the printed copy (1921) which he sent to Taylor on 20.4.1922, Warlock wrote in pencil next to the top line of music (marked contralto solo) "perhaps Soprano w[oul]d be better - or mezzo sop".¹¹⁸ In the later printed edition the word contralto has in fact been replaced by Soprano or Mezz Sop. There is another pencilled comment on page 2 of the music with an arrow directed at the first note of the top line of bar 10 of the piano reduction of the voice parts: "this idiotic transcription in the bass clef is not my doing. Playing it on the piano one must of course play it an octave higher".

This carol, a setting of an early sixteenth century poem (from Balliol MS 354), has an almost Pre-Raphaelite atmosphere not unlike that created by Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898)¹¹⁹ and William Morris (1834-1896)¹²⁰ in some of their quasi-medieval paintings and stained-glass. Gray described it as having a "peculiar quality...the union of a vein of medieval mysticism with an acutely modern sensibility".¹²¹ Warlock's letter mentions how the mood captured in this piece was so successful that many people believed it to be based on an old melody, whereas the material was entirely original.

Almost throughout the work the choir provides a wordless accompaniment to the soloists evoking an atmosphere of restless sadness and anguish, which matches the

¹¹⁶ Lambert, op. cit., pp.12-13.

¹¹⁷ Curwen, 1927.

¹¹⁸ Cape Town, S.A. College of Music Library, TPB 780.47 WAR.

¹¹⁹ Pre-Raphaelite painter.

¹²⁰ Pre-Raphaelite poet, writer, painter and designer.

¹²¹ Gray, op. cit., p.204.

words perfectly. It is a figure which Warlock was to use again both in *The Curlew* and in *Call for the Robin Redbreast and the Wren*. Copley writes most eloquently about this *Corpus Christi* carol:

For a large proportion of the work the chorus vocalizes wordlessly, providing a continuously undulating tonal background against which the solo voices are projected...The harmonic language, with its emphasis on the augmented fourth and its elusive tonality, is completely at one with the text (note especially the subtle use of pedal and quasi-pedal effects). At the climax, when, without any expression, the altos and basses intone the words "By that bedside there standeth a stone: CORPUS CHRISTI written thereon", the effect can be overwhelming. It is because of the complete appropriateness of means to end that *Corpus Christi*, for all its relative brevity, deserves to be regarded as one of the composer's finest works.¹²²

Curwen published an arrangement of *Corpus Christi* (1927), in which Warlock had replaced the choir with a string quartet accompaniment. This string accompaniment is, in fact, almost an exact transcription of the original choral parts except for the imaginative addition of a high D harmonic for the first violin in bars 43 and 44, giving a strange otherworldly atmosphere to the music at this point. Copley observes that in this new arrangement the composer has re-assigned the original contralto part to a soprano. Referring to this he writes: "Identical in notes to the contralto part in the 1919 choral version. Perhaps Warlock changed his mind as to the vocal colour required".¹²³ The pencilled markings in the Cape Town copy confirm this theory.

More difficult to explain, however, is the reference in this same letter to "a short work for chorus and orchestra" which he claims finally to have completed. Copley suggests that it is a composition either lost or destroyed¹²⁴ for there seem to be no other works composed around this time (early 1922) which fit this description.

One of Warlock's greatest friends and supporters in the 1920s was the singer Philip Wilson (1886-1924),¹²⁵ with whom he combined to produce a number of editions of

¹²² Copley, op. cit., pp.190-191.

¹²³ Copley, *ibid.*, p.182.

¹²⁴ Copley, *ibid.*, p.290.

¹²⁵ English tenor and editor of early music.



17. Bernard van Dieren

The pencil notes are in Warlock's hand.

61124.

CURWEN



EDITION

6d.



To the Bishop of Ripon (The Right Rev. Thomas B. Strong, D.D.)

Corpus Christi.

Colindale

AN OLD ENGLISH CAROL SET FOR CONTRALTO AND TENOR SOLI
AND CHORUS OF MIXED VOICES.

PETER WARLOCK.

CONTRALTO
SOLO.

Very quietly, but not slow.

Lul-ly, lul-ly, lul-ly, lul-ly, The

SOPRANO.

CONTRALTO.

(This very small dynamic rise and fall should be observed wherever the figure occurs throughout the piece.)

Ah

TENOR.

Ah

Ah

BASS.

Mm

Very quietly, but not slow.

PIANO
(for rehearsal
only.)

The chorus must be very subdued throughout. The phrasing marked is only approximate. A smooth *legato* is required, almost unbroken. In order to secure this effect the singers should take breath at different points. For the figure marked Φ , wherever it occurs, a slight aspiration, rather than marked phrasing, is wanted.

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London: J. Curwen & Sons Ltd., 24, Berners St., W.1.

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faucen hath borne my make a - way.

Ah

mp

à 2.

(Half the basses sing Ah, the other half Mm with closed lips.)

TENOR SOLO.

He bare him up, he bare him down, He bare him in-to an orchard brown.

this is the
transcription
in the hand
of the
composer
Raising it
in the piano
one
note of course
they it an
octave higher.

61124

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early English music. Wilson was born in 1886 and, although originally intending to join the church, went to Australia in 1913, where he was appointed professor of singing at the State Conservatory in Sydney from 1915 to 1920. Returning to England in 1920 he gave three historical recitals at the Wigmore Hall the following year. Two years later (5.5.1923) he gave another recital to celebrate the tercentenary of the death of the Elizabethan song-writer, Philip Rosseter (c.1575-1623).¹²⁶ Warlock wrote enthusiastically to Taylor about him on several occasions and, as he often writes about his own works in the course of these references to Wilson, this would seem an appropriate time to refer to him.

He is first mentioned in the letter discussed above when Warlock wrote asking if Taylor could perhaps find him work at the S.A. College of Music in Cape Town:

Wilson - (whom since the first time I met him, with you, at a John Coates¹²⁷ recital - I have got to know very well and like very much) came down for a week in November and is coming again this week. He is a hearty, cheery soul and very keen on doing good things. His three all-British historical recitals last year cost him a lot of money that he can ill afford, but they were an artistic success and he is undaunted enough to be contemplating more. (Did I tell you, by the way, that he sang your "Visit from the Sea"¹²⁸ at the third?). However, it seems almost impossible for a man without money or influence to make even a fair living by singing and teaching in London. Before the war he was making £1000 a year in Sydney and he feels the drop now, very naturally. Are there any prospects for a man like this in Cape Town? I am told on all sides that he is a splendid teacher - as indeed he must have been to have a position such as he had at the Sydney Conservatorium; and he has enthusiasm and a really musical faculty such as few singers in these days can boast of.¹²⁹

Replying a short while later to Taylor's request for some suggestions for song programmes, he writes from Cefn Bryntalch even more urgently about Wilson and the possibility of Taylor helping to find him some kind of post in Cape Town. This letter is important for it gives positive proof that Warlock seemed to prefer the male voice for the performance of his songs (and transcriptions) mainly on account of the words set:

¹²⁶ English composer and lutenist.

¹²⁷ 1865-1941, English tenor.

¹²⁸ *A Visit from the Sea*, words R.L. Stevenson, Stainer & Bell, 1913.

¹²⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.2.1922.

As regards the programmes you ask me for - I would very strongly recommend you to postpone your very excellent scheme if there is any possibility of an opening for Wilson in Cape Town. As I told you in my last letter he is very keen to go out there - or anywhere where there is money to be made and good work to be done; and he is the very man to do historical recitals of English songs with you. To begin with, the majority of early English songs - the best period i.e. 1590-1620 - are quite unsuitable for a woman's voice. Wilson has made a special study of this period and has a large collection of manuscript songs which Dr. Fellowes and I have copied specially for him from MSS in the British Museum and elsewhere. He gave three historical recitals (all English) in the autumn with very great success (except financially!) and is going to give some more this year.

He is a real musician as well as a good singer, enthusiastic for all that is good, both old and new, reads marvellously and can (and will) learn anything, however difficult, in a very short time.

At the present moment he is staying here with me and is learning half a dozen new songs of mine which I have just finished. I couldn't want anyone better or keener to work with. If you can find an opening for him, I feel sure he would be a very valuable asset in the musical life of Cape Town. If there's a chance for him, I'll send you some old MS stuff, but if you could possibly do a tour with him, I feel sure it would come off brilliantly. Most of the old songs, and I should say a majority of the modern English ones are - from the point of view of the words - far better sung by a man than by a woman.¹³⁰

Later that year when he wrote again about Wilson to Taylor it was in less than complimentary terms about a performance of his song-cycle, *The Curlew*: "Wilson buggered up the voice part completely...."¹³¹

Over the next few years Warlock regularly sent Taylor copies of his works as they appeared in print, often inscribed and, in some cases with annotations.¹³² For example, in the letter already discussed, Warlock promised to send Taylor copies of two works recently published: the carol, *Corpus Christi* (Curwen, 1921), and a piano duet arrangement of Delius' orchestral work, *Four North Country Sketches* (Augener, 1922). The postscript to this letter is also significant for it confirms that this particular period in Warlock's life was a busy and most fruitful one:

I will send you in a day or two a copy of my carol and of my piano duet arrangement of Delius' four "North Country Sketches" for orchestra....

¹³⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

¹³¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.12.1922.

¹³² A list of these which are now in the S.A. College of Music Library of the University of Cape Town, appears in Appendix C.

[P.S.] Forgive a rather scrappy letter but I'm working like blazes at new songs.¹³³

In this instance Warlock's memory obviously needed jogging for in a letter of April 1922 he refers to a postcard recently received from Taylor. In response Warlock immediately sent off a parcel of music to Cape Town:

Your postcard reminded me of my unfulfilled promise - as I now send you the "North Country Sketches", the carol (which the Oriana Choir, under Kennedy Scott, have now sung five or six times at various concerts in and around London) and two pot-house songs which will shortly be followed by a third¹³⁴ which has a more rollicking tune than either, each verse concluding with the chorus

"And bring us in good ale
For Our blessed Lady's sake
Bring us in good ale!"

In addition to these Augener's are publishing several more "little Peterisms" - three to old texts - two to poems by Edward Shanks¹³⁵ ("little Shankers" !!) - one Stevenson¹³⁶ and - if the publishers can be squared - two Yeats;¹³⁷ also the folk-song pieces for piano. I'm afraid I should never have the energy to copy the parts (or the money to have them copied) of any of my orchestra stuff - otherwise I'd send you something.¹³⁸

Together with this letter Warlock enclosed copies of the following four pieces of music:

- (1) *North Country Sketches* by Delius (arranged for piano duet) (Augener)
- (2) *Corpus Christi Carol* (Curwen)
- (3) *Captain Stratton's Fancy* (Augener)
- (4) *Mr. Belloc's Fancy* (Augener)

The third song mentioned in the letter, the one with the "rollicking tune" was *Good Ale* while the three other songs to old texts were:

¹³³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

¹³⁴ *Good Ale* (composed 4.2.1922); London, BL, Add MS 57966 contains a printed copy with annotations by Warlock. Facing p.1, where the poem is printed, the solo verse is marked "in the Saloon Bar" and the chorus "in which Public and Private Bars join equally". On p.1 Warlock has noted: "This [A flat] is the original version and is very much better than the low key as here. But for roaring unaccompanied it doesn't matter".

¹³⁵ Edward Buxton Shanks, 1892-1953, English poet.

¹³⁶ Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-1894, English author and poet.

¹³⁷ Unidentified songs; problems with Yeats's musical censor and a resulting disagreement with Yeats prevented the publication of Warlock's settings of his poetry. See chapter 8 for a full discussion.

¹³⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 20.4.1922.

- (1) *The Bachelor* (Augener)
- (2) *Hey, trolly loly lo* (Augener)
- (3) *Piggesnie* (Augener)

The two songs which had been set to poems by Edward Shanks were:

- (1) *Late Summer* (Augener)
- (2) *The Singer* (Augener)

whilst the Stevenson song was:

To the Memory of a Great Singer (Augener)

The piano pieces mentioned were, of course, the *Folk-song Preludes* which he had written to Taylor about at great length and which have already been fully discussed above.

During the months that followed Warlock was very much absorbed in the transcribing and editing of Elizabethan songs which he enthused about in his next letter to Taylor written from 20 Bury Street in London. Despite the quite remarkable amount of time he was spending editing this early music, he was somehow still able to find time for his own composing:

...I hope...in January...to be able to send you another dozen or so of the songs of "Little Peter".¹³⁹

One of the few surviving letters from Warlock to Taylor is a prompt reply to the letter just discussed. It was a short note, written from the S.A. College of Music wishing his friend and former pupil greetings for Christmas and the New Year:

Of course I will get as many of your new publications done as possible. You have not sent me anything lately, except the part-song & drinking-songs - Let me see anything else you have.¹⁴⁰

Warlock was able to return Taylor's Christmas greetings in an ebullient letter from Cefn Bryntalch including, at the same time, some recent publications together with news of some other pieces that were soon to appear in print. His other exciting

¹³⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.10.1922.

¹⁴⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 30.11.1922.

news was that his song-cycle, *The Curlew*, had recently been performed and, even though Philip Wilson had not given a completely accurate account of the solo part, for the first time in his life he had felt really pleased with something he had written.

Here are some more "little Peterisms" for you, with all good wishes for a pleasant Christmas!....

My "Curlew" cycle was performed on November 23rd - and for the first time in my life I really feel pleased with something I have written. Wilson bugged up the voice part completely but the instrumentalists were fine. It is going to be given again in January - with another singer, John Goss, who will do it far better. I wish I could send you this work but I simply haven't time to make another copy, and I can't get permission from Yeats¹⁴¹ to have it printed.¹⁴²

The Curlew held a special place in Warlock's affections¹⁴³ and is reckoned by many of his admirers to be his finest work.¹⁴⁴ Only the *Capriol Suite* is conceived on as large a scale, all his other works being miniatures. Moeran even refers to it as "a kind of symphonic poem".¹⁴⁵ Unlike many of his other so-called song-cycles (*Lillygay*, *Candlelight*, *Peterisms* or *Saudades*) *The Curlew* is unified by a number of themes or motives which appear throughout the whole piece. Here Warlock set four of Yeats's poems and, although the work falls into several sections, it is constructed as a continuous movement, each poem separated by an instrumental interlude. The whole work is saturated with an intense atmosphere of almost unbearable sadness and loneliness which hits unerringly at the heart of Yeats's poetry. Present day listeners may not perhaps appreciate just how original this work is, especially for its time and country of composition. Not only in the choice of the particular instrumental accompaniment but also in its overall conception. It is a crystallization of all Warlock's 20th century inspirations and ideals and it is interesting to note that although the van Dieren influence is apparent, it is, in fact,

¹⁴¹ When *The Curlew* was selected for publication under the auspices of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, Yeats was more or less forced into giving permission for the publication of his poetry. Gray, op. cit., p.249-250.

¹⁴² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.12.1922.

¹⁴³ Lambert, "Master of English Song", *Radio Times*, 1 July 1938, pp.12-13.

¹⁴⁴ For a full analysis of the work see Copley, op. cit., pp.171-175.

¹⁴⁵ Moeran, E.J., *Peter Warlock (Philip Heseltine)*, J.& W. Chester Ltd., London, 1926, pp. 4-5.

the spirit of Bartók which hovers far more closely. Gray, to whom the work was eventually dedicated, wrote about it as follows:

The mood of the *Curlew* songs...is one of the darkest despair throughout, save only for one ray of sunshine in the third number, at the words "I know of the sleepy country"; and even this temporary, fleeting respite, a moment of escape into an imaginary world, only renders the gloom of the rest of the work all the blacker and more intense. I do not know of any music, in fact, more utterly desolating to hear than *The Curlew*, and this is not merely due to retrospective subjectivity on my part; I felt precisely the same about it when I first heard it, in 1922. To-day I cannot even bear to listen to it at all, and probably I never shall be able to again.¹⁴⁶

The work evoked similar feelings in Moeran who wrote a perceptive paragraph on the piece:

This unique composition is undoubtedly one of the most original things achieved by any British composer in recent years, and was well received in the report of the Carnegie trustees as a perfect expression of the poems round which it is constructed. The music reflects with an almost uncanny fidelity not only the despairing sorrow of the lover, but also the eerie surroundings...the desolate lake besides which he wanders, of "the leafy paths that witches take", of the "sleepy country where swans fly round, coupled with golden chains", and brings to one's mind the mournful sound of the wind crying in the sedge.¹⁴⁷

In a scholarly article Arthur Hutchings (1906-1990)¹⁴⁸ writes perhaps even more enthusiastically of this work:

'The Curlew'...which foreshadows Britten's skill in dealing with a chamber group and solo voice, is surely one of the most beautiful evocations of desolate melancholy produced outside opera by any musician since Schubert.¹⁴⁹

When the work was eventually published by Stainer and Bell for the Carnegie Trust in 1924, Warlock duly gave Taylor a copy with the following inscription on the inside front cover: "Colin Taylor with love from Peter Warlock. Chelsea, June 1924".¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Gray, op. cit., p.247.

¹⁴⁷ Moeran, op.cit., pp.4-5.

¹⁴⁸ English teacher, author and composer.

¹⁴⁹ *Music in Britain: 1918-1960* in Cooper, M. (editor) *The New Oxford History of Music: The Modern Age* O.U.P., London, 1974, p.520.

¹⁵⁰ Cape Town, S.A. College of Music Library, TPB 782.6 WAR 62/493.

The letters to Taylor at this stage in Warlock's career seem to be filled with descriptions of a workload which can only be described as having a kind of maniacal hyperactive quality - a febrile excitement, the result of the discovery of so many early English masterpieces. Coupled with this is an uncertain, disbelieving and quite untypical pleasure in the satisfaction generated by the recent performance of *The Curlew* with the eager anticipation of a second performance the next month. This is clearly apparent in the following letter written from Cefn Bryntalch which he describes as "dreadfully egoistic" and in which there are dark hints of that ever-lurking spectre of "grisliness", the depression which he so much dreaded.

Many thanks for your letter and the amusing cutting. But don't let that song get too popular, for I've done a very much better setting of the same delightful poem, of which I send you a MS copy. This is altogether fresher and nearer to the spirit of the words; the other setting begins, as you justly remarked four years ago, like Percy Grainger and becomes mechanical and unspontaneous in its devious modulations.

Five publishers have turned down this song - which I consider the best light song I've done - so I am having it printed in Vienna (with the "Saudades" of 1917, a new cycle of 5 songs called "Lillygay" and some others) and it will be obtainable at Chester's some time during the spring....

"The Curlew" is to be given again on Jan. 31st (sung by John Goss) at one of a series of concerts got up by Lady Dean Paul (Poldowski).¹⁵¹ Did I tell you (forgive me if I repeat myself) that the Oxford University Press are bringing out a series of school-songs (unison, 2 or 3 part) under the general editorship of W.G. Whittaker of Newcastle-on-Tyne? I have done half a dozen for them, as well as 25 Elizabethan songs "transcribed and edited". Perhaps you have stuff on hand they might like. They buy outright and pay £5 per 4 pages, or complete leaflet.

I'm writing a Serenade for strings in three movements now - which I think is going well. I'd like to send it to you when completed, but I fear I shall never have the time or energy to copy out parts, nor the money to have them copied!

Again a dreadfully egoistic letter I'm afraid! But I've so little news. The only way to escape intolerable boredom is to work from morning till night...I don't write like this out of any illusions about the value of the work. I wish I had more - but it's the only thing to do to stave off the incursions of grisliness.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ This was the fifth of the *Concerts Intimes* given in the Hyde Park Hotel on Wednesday, 31.1.1923 at 12 noon. Leon Goossens played the cor anglais together with the Charles Woodhouse string quartet. Handbill, London, BL, Add MS 57795.

¹⁵² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.12.1922.

Warlock was evidently amused by the cutting about the local performance¹⁵³ of the early 1918-19 version of *Whenas the Rye*¹⁵⁴ by one of Taylor's students which Taylor had sent to him (30.11.1922). The second setting of the same words, dating from 1922¹⁵⁵ is, as Warlock himself admits in his letter, a far better setting. It is also interesting to note that Warlock still remembered and could quote Taylor's criticisms of the first setting made some four years earlier. Copley describes the earlier one as "bright, rhythmic, immediate and earthy", adding that there are sequential patterns to the words "Then O, then O, etc." which lead the music into some very remote keys indeed "but Warlock manages to extricate himself and return to his home tonic with an easy agility".¹⁵⁶ These were, no doubt, the "devious modulations" referred to.

The second setting of this sixteenth-century poem by George Peele (?1558-1597)¹⁵⁷ could not be more different in character. Gone is the almost four-square, thick-textured, forced heartiness and in its place there is now a deft, lightness of touch with delicious rhythmic felicities in a melodic line which often spans across bar-lines displacing the expected rhythm. Warlock's sums it up to a nicety by describing it as being "fresher and nearer the spirit of the words" as well as being the best light song he had done to date. The fate of the MS of this second setting which Warlock sent to Taylor with the letter of 19.12.1922 is unfortunately not known.

Warlock then proceeds to relate his problems with publishers and how he was having his songs printed in Vienna because of the favourable exchange rate. He had somehow managed to persuade his usually parsimonious mother to advance some money for the project. This new setting of *Chopcherry* (which was to become the

¹⁵³ *The S.A. College of Music Quarterly Magazine*, July 1922, p.16, records a performance of two Warlock songs, *Whenas the Rye* and *As ever I saw*, by Dorothy Lunt at a student concert in the Hiddingh Hall, University of Cape Town, on 12.6.1922.

¹⁵⁴ Winthrop Rogers, 1920.

¹⁵⁵ Chester, 1923. There is also an arrangement of this version for voice and string quartet.

¹⁵⁶ Copley, op. cit., p.71-72.

¹⁵⁷ English poet.

first of a set of three songs called *Peterisms: First Set*, 1922), the *Saudades* of 1917 as well as a new set of five songs entitled *Lillygay* were all printed in Vienna and later sold through the London publisher, Chester, on a royalty basis. Unfortunately they did not produce the spectacular profits that Warlock had hoped for.

On his honeymoon in the summer of 1924 Taylor paid a visit to England and he and Warlock took the opportunity of seeing each other on several occasions, the last times, in fact, that they were to meet. A letter written to Taylor from Warlock's lodgings at 6A Bury Street Chelsea talks of a meeting where they were able "to gibber away regardless".¹⁵⁸

It appears from a postscript to this same letter that, when they met, Warlock also took the opportunity of giving Taylor copies of two of his recent publications, the collection of five songs, entitled *Lillygay*, and the group of three songs, *Peterisms*, which had both been published by Chester in 1923:

Did you take your copies of 'Lillygay' and the 'Peterisms'? If not, you shall have them next time you come.

Once again there is yet another South African connection here, something which seems to run like a strange unifying thread through the whole Warlock story. The song-cycle, *Lillygay*, was dedicated to his cousin, Irene Heseltine (1892-1980),¹⁵⁹ who spent most of her life in South Africa. At one of these convivial meetings in June, Warlock obviously gave Taylor some of his other recent publications. Amongst the many Warlock pieces Taylor donated to the S.A. College of Music Library are two volumes each inscribed on the cover in Taylor's handwriting: "From Peter Warlock, London, June 1924". These are the group of twelve short songs, entitled *Candlelight* (published Augener, 1924) and *Two Short Songs (I held Love's head and Thou gav'st me leave to kiss)*.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.6.1924.

¹⁵⁹ Warlock's favourite cousin who spent most of her life in South Africa.

¹⁶⁰ Boosey & Hawkes, 1924.

In January 1925 Warlock moved to the charming little village of Eynsford in Kent. He wrote telling Taylor of these new "rustic surroundings" as well as about his latest compositions and publications:

Did you take away all the works of mine you wanted? If not, let me know and I will send you any you haven't got.

The last batch of songs were published by the Oxford University Press - "Peterisms" (II), "O mistress mine", "Consider", "Autumn Twilight", "Sleep" and others. I forget whether I sent you these or not. The "Serenade" (which had its first performance broadcasted and was quite a success) will be out next month, as well as a new toping tune (to troll in taverns over tankards) which I will send to cheer you up. I've just finished a largish work for chorus and orchestra, but I don't like it very much.

Enclosed is a bookplate drawn for me by a strange man whose grandmother was a cannibal, and used, within his memory, to lament the passing of the good days when she could feast upon her own kind.¹⁶¹

It was at this time that O.U.P. began developing their music department under the management of Hubert Foss, expanding gradually from educational music to the wider serious market. This was an opportune moment for Warlock to switch allegiance. He withdrew the second set of *Peterisms* and the *Serenade for Strings* from Chester and sold them to O.U.P. who then became his principal publishers for the rest of his life. The second set of *Peterisms* was dedicated to Balfour Gardiner and published by the O.U.P. in 1924, the three songs in this set being:

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) | <i>Roister Doister</i> | (Nicholas Udall 1505-1556) |
| (2) | <i>Spring</i> | (Thomas Nashe 1567-1601) |
| (3) | <i>Lusty Juventus</i> | (Robert Wever late 16th Century) |

This set is a group of three short, fast songs. The first is a rumbustious setting of a sixteenth-century text about a country wedding complete with a musical quote from the nursery-rhyme, *Here we go round the mulberry bush*, and extrovert harmonies providing the necessary word-painting to build up to a crashing climax. At the end of the original MS there is the instruction: "Stamping of feet, clapping of hands,

¹⁶¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1925.

pounding with pint pots and expectoration ad libitum but in strict time on the first beat of each bar".¹⁶²

The second song is a setting of the well-known poem, *Spring, the sweet spring*, by another sixteenth-century poet, Thomas Nashe (1567-1601).¹⁶³ This is in complete contrast to the first song, showing as it does a deft lightness of touch. This is particularly noticeable in the melodic line with its sensitive feeling for the natural rhythm of the words underlined throughout by colourful, chromatic harmonies and skilful modulations.

The last of the these settings is one of three versions that Warlock made of yet another sixteenth-century poem, *In an arbour green*. Its main problem is the enormously difficult piano part, marked *Fast and gay* and literally crammed full of notes. Perhaps it was precisely this kind of accompaniment that Taylor was referring to when he wrote of his own influence on his pupil's piano writing:

...many of his song accompaniments took wing to such a degree, and became pianistically so exacting, as to preclude the universal acceptance that the works in question deserved.¹⁶⁴

The other four songs mentioned all deserve at least a paragraph each to themselves. Two of them, *O Mistress Mine* and *Sleep*, are perhaps Warlock's most popular and most often performed pieces while the other two, *Consider* and *Autumn Twilight*, are of particular interest being quite unlike any other song he wrote and so cannot be placed into any neat Warlock category.

Sweet and Twenty (better known as *O Mistress Mine*) dates from 1924 and is one of those compositions which the hearer instinctively recognizes as a masterpiece of its kind. It is a triumph of art concealing art. In its short 59 bars one has the feeling that its melody, harmony and counterpoint are perfectly fused together with

¹⁶² Part of this song is reproduced in Vol. IV of the Warlock Society Complete Edition of the Songs, Thames, 1986.

¹⁶³ English poet.

¹⁶⁴ Taylor, op. cit., pp.9-10.

Shakespeare's famous poem.¹⁶⁵ The skilful use of cross-rhythms and displaced accent give the music just the right quality of vitality and restlessness while the shape and contour of the melodic line has an inevitability about it which is the hallmark of inspired writing - and oh, the delicious aptness of the *envoi* and its last five throw-away bars:



Warlock's setting of John Fletcher's¹⁶⁶ poem *Sleep* (1922) is another song considered to be one of his finest compositions,¹⁶⁷ a work with a remarkable fusion of two utterly diverse styles: this time a quasi-sixteenth-century vocal line and an accompaniment heavily overlaid with chromatic, contrapuntal, van Dieren-like features. In theory such a combination sounds unlikely to succeed but in practice it produces a song of haunting, almost eerie beauty with an atmosphere not unlike that created by the finest Elizabethan song-writers. There are many inspired moments in this song, suffice it to draw attention to two masterly moments: the aptly chromatic treatment of the vocal line and accompaniment in b. 14 at the words "Tho' but a shadow, but a sliding" (Ex.1) and the wonderful 6-bar piano postlude where Warlock screws up the tension in ever-increasing chromatic complexity until the penultimate bar where, after a brief pause, the tierce de picardie of the final chord becomes the musical representation of longed-for sleep which resolves the tension and, to quote Shakespeare, "knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care"¹⁶⁸ (Ex.2).

¹⁶⁵ Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, Act II, scene iii, lines 36-41 and 44-49.

¹⁶⁶ John Fletcher, 1579-1625, English poet.

¹⁶⁷ Warlock made an arrangement with string quartet accompaniment at the same time (1922). A later copy of the version with strings has two variants in the vocal line (bars 7 and 16) in Warlock's hand. London, BL, Add MS 52909.

¹⁶⁸ Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act II, scene ii, line 36.

Ex.1

Ex.2

As has already been noted, the two other songs mentioned in this letter are quite unlike any other Warlock genre. *Consider*, dating from 1922 and dedicated to C.W. Orr, a composer-friend, is conceived on quite different lines: here Warlock takes a poem by Ford Madox Ford (1873-1939)¹⁶⁹ and treats each stanza to a long, arching pentatonic melody which soars over a demanding accompaniment of continuous sweeping rhapsodic semiquaver arpeggios, *Allegro con fuoco*. In many ways it is very redolent of Quilter's setting of Shelley's *Love's Philosophy* (1905) though without the inevitable, almost over-ripe, richness of Quilter's harmonies.

The second of these songs is a setting of a poem by Arthur Symons, *Autumn Twilight*.¹⁷⁰ It was composed in 1922 and dedicated to the poet, a friend of the family who had stayed at Cefn Bryntalch.¹⁷¹ It is a setting which captures the impressionistic quality of the poem by means of strange shifting and overlapping harmonies. It is difficult to identify any of the usual influences that mark Warlock's style and, whereas the majority of his settings have some kind of recognizable quality, few people hearing this song for the first time would be able to identify its

¹⁶⁹ English poet.

¹⁷⁰ O.U.P., 1923.

¹⁷¹ "Arthur Symons is coming here for Christmas - an interesting old bird full of anecdote and reminiscence. He seems to have met everybody that's been anybody for the last half-century". Unpublished letter from Warlock (from Cefn Bryntalch) to Taylor, 7.12.1922.

composer. Here Warlock has produced something quite unusual but nonetheless beautiful in its own very individual way.

Warlock had been at work on his *Serenade* for string orchestra during 1921-2 whilst in Wales. He had referred to it in an earlier letter to Taylor: "I'm writing a Serenade for strings in three movements now - which I think is going well...."¹⁷² Perhaps the deadline which the birthday dedication imposed on the piece was responsible for its eventual truncation to a one-movement work. There is no evidence of Warlock actually beginning any work on either of the other two intended movements. This final version of the *Serenade* was printed by the O.U.P. in 1925 with the dedication "to Frederick Delius on his sixtieth birthday".¹⁷³

It was to be expected that the language of Warlock's early idol and mentor should pervade a work written for such an auspicious occasion. From the very first bar of the opening phrase the listener is immediately transported into a typically English, quasi-pastoral atmosphere. This is created largely by the 12/8 rhythm, the rich Delius-like string writing, full of divisi and double-stopping, as well as the lush harmony which, even though it never strays far from the orbit of the D major and b tonality of the opening, more than nods in the direction of its dedicatee. But for all this it is no mere pastiche but a work which deserves to be heard far more frequently. It is worthy to stand alongside the other string works in the repertoire, not only those of his compatriot Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934)¹⁷⁴ but also those of Grieg, Dvorak and Tchaikovsky.

Yet another "new toping tune" receives mention in this letter. This is undoubtedly the song, *Peter Warlock's Fancy*, composed around this time (in 1924), a setting of anonymous words of the fifteenth century, dedicated to Trelawny Dayrell Reed and

¹⁷² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.12.1922.

¹⁷³ Delius wrote to Warlock on 26.2.1923 to thank him: "Forgive me for not answering your kind letter of congratulations and acknowledging your charming serenade, which I received early in the morning on my birthday to my greatest surprise and pleasure. I like it very much indeed; it is a very delicate composition of a fine harmonist. Composition is your true vocation...." Carley, op. cit., pp.266-267.

¹⁷⁴ English composer and conductor.

published by Paterson in 1925. It is a typical Warlock drinking-song with a vigorous accompaniment (spiced up with the odd chromatic chord), plenty of thundering octaves in the left hand and even including a highly effective part for optional chorus thrown in for good measure. It shows how Warlock could write a first-class memorable, singable melody perfect for such an occasion. It would be a rip-roaring success at the type of sing-along occasion for which it was obviously intended.

The work for chorus and orchestra mentioned in this same letter was either destroyed or lost, probably the former for Warlock clearly expresses his dislike for the piece. As for the bookplate by the cannibal's grandson: this was designed and executed by one Hal Collins (18? -1939)¹⁷⁵ (a Maori from New Zealand), originally a barman at a London drinking club and who joined the Eynsford menage as a kind of domestic assistant. Here is what Gray has to say about him:

In contra-distinction to this more or less floating population of cats and women, a permanent member of the establishment was a strange character called Hal Collins, otherwise Te Akau, a New Zealander whose Maori grandmother had been a cannibal and used, within his memory, to lament the passing of the good old days when she could feast upon her kind. Besides being a graphic artist of considerable talent, particularly in woodcut, he was one of those people who, without ever having learnt a note of music or received a lesson in piano playing, have an inborn technical dexterity and a quite remarkable gift for improvisation. He used to compose systematically, also, but without being able to write it down; I remember him once playing to me a whole act of an opera he had conceived on the subject of Tristram Shandy.¹⁷⁶ A song of his, incidentally, taken down in notation by Peter, called *Forget not yet*,¹⁷⁷ was published by the Oxford University Press,¹⁷⁸ and testifies to his genuine talent. He subsisted chiefly on stout, of which he consumed gargantuan quantities, and when elated would perform Maori war dances with quite terrifying realism. On spirits, however, he would occasionally run completely amok, in true native fashion, and on one occasion almost succeeded in massacring the entire household...He was devoted to Peter as a dog to its master...He died even before Peter, in 1929, of what is popularly called galloping consumption, after an illness of only a few months.¹⁷⁹

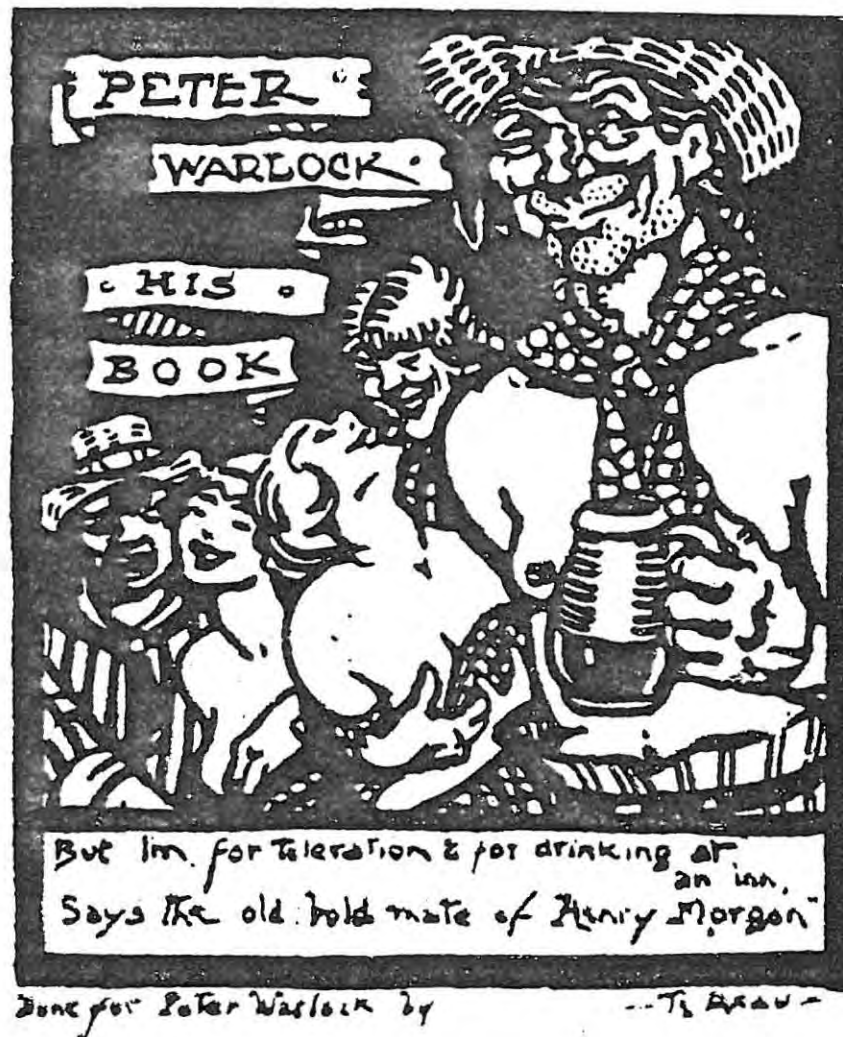
¹⁷⁵ New Zealand Maori amateur poet.

¹⁷⁶ Presumably based on the novel of the same name by the English novelist, Laurence Sterne, 1713-1768.

¹⁷⁷ Words by Sir Thomas Wyatt, 1503-1542, English poet and diplomatist.

¹⁷⁸ 1928.

¹⁷⁹ Gray, op. cit., pp.254-255.



22. Bookplate by Hal Collins

A copy of the bookplate is included here. It has a quotation from the song, *Captain Stratton's Fancy* and portrayed in the woodcut are a suitable collection of toppers and trollops in various degrees of disarray.

Four months later Warlock wrote from Eynsford primarily to discuss the printing of some of Taylor's own compositions, the proof-reading side of which he was looking after at the time:

I am only too pleased to do anything I can for your work at any time...The firm of Winthrop Rogers has been acquired by Hawkes of Denman Street, Piccadilly Circus; the manager is an American, E.R. Voigt, a very intelligent and progressive person who is keen on getting good things to publish. He might be useful to you. I have sold him some stuff lately at quite a good price - and I have also disposed of a couple of songs to the firm of Paterson, Buchanan Street., Glasgow.¹⁸⁰

The only two songs printed by Boosey and Hawkes soon after this letter was written were *Chanson du Jour de Noël*¹⁸¹ and *The Countryman* (both in 1926). Copley dates their composition as 1925? and 1926 respectively¹⁸² which presents a small problem if, indeed, these are the songs referred to by Warlock in the above letter. They must have both been composed by mid-1925 and not 1926 (as stated by Copley) if they were the ones sold to Voigt. The two songs sold to and eventually published by Paterson in 1925 were *In an arbour green* and *Peter Warlock's Fancy* both composed in 1924.

In this same letter Warlock also wrote about life in Eynsford (not without its amusing aspects) and included some details of his recent literary work, his editing of early music and his feelings about his own declining abilities as a composer:

I'm still living in Eynsford and hope to do so yet for some considerable time. It is a very pleasant place, only 20 miles from London but a quite unspoiled country village. The only drawback is when one goes to sleep in the last train down and finds oneself penniless in the small hours of the morning at Maidstone (19 miles off) whence I had to walk a few nights ago. I have also visited Whitstable under similar circumstances.

¹⁸⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.6.1925.

¹⁸¹ Dedicated to Sir Richard Terry.

¹⁸² Copley, op. cit., p.299.

Warlock's next letter to Taylor from Eynsford was a very brief one, no more than a note accompanying the returned MS of Taylor's *Capricietto*¹⁸³ and a proof which had been corrected by Warlock. This *Wireless League Gazette* which he mentions was yet another ill-fated venture in which Warlock was involved; only one issue in fact actually appeared (15.8.1925). For this short-lived Gazette Warlock wrote an article under the very general heading *Music*, using as the basis one of his favourite quotes, from Robert Jones, that the musical profession was the greatest enemy to music. There is also one brief, cynical reference to composition in this letter:

I'm very busy with literary work - several books and pamphlets on hand, editions of old music and a weekly article for the "Wireless League Gazette" - a new paper starting this month. This is much more fun than writing music one doesn't believe in - and far more paying.¹⁸⁴

At the end of the year Warlock wrote his customary Christmas greeting to Taylor in December 1925. He usually liked to send Taylor one or more of his recent publications as a Christmas gift but on this occasion he was unable to send all the pieces he had wanted to:

I had hoped to be able to send you in time for Christmas the two remaining numbers of my choral triptych of dirges from the plays of John Webster;¹⁸⁵ you have the first - "All the flowers of the spring", for mixed voices: the other two are "Hark, now everything is still" - that grisly poem from "The Duchess of Malfi", for male voices, and "Call for the robin-redbreast and the wren", for 4-part female chorus, this last being dedicated to you, the more appropriate because your delightful Madonna songs¹⁸⁶ were the first examples I ever saw of good music for this rather troublesome combination....

I am doing a great deal of work on old English music, transcribing and editing. This, and the writing of articles, fills most of my time. I have written no original stuff for more than a year, and see no prospect of doing so.

I enclose four old songs, reconstructed as nearly as possible in the style of the period; and a pretty tune which Moeran got from an old man in Norfolk - a queer mixture of folk-song and music-hall as you will see from the explanatory note.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ Piano piece by Colin Taylor, O.U.P., 1925.

¹⁸⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1925.

¹⁸⁵ 1580-1630, English dramatist.

¹⁸⁶ *Three Slumber Songs of the Madonna* for unaccompanied female voices, Novello, 1910.

¹⁸⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

The *Three Dirges of Webster* were written between the years 1923 and 1925 and consist of the following:

- (1) *All the flowers of the Spring* (1923) For mixed voices, dedicated to Charles Kennedy Scott and the Oriana Madrigal Society (Winthrop Rogers 1924).
- (2) *The Shrouding of the Duchess of Malfi* (1925) For male voices, dedicated to Albert Whitehead (Winthrop Rogers 1926).
- (3) *Call for the Robin Redbreast and the Wren* (1925) For female voices, dedicated to Colin Taylor (Winthrop Rogers 1926).

Copley makes the interesting comment that:

from 1923 onwards Warlock's choral music tends to be associated more with professional choral groups or amateur groups having a professional standard of accomplishment. For instance, in this year he produced the first of his set of *Three Dirges of Webster*, *All the flowers of the Spring*, dedicated to C. Kennedy Scott and the Oriana Madrigal Society, and published in 1924. There is a kinship between this work and *The Full Heart*,¹⁸⁸ but although there are similar difficulties of execution, the block chordal texture is interspersed with passages more contrapuntal in their movement, and there are occasional diatonic passages to lighten the tenebrous chromatic texture. The final section, a lengthy melisma to the word "wind", has a most original and evocative atmosphere, though it is doubtful whether any choir could reproduce the hollow moaning effect as the composer envisaged it.¹⁸⁹

The male-voice dirge, *The Shrouding of the Duchess of Malfi*, surely must contain some of the most melancholy and desolate music Warlock ever wrote. Its uncompromising and unrelenting chromaticism presents formidable problems of intonation to even the finest of choirs. By skilful use of dissonance and other devices (such as bitonality) the atmosphere of the text is conveyed with a stark and chilling reality. Arnold Bax, in an undated letter to Warlock, wrote of the work as follows:

I think *The Shrouding of the Duchess of Malfi* is a masterly piece of tragic writing. You are one of the only modern composers in my opinion whose harmonic invention derives from an emotional and natural source. I would rather hear pure diatonic and nothing else than the damnable brain-spun muddle and mess which is the stuff of most modern music. That is why it is

¹⁸⁸ An extremely difficult choral work written during the years 1916-21 and published in 1923.

¹⁸⁹ Copley, op. cit., p.193.

exciting to find someone writing harmony that to my mind is obviously sincere and imaginative and flexible.¹⁹⁰

As has been noted, the third of these Webster dirges, *Call for the Robin Redbreast and the Wren*, was dedicated to Taylor.¹⁹¹ Although this is still a difficult, dissonant composition it is not as stark or as bleak as its two companion pieces. It has fewer contrapuntal features, tending to be more homophonic in character, apart from the ending where there are distinct echoes of the earlier *Corpus Christi* carol: a unison melodic line accompanied by a gently undulating semiquaver pattern in the two alto parts beneath.

Gray's comments about the merits of these three strange settings of three equally strange texts are worth noting:

And once again in striking contrast is a small group of works for the same medium set to poems of Thomas Webster - *Three Dirges* - probably the gloomiest and grisliest music that even Philip Heseltine ever wrote, which is saying a good deal....

The intrinsic substance of these *Dirges* is deeply interesting and very personal, but they are so excessively difficult that I doubt whether a satisfactory performance is possible, or at least practicable without a degree of preparation and rehearsal which are seldom obtainable under present conditions.¹⁹²

Warlock enclosed with this letter a Christmas gift in the form of a copy of this "pretty tune", as he describes it, *Yarmouth Fair*, another of the Warlock songs which gained immense popularity and one which is regularly performed. There exists a letter from Moeran to Arnold Dowbiggin which tells of the rather unusual way in which this song came to be composed:

..."Yarmouth Fair" is not a traditional song in any sense of the word at all. I first heard it sung in a pub at Cley-next-the-sea in 1921 by a villager, John Drinkwater. After he sung it he turned to me and said, "I picked that old song up by the roadside in an old newspaper". I said, "But how about the tune?" Drinkwater said, "Oh, that sort o' fared to come to me when I was sitting on a pile of stones by the roadside and reading the words over".

¹⁹⁰ Gray, op. cit., pp.265-266.

¹⁹¹ The copy sent to him by Warlock is now in Cape Town, S.A. College of Music Library, TPB 780.48 WAR.

¹⁹² Gray, op. cit., pp.264-265.

To Colin Taylor

Call for the Robin - Redbreast and the Wren

Dirge for unaccompanied female voices

Poem by JOHN WEBSTER (1612)

PETER WARLOCK

Moderato.

SOPRANO I

SOPRANO II *mp*

ALTO

ALTO *mp*

PIANO (for practice only) *mp*

Call for the rob-in - red - breast and the wren,

Call for the

Call for the

pochiss. rit. a tempo

Call for the red-breast and the wren, Since o'er sha-dy groves they hov - er, And with

for the red-breast and the wren, Since o'er sha-dy groves they hov - er, And with

ro - bin red-breast and the wren, Since o'er sha-dy groves they hov - er, And with

ro - bin red-breast and the wren, Since o'er sha-dy groves they hov - er, And with

pochiss. rit. a tempo

WINTHROP ROGERS EDITION
Copyright 1926, Hawkes & Son.

23. Peter Warlock's part-song, *Call for the robin redbreast*, with its dedication to Colin Taylor

Now the words were about a "Magpie": I took them also. Several years later, Peter got stuck, as all decent composers do sometimes, i.e. ideas wouldn't come to him one day when he was trying to compose. I happened to drop in on him and said, "If you're hard up for ideas why not arrange a folk-song?" He quite took to the idea, so I showed him my Mss. and gave him some to choose from and he picked *The Magpie*. The words seemed to have a music-hall tang about them, and the Oxford Press deemed it advisable to enquire about copyright. It turned out that they had appeared in a publication of Francis, Day, and Hunter's, *The Mohawk Minstrels* [1896]. Permission to reprint was refused by the firm. A friend of ours, the late Hal Collins, set to work and composed the "Yarmouth Fair" words to fit Peter's arrangement of Drinkwater's tune, and the O.U.P. published this. So there is nothing traditional in the accepted sense of the word.¹⁹³

The tune of this song could not be more straightforward nor more infectious - once heard, never forgotten. It is in the piano accompaniment, however, that Warlock shows his considerable skill and ingenuity. Somehow he cleverly contrives to incorporate and juxtapose elements as diverse as lute-like accompaniments (bar 13 - 15), horn fifths (bars 9 and 10), drone-bass pedal points (bars 25-34), daring across the bar-line syncopations (bars 59-60), touches of the Tudor flattened 7th (bars 25, 27 and 33), percussive dissonances (bar 69 especially) and echoes of the Delius-like harmonies rising to the surface as the excitement mounts from verse three to the end. The whole piece, when performed with the almost breathless exuberance and panache it demands, is a *tour de force* for both singer and accompanist alike. For those familiar with the floral-patterned covers of the original 1920s O.U.P. editions of Warlock's songs, the postscript to this letter will strike an amusing note:

Please excuse the lavatory wall-paper in which the Oxford Press thought fit to clothe the Norfolk song!

As Warlock's accompaniments were originally conceived for the song, *The Magpie*, here are the words of the original poem by Harry Hunter. Tomlinson rightly draws attention to the fact that "the accompaniment makes more sense with the original lyrics, particularly in the last verse - 'Her father then came rushing in,' etc."¹⁹⁴:

I lingered near a cottage door,
And the magpie said "Come on! come on!"
And the magpie said "Come on!"

¹⁹³ Letter from Moeran to Dowbiggin, 5.2.1931, quoted by Copley, op. cit., p.113.

¹⁹⁴ Tomlinson, Preface to *Peter Warlock Songs* Vol.5, Thames, London, 1989, p.5.

The door was open, I went in
 And I saw standing there
 A maiden with a dimpled chin
 A-combing her back hair, back hair, a-combing her back hair.
 A sweet surprise was in her eyes,
 But still she did not frown,
 But even smiled, the pretty child,
 And the magpie said "Sit down! sit down!"
 And the magpie said "Sit down!"

I sat down in her father's chair
 And the magpie said "Kiss her! kiss her!"
 And the magpie said "Kiss her!"
 And yet the maiden didn't speak
 Which made me think "I will! I will!"
 For as the red rushed to her cheek
 She looked more lovely still, still, still,
 She looked more lovely still.
 But when in haste I clasped her waist
 She screamed out "No! No! No!"
 But 'twas so nice I kissed her twice
 And the magpie said "Bravo! Bravo!"
 And the magpie said "Bravo!"

Her father then came rushing in,
 And the magpie said "Get out! Get out!"
 And the magpie said "Get out!"
 Her father's voice was like a rasp
 And swearing he began -
 And I experienced the grasp,
 The grasp of an honest man, man, man,
 The grasp of an honest man.
 He rained such blows upon my clothes
 I feel them to this day:
 He kicked me too as out I flew,
 And the magpie said "Hooray! Hooray!"
 And the magpie said "Hooray!"
 And the magpie said "Hooray!"¹⁹⁵

In a letter from Eynsford that September (1926) Warlock repeats, like some doom-laden litany, his belief that his inspiration to compose seems to have dried up:

As far as original composition is concerned, I have completely dried up, so that list contains everything that is likely to appear for a good long time to come.

A little later in the same letter he continues in a vein of self-pity relating a quite appalling history of virtual exploitation on the part of his publishers over the years:

Music publishing in this country does not seem to be a very flourishing affair. If it were not for the Oxford Press, which is subsidized to some

¹⁹⁵ *Peter Warlock Songs* Vol.5, Thames, London, 1989, pp.60-64.

extent by the University and therefore need not look to the profits and losses as much as most ordinary commercial firms, I should be a complete pauper. As it is, in the course of seven years, I have made, by publishing original music, transcriptions of Delius and of old English music, books on music and articles on music, the magnificent sum total of £1100 - a little over £150 a year, and this year it looks as though the sum would be very considerably less. If I had been idiotic enough to accept royalties, I should have had next to nothing at all. Under the royalty system one is absolutely at the publisher's mercy. On "Captain Stratton's Fancy" - my most popular song, an absolute potboiler which has been published in 3 keys, gramophoned, and continually broadcasted, I have had less than £3 in four years, and I am having to put solicitors on to Enoch's over the "English Ayres".¹⁹⁶

There is only one Warlock autograph letter in the Colin Taylor Collection written from Eynsford on 3.2.1927.¹⁹⁷ It is written in characteristic impeccably neat and minute script on a single folded, white sheet of paper, 25cm x 23cm.

Besides writing in reply to a query¹⁹⁸ from Taylor about an unknown authoress¹⁹⁹ (of a book called *The Constant Nymph*²⁰⁰) and describing a performance of the "great" Berlioz *Requiem* which he had recently heard, the first paragraph of this letter is about two of his most recent publications which he enclosed with the letter:

Here are my "Sorrow's Lullaby", and an Elizabethan song which is surely one of the best songs ever written....

Sorrow's Lullaby is one of four vocal chamber pieces by Warlock which were conceived with instrumental (not piano) accompaniment and exist only in this form. This particular song was written as a duet for soprano and baritone soloists accompanied by a string quartet. In the score there is a piano reduction but Warlock has added to this the careful instruction "for practice only". The MS score is dated Eynsford, May 1926 and it was published by the O.U.P. the following year.

¹⁹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.9.1926.

¹⁹⁷ Cape Town, S.A. College of Music Library, BC76 C1.2.88.

¹⁹⁸ "You asked me in your last letter for some information about the authoress of 'The Constant Nymph'. I know nothing about her, nor, indeed, do I know anyone who knows her; so there is no possibility of any incident or character in the book being connected with me, I am glad to say!" Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.2.1927.

¹⁹⁹ Margaret Moore Kennedy, 1896-1967, English novelist.

²⁰⁰ Kennedy, Margaret, *The Constant Nymph*, William Heinemann, London, 1924.

February 3rd 1927

Eynsford
Kent

My Dear Colin

Here are my "Sonnet's dellaby," and an Elizabethan song which is surely one of the best songs ever written. The original version is for solo voice and four viols, but the piano part of the present edition is an absolutely literal transcription of the string parts (which are, by the way, now published - with the score - together with 21 other songs, all originally composed for voice and string quartet between 1560 and 1600 - by the Oxford Press).

You asked me in your last letter for some information about the authoress of "The Constant Nymph". I know nothing about her, nor, indeed, do I know anyone who knows her; so there is no possibility of any incident or character in the book being even remotely connected with me, I am glad to say!

Last month I heard the great Berlioz concert at Albert Hall under Hamilton Harty - a most wonderful and memorable experience - the Hall's chorus with a vast orchestra including 4 of each wood-wind, 8 horns, 13 trumpets, 17 trombones, 6 tubas (which ought to be euphoniums) and about a dozen drums. The "Requiem" is undoubtedly one of the very greatest of all musical creations - worthy to rank with the Masses of Palestrina and the 9th Symphony.

Much love -

Ever affectionately

Neil

Gray makes some interesting comments about Warlock and this setting when he draws a parallel between the composer and the poet, Thomas Lovell Beddoes (1803-1849).²⁰¹ It is only a pity he had to drag in the somewhat far-fetched reference to re-incarnation. Gray could never resist an opportunity to gild the lily:

The sense of finality which marks the pattern of his life at this juncture is reflected also in his art; not merely in the fact that the last songs...show the same momentary return to the earlier personality...but in the peculiar qualities of the individual songs themselves. In the unearthliness and otherworldliness of *The Frostbound Wood*, in the obsession with the idea of death and dissolution in *The Fox*, there is a strange morbid beauty quite different from anything else in his work, or in any other music that I know, for that matter, and only paralleled in any art by the poetry of Thomas Lovell Beddoes. The analogy between the two extends further than this; there is, indeed, a quite uncanny resemblance between the two men - so much as almost to induce one to believe in the doctrine of reincarnation - and it is only surprising that Warlock did not set any of Beddoes' poetry to music, with the exception of *Sorrow's Lullaby*. Beddoes has frequently been described as an Elizabethan born out of his time: 'The Last Elizabethan' Lytton Strachey²⁰² calls him in his fine essay of that title devoted to him in *Books and Characters*²⁰³; and so has Peter Warlock been described.²⁰⁴

To better understand Gray's remarks here are a few facts about Thomas Lovell Beddoes, a fascinating character in nineteenth-century English literature. The son of a distinguished scientist, at Charterhouse School he was already indulging his imagination in a passion for Shelley and the Gothic romances, to the extent of writing one of his own whilst still a schoolboy. At the age of seventeen he went to study at Oxford where some of his verse tales were published. These early writings show a strange obsession with death which was to persist throughout his life, particularly in his magnum opus, the extraordinary *Death's Jest Book* (or *The Fool's Tragedy*) which was published posthumously. It is a work containing some brilliant verse, full of characters not unlike himself and a meditation on life and death suffused with a perpetual longing for what he called "a wished-for change of being". He qualified as a medical doctor in Germany but after repeated trouble with the

²⁰¹ English poet and author.

²⁰² 1880-1932, English biographer and critic.

²⁰³ Strachey, *Books and Characters*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1922.

²⁰⁴ Gray, op. cit., pp.301-302.

authorities, probably for political reasons, fled to Switzerland where he later committed suicide.

Gray has more to say about this particular setting of Beddoes' *Sorrow's Lullaby*. Although not unappreciative of the qualities of the piece he tends to be rather dogmatic (if not even a little patronising) in his criticisms which follow. Surely Warlock was the person to judge what combination of instruments he wanted, the choice of string quartet no doubt being the influence of his recent transcriptions which had included Elizabethan songs with viol accompaniment?

In the same vein and on a larger and more ambitious scale is the little known and never performed *Sorrow's Lullaby*, to words by Thomas Lovell Beddoes, for soprano, baritone, and string quartet. This is a highly personal and intimate utterance, strange and elusive in its mood and singularly recondite in its harmonic idiom. If it must be adjudged less successful than the foregoing songs with piano accompaniment it is because the medium is not entirely suited to the thought. There is in particular too much double-stopping for the strings, and I am inclined to think that the work could have been more satisfactorily realized in a more extended combination of chamber instruments, such as that employed in *The Curlew*.²⁰⁵

But Gray was right in 1934 about one thing which has proved as true almost sixty years later: it is still probably perfectly safe to say that the work is "never performed". The comparative infrequency of being able to bring together the unusual forces of expert soprano and baritone soloists as well as a string quartet of professional quality for a work of only five pages and lasting for as many minutes mitigates very strongly against its performance. The whole melodic and harmonic style too is not Warlock at his most immediately accessible. Throughout this work he leans very heavily on the van Dieren idiom with its restless chromaticism, its evasive tonality and seeming lack of harmonic direction. But having said all these negative things, it may well be that given performers of sufficient skill, sensitivity and commitment, the final result could be a most moving experience. It is not too rash a remark to say that it would be worth performing even if only to hear the final string postlude where a wonderful sense of calm repose settles on the work as the

²⁰⁵ Gray, *ibid.*, pp.263-264.

dissonance of the last quaver of each bar melts into a resolution of almost numinous quality.



The poem itself is quite hauntingly beautiful and if ever any lines of poetry were a suitable epitaph for Peter Warlock, then these are surely the ones:

What sound is that, so soft, so clear,
 Harmonious as a bubbled tear
 Bursting, we hear?
 It is young Sorrow, slumber breaking,
 Suddenly awaking.
 Let us sing his lullaby,
 Heigh ho! a sob and a sigh.

Taylor must at some stage have written to Warlock asking him a few questions as well as prodding him about returning some of his MSS. Warlock replied from London in this rather depressed vein:

I am an execrable correspondent...there is less and less of any interest to correspond about, as time goes on. So the best thing I can do is to go through your letter and answer all your questions seriatim.

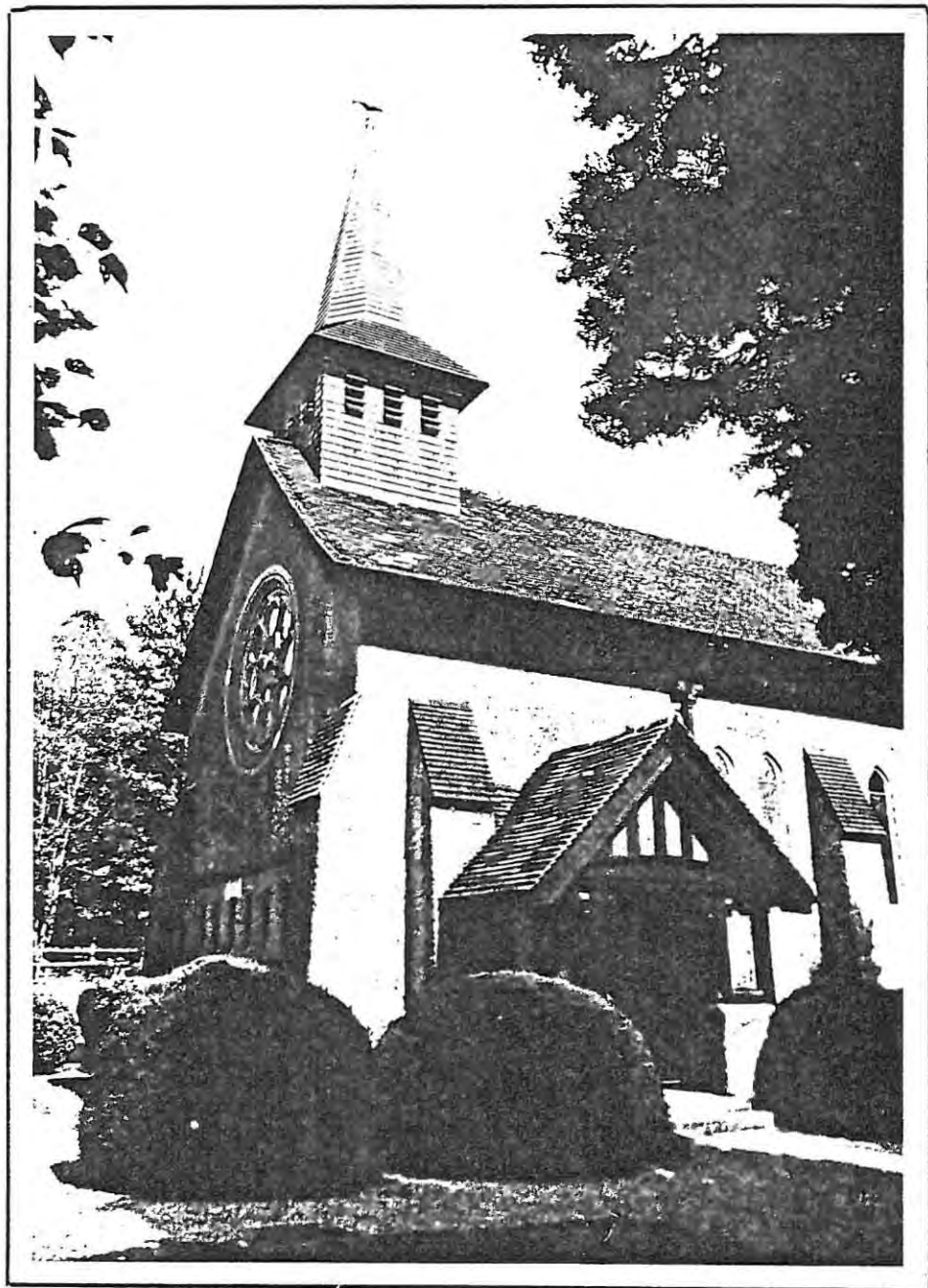
Evelyn Heseltine is a rich, octogenarian uncle who built a hideous church to the memory of my father. As he is very pious, I dedicated a couple of silly carols to him, in the hope that he might fork out a little dough at Christmas; but alas, the spirit of patronage is not what it was in former ages, and I got nothing beyond a polite letter of thanks.²⁰⁶

This uncle was the one Warlock used to have to visit as a boy for the dreaded Christmas house-parties at The Goldings, Great Warley.²⁰⁷ It was there that Evelyn Heseltine had erected the famous Art Nouveau church to the memory of his brother, Arnold (Warlock's father).²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.1.1929.

²⁰⁷ "I arrive in London on the 21st and go on the 23rd to Goldings, Great Warley, Essex, for four days...." Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.12.1911.

²⁰⁸ "I only wish I could come and see you this weekend but alas, I have an unpleasant duty to perform which I cannot evade, much as I should like to. My mother is staying at Great Warley with my rich and pious uncle - the one who built the church in memory of my father: which is known as Heseltine's folly - and I have promised to go down and see him this week end as he is getting very old and is not likely to last



25. Great Warley Church, Essex
(photographed by the author)

These two carols were composed in 1927 and are both settings of mediaeval texts: *What cheer? Good cheer!*²⁰⁹ and *Where riches is everlastingly*.²¹⁰ The first is described as "a carol for the New Year for voices in unison" and has an optional organ or piano accompaniment (though it seems more suited to the latter instrument in its actual layout). It is written in a swinging 6/4 tempo and, although the tune could be described as "singable", the whole piece is not particularly memorable or effective. Very much the same things could be said of the other carol which is also in 6/4 with the tempo indication "Fast, with a good swing". It has however a little more character (notably in its more interesting harmonies) and Warlock at least offers an optional harmonized refrain for verse three.

As Warlock had written off his family by this time one wonders perhaps if there was perhaps some implied cynicism in the title of the second carol, *Where riches is everlastingly*, which prompted Warlock to dedicate it to his rich Uncle. Did he really expect Uncle Evelyn to "fork out a little dough" on the strength of these dedications on two little carols that Christmas 1927? Evelyn Heseltine died a week away from his 80th birthday on 28.4.1930 and the funeral, held in the "hideous" church, was attended by most of the family, including Warlock, his mother, step-father and son, Nigel.²¹¹ The final irony was, however, still to come. Although the old man left an estate of £639,366 to be divided between various members of the Heseltine family (after the servants had been paid six months' wages) Warlock was left nothing. From this moment on he abandoned the family name.

The final letter to Taylor is a somewhat matter-of-fact-affair, not the sort of letter which would be used as evidence to illustrate the onset of a final black depression or feelings of despondency. In fact, even though he speaks of his having definitely abandoned composing, he carries on to say that he has "plenty of other work",

long". Unpublished letter from Warlock to Robert Nichols, 1.1.1929, London, BL, Add MS 57795.

²⁰⁹ Winthrop Rogers, 1928.

²¹⁰ O.U.P., 1928.

²¹¹ From the report of the funeral in *The Times* of London, 5.5.1930, p.17.

indeed he has "never been so busy". This letter was presented by Taylor to Eton College and is preserved in the library there. Written on the headed notepaper of Beecham's *The Imperial League of Opera*, yet another ill-fated venture, it tells of the plans for the forthcoming Delius Festival in October 1929 and about the magazine which he was to edit in connection with the *League of Opera*. Only three issues of this publication, *The Magazine of the League of Opera (MILO)* actually appeared²¹² and by January the whole venture itself had collapsed leaving Warlock once again without a job. There is a more cheerful paragraph where he writes about yet another figure with South African associations, the conductor, Leslie Heward (1897-1943):²¹³

I have seen a good deal of Leslie Heward lately, and we often speak affectionately of you. He is a delightful fellow, and - to judge from two recent orchestral works - an exceptionally talented composer. We have need of such in England: if, as is confidently expected, the League of Opera is able to start functioning early next year, Heward should certainly be engaged as a permanent conductor.

Before succeeding Adrian Boult as conductor of the City of Birmingham Orchestra in 1930, Heward had spent three years in Cape Town as musical director of the South African Broadcasting Corporation and conductor of the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra (1924-7). During his time with the orchestra in Cape Town he was able to raise the standards considerably and even managed to organize a tour which took the orchestra to London to play at the Wembley Exhibition and at Buckingham Palace in 1925. Although an artistic success it was, in fact, a financial disaster. It is also interesting to note that for a while Heward had occupied Taylor's old post, having been assistant music master for a brief spell at Eton in 1917 before taking up the post of Director of Music at Westminster School in London in 1920.

In the rest of the letter Warlock writes of his finally having decided to abandon composition, of a forthcoming engagement at the Proms to conduct his own *Capriol*

²¹² October, November and Christmas 1929.

²¹³ English conductor and composer; conductor of the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra, 1924-1927.

Suite (1928) and includes a final postscript about his decision to abandon the family name, precipitated by the publishing of the contents of Uncle Evelyn's will that same month:

I have definitely abandoned musical composition - it is more than a year since I wrote even a pot-boiler, and the demands for any but purely educational music in this country is absolutely nil: but I am glad to say that I have found plenty of other work in the last few months - indeed, I have never been so busy.

On the 29th of this month I make my first and last appearance as a conductor, when "Capriol" will be given at the Proms. What a farce this silly "conducted by the composer" fetish is! One feels that one is merely stuck up at the desk to make the audience laugh, as though one were a dancing bear or something.

Much love to you all,
Ever affectionately
Phil

P.S. I am now officially Peter Warlock for all public communications - it saves trouble and confusion and keeps one's name in people's minds: they cannot remember two at a time.²¹⁴

The Times newspaper gave the concert a warm review for its British content especially, though not commenting specifically on Warlock's skill as an orchestral conductor. Considering Warlock's general contempt for the music of Stanford²¹⁵ and his numerous and outspoken condemnations of Holst's suite, the *Planets*²¹⁶ it is rather ironic that he had to share the programme with these two composers: Stanford's *Irish Rhapsody*²¹⁷ and three movements from the *Planets* having also been played. More congenial to Warlock's tastes would have been the two other pieces on the programme, Delius's Cello Concerto (1921) played by Beatrice Harrison (1893-1965)²¹⁸ and the first concert performance of Constant Lambert's *Music for Orchestra* (1927), conducted by the composer:

²¹⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1929, Windsor, Eton College Collections.

²¹⁵ Warlock attacked Stanford and the establishment in an article, "Sir Charles Snarls", under the pseudonym, Barbara C. Larent, in *The Sackbut*, March 1921, v.1, no.1, pp.418-419.

²¹⁶ Op.32 (1914-16). Warlock wrote critically of the work in an article, "That Butchered Cosmos Again", (signed P.H.) in *The Sackbut*, March 1921, v.1, no.1, p.420.

²¹⁷ Op.78, no.1 in d (1901)

²¹⁸ English cellist.

This much at least is to be said in favour of giving us whole evenings of British music at the Promenade Concerts, that we are having it brought home to us how very extensive is the field, how various the crop, and, be it whispered, how very good is the quality thereof....

Nor does that exhaust the tale, for two works were conducted by their composers: Constant Lambert's "Music for Orchestra" and Peter Warlock's Suite "Capriol". Mr. Warlock's music is always his own, and this suite, based on tunes borrowed from Arbrau's [sic] *Orchésographie*, is both virile and charming, but to the critic - and Mr. Warlock himself practises that art with distinction - it is interesting as showing a connecting link between these diverse traits of the other composers: the clarity and sprightly character of the 16th-century composers, the clean technique of Stanford, the Delian sensitivity to orchestral sound, and the abrupt willingness of Holst to say precisely what he means and then stop dead. It would almost seem, therefore, as though there is some vague thing in British music that corresponds to that other vague thing - national character.²¹⁹

As Warlock writes about his *Capriol Suite* in this letter it would be appropriate to conclude this chapter with a brief discussion of the work, probably his most often performed and best known composition.²²⁰ It exists, in fact, in three different versions made by the composer himself: for piano duet, for string orchestra and full orchestra. Warlock dedicated all these versions to the Breton composer, Paul Ladmirault (1877-1944)²²¹ with whom he corresponded²²² and whose music he much admired. After Warlock's death the popularity of the work was such that arrangements were made for piano solo and for two pianos in duet. Later some of the individual movements were also transcribed for combinations such as solo and duo violin and piano and for organ solo, while the fifth movement appeared as a carol arrangement for various vocal combinations (SATB, unison voices and equal voices). The Suite was also choreographed as a ballet by Frederick Ashton (1906-1988)²²³ and performed at the Lyric Theatre in London in February 1930.

²¹⁹ *The Times* of London, 30th August 1929, p.10.

²²⁰ See also *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter* no.35, August 1985, the Chairman's report (Tomlinson), pp.1-3, for a discussion of the *Capriol Suite*.

²²¹ French composer.

²²² Warlock's letters to Ladmirault are preserved in London, BL, Add MS 50186 and in Paris, Conservatoire Library, Don. 9597.

²²³ English choreographer.

In 1925 Cyril Beaumont published an English translation of Thoinot Arbeau's (1519-1595)²²⁴ treatise on dancing, the *Orchésographie of 1588*, the preface of which was written by Peter Warlock who had also assisted in various other ways with his considerable editorial expertise. In this preface there is a study of both English and European dance music of the sixteenth century together with many musical illustrations reproduced in Warlock's own beautiful handwriting.²²⁵

Having discovered this work, Warlock proceeded in October 1926 to compose his so-called *Capriol Suite* based on some of the dance tunes contained in the original volume by Arbeau. Arbeau had written his treatise in the typical Renaissance dialogue form: in this case between himself, the teacher, and his pupil, Capriol, hence the name of the Suite. The first version to have been composed was that for piano duet, the string orchestra version being published in 1927²²⁶ with the two other versions (for piano duet and full orchestra) appearing the following year. All were originally published by Curwen. A full analysis of the work can be found in Copley's book,²²⁷ where each movement is discussed in considerable detail.²²⁸

²²⁴ French priest and author. His real name was Jehan Tabournot, of which Thoinot Arbeau is an anagram.

²²⁵ Hubert Foss had this to say about Warlock's handwriting: "Warlock wrote with exquisite precision...the shapes of the note-heads, the uprights, the binds and ties, were of enormous interest to him. He wrote his crotchets and quavers in a handwriting exactly as his ear demanded of the singer and player that they should reproduce his sounds. A Warlock manuscript is a joy to see, and to play from". Foss, op. cit., p.67. Spike Hughes wrote in similar vein: "One thing, however, I believe his biographer did not touch on, and that was Philip's quite fantastic musical calligraphy. Some time after Philip's death Bumps asked me to copy a manuscript piano-reduction score of Bernard van Dieren's *Chinese Symphony*. From all accounts this score had been written by Philip at his drunkest - and Philip could get very, very drunk. But the drunker he had become the more exquisite the handwriting of words and music became...The sight of this score gave me a sensuous pleasure rarely derived from Philip's own music...." Hughes, op. cit., pp.51-52.

²²⁶ A letter written towards the end of 1926 suggests that there was at least one performance of the work in its string version before its publication in 1927: "My suite was not well played, owing to there being insufficient time for rehearsal, but, as you will see from the enclosed cutting, it made a good impression on the only critic who was present". Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 26.11.1926, London, BL, Add MS 57961.

²²⁷ Copley, op. cit., pp.235-242.

²²⁸ Van Dieren wrote the following about the *Capriol Suite*: "...technically he had reached an amazing degree of perfection as for instance in the full score of "Capriol" which is admirably constructed and most beautifully limned. And the orchestration is crystal clear and powerful in sound. It is all done with so little apparent effort that it makes one feel all the more unhappy that he gained no confidence but retained

In conclusion here are two most appropriate extracts about Warlock's style from the writings of Copley and Moeran. The first sums up Warlock's achievement in the *Capriol Suite*, a work which, in many ways, crystallises the various influences that produced Warlock, the composer.

Warlock's treatment of the tunes in the *Capriol Suite* shows that in his maturity he had solved the problems that had defeated him nine years previously when he wrote the *Folk Song Preludes*. In his harmonizations he achieves a just mean between, on the one hand, the conventionally orthodox stylistic appropriateness of Respighi²²⁹ in his *Ancient Airs and Dances*, and the pert sophistications of Stravinsky's²³⁰ *Pulcinella*²³¹ on the other. There is nothing of the pseudo-sixteenth century or of the self-consciously archaic about Warlock's treatment of the tunes. The occasional false-relations, "Elizabethan cadence" formulae, van Dieren chromatics, or melting Delius-like harmonies, are amalgamated in his own individual utterance.²³²

Whilst commenting on attempts to pin down the elusive quality of Warlock's music, his great friend, E.J. Moeran, wrote this perceptive paragraph:

Some writers attempt to sum up every composer as though he were a bottle of medicine, compounded of this, that, and the other ingredient; but when we have admitted that in Warlock's music there is a certain percentage of the harmonic richness of Delius, of the contrapuntal lucidity of the Elizabethans, welded together by the influence of the textual clarity which is always apparent in the works of Van Dieren, there is yet a residuum [sic] which cannot be accounted for by reference to these extraneous influences. This personal element is as apparent in his literary work as in his songs and other compositions. It is a mysterious element...one never knows what he has up his sleeve....²³³

his exaggerated notion of the ease with which composers may work". Unpublished letter from van Dieren to Colin Taylor, 12.4.1931, in the possession of Hugh Taylor.
²²⁹ Ottorino Respighi, 1879-1936, Italian composer. *Ancient Airs and Dances* (1917 and 1924).

²³⁰ Igor Stravinsky, 1882-1971, Russian-born composer, pianist and writer.

²³¹ *Pulcinella* (1919-20).

²³² Copley, op. cit., p.241.

²³³ Moeran, op. cit., p.6.

CHAPTER 8

WARLOCK WRITES ABOUT HIS LITERARY WORK

After he had already established his fame as a composer, he returned again and again to musical journalism with conspicuous success...In his independent literary works [he] revealed a mastery of prose style, a lucidity in argument, and a constructive ability that in themselves would suffice to establish an author's reputation.¹

When describing Warlock's prodigious talent his friend, Hubert Foss, used this striking analogy:

...Warlock's mind was acutely receptive. He had, as it were, a mind like a funnel - an enormous trough at one end, his mental-receiving end, and a narrow channel for the outlet. Only, there were three channels (at least) - the scholar, the critic, the composer. Each had a nozzle, directed with some force on to the flammable object.²

The outlet for Warlock's literary channel was a remarkably productive one including 9 books, 20 prefaces, 73 articles, 31 concert and book reviews, 12 programme notes written for concerts and 19 published letters to the press.³ It was, in fact, in one of these articles, a critical study of the chamber music of Eugene Goossens, that he first used the pseudonym, Peter Warlock.⁴

¹ Extract from van Dieren's obituary tribute to Warlock, *Musical Times*, 1931, pp.117-119.

² Foss, H., 'Peter Warlock' (Philip Heseltine), *British Music of Our Time* (ed. Bacharach, A.L.), Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1951, pp. 67-68.

³ Statistics from Tomlinson, *A Peter Warlock Handbook Volume 1*, Triad Press, London, 1974, p.45. Tomlinson has drawn up a complete list of all Warlock's literary and journalistic works in volume 2 (Triad press, Rickmansworth, 1977, pp.91-109). For further details the reader is referred to this impressive and well-documented list.

⁴ Warlock, "Notes on Goossens' Chamber Music", *The Music Student*, November 1916, Chamber Music Supplement no.22a, pp.23-24.

Besides noting his 9 full-scale books, Copley has conveniently placed Warlock's occasional journalism into three "fairly well-defined categories":⁵

- (i) Critical studies of the music of such contemporary and nineteenth-century composers as interested him.
- (ii) Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century studies - including articles on the business of editing early music.
- (iii) Miscellaneous topics - this last list includes such diverse subjects as the Brass-band movement, Opera, Music in Wales, Street Music, Modern Musical Criticism, and the Training of the Musical Imagination.

When considering Warlock's literary achievements it should not be forgotten that he regarded his writings *on* music as important as his writing *of* music, if not more so. He says as much in some of his correspondence: in a letter to Taylor:

I'm very busy with literary work - several books and pamphlets on hand...This is much more fun than writing music....⁶

And again in a later letter to Arnold Dowbiggin:

...owing to the enormous decline in the music publishing trade, I intend devoting myself to other activities than composition and shall probably write no more solo songs.⁷

His power as a writer and his skill with words is amply illustrated in these numerous publications and has been praised in fulsome terms by many, nowhere better than in this tribute by his friend, Robert Nichols:

Such of his prose as I have read - and I have read much - was always sound, frequently excellent and on occasion brilliant...Philip was singularly felicitous in exposition...[he] knew how to render the brute intractable substance, if not entertaining, at least acceptable. In exposition - especially controversial exposition - of matter that fired his imagination he was quite wonderful and that imagination, set to work, soon communicated both the

⁵ Copley, op.cit., p.278.

⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1925.

⁷ Letter from Warlock to Arnold Dowbiggin, 18.3.1929, quoted by Copley, op cit., pp.139-140.

substance of the thing in all its ramifications and the enthusiasm of the writer. In the composition of such a passage, Philip's extensive and sometimes curious culture lent enormous aid. For he was as fertile in analogies as he was subtle in drawing them, and thus it was that his knowledge of painting and of literature (particularly its bypaths) enriched what he had to say about music...his judgments...were set forth in such flexible and vigorous prose as bears witness to the presence of a master....⁸

From time to time in his correspondence with Taylor, Warlock mentions these writings, one of the most important being the book on Delius on which he worked for a number of years. In a letter of 1922 to Taylor he writes about his musical and literary work as well as about some correspondence that had appeared in the *Musical Times*.

Since I last wrote to you I have finally completed my book on Delius, a number of articles for various musical papers, and a short work for chorus and orchestra. Not much, you will think; for four months work but I am incredibly slow and neither musical nor literary composition seems to become any easier as time goes on...No doubt you see the *Musical Times* at the Conservatorium⁹ - so you will see my little lucubrations. The Yeats business ought to prove amusing; I want to get as many people as I can to pursue the matter. It is really disgraceful. People like Fritz Hart¹⁰ and Edgar Bainton¹¹ get turned down; the latter was told that no syllable must have more than one note of music to it (!), but I know of a recently published Yeats-setting with 4 notes to the first syllable of "rabbit"!!¹²

The book on Delius referred to in this letter is the biography which Warlock had completed that month (February 1922) at Cefn Bryntalch. As early as April 1914 he had written to Viva Smith mentioning his intention of writing "a little book about Delius"¹³ and began making some preliminary sketches in 1915. It was eventually published in 1923 by John Lane and includes a preface, chapters on Delius' life, his operas, his choral and orchestral works and his music viewed as a whole. There is

⁸ Gray, op. cit., pp.83-84.

⁹ The South African College of Music.

¹⁰ Fritz Hart, 1874-1956, English composer.

¹¹ Edgar Bainton, 1880-1956, English composer.

¹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.2.1922.

¹³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 10.4.1914. London, BL, Add MS 58127.

also an appendix listing his works (up until 1921) with details of their first performances. When it was reprinted in 1952, Hubert Foss added an introduction:

The book itself is a work of art, a charming and penetrating study of a musical poet's mind. For itself alone, as a piece of English prose, it is worth reading and re-reading...Though Heseltine was 28 when he wrote the book and 29 when it was published, there hangs about it a delicious scent of youth and enthusiasm.¹⁴

Gray wrote of the book as follows:

His book on Delius is a thoroughly sound, and sometimes exceedingly brilliant piece of work, both as biography and as criticism. It is true that it is occasionally pitched in too high a key; to-day it is difficult, for example, to agree with his words on the *Mass of Life* - 'This colossal work, without doubt the greatest musical achievement since Wagner, a Mass worthy to rank beside the great Mass of Sebastian Bach.' Certain pages also are somewhat too florally ecstatic and vacuously mystical; he himself humorously confessed to me in later years, when I asked him, that he had not the faintest notion of what he meant by the last sentence of the book: '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 lovely singer the voices of the innumerable multitudes of Eternity.' It sounds all right, but it means precisely nothing at all...On the other hand there are sections of the book which are among the finest things in English musical criticism, alike for soundness of aesthetic judgment and eloquence and grace of style. Particularly notable in these respects are the analysis and appreciation of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, and the final chapter on the music of Delius viewed as a whole.¹⁵

Warlock's next letter to Taylor was written from 20 Bury Street in London. Despite the quite remarkable amount of time he was spending editing early music he was somehow still able to find time for his own work, as witness the following short paragraph about his own creative efforts:

My book on Delius is in the press (John Lane) and will, I hope be out in January, by which time I hope also to be able to send you another dozen or so of the songs of "Little Peter".¹⁶

¹⁴ Warlock, (ed. Foss, H.) *Delius*, The Bodley Head, London, 1952, p.10.

¹⁵ Gray, op. cit., pp.250-251.

¹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.10.1922.

One of the few surviving letters from Taylor to Warlock is a prompt reply to this letter just discussed. It was a short note, written from the S. A. College of Music towards the end of 1922, wishing his friend and former pupil Christmas and the New Year greetings (strange these Christmas greetings as both men were self-confessed and, at times, quite cynical non-believers). In this letter Taylor expresses his delight that the Delius book is about to appear and urges Warlock to continue sending him copies of his new works. He was obviously doing his bit to promote the Warlock cause in Cape Town:

Of course I will get as many of your new publications done as possible. You have not sent me anything lately, except the part-song & drinking-songs - Let me see anything else you have. I am thrilled to hear that the Delius book will soon be out - Do send me an inscribed copy.¹⁷

When Warlock asked Taylor if he saw the *Musical Times* at the "Conservatorium" he was referring in particular to the edition of February, 1923, where no less than three of his contributions appeared: an article entitled "A Note on the Mind's Ear"¹⁸ and two letters to the Editor,¹⁹ one with the heading "Mr. Yeats and a Musical Censorship" and the other "Scriabin's Music and the Three Choirs Festival". It is interesting to note that all three items were signed with a different name: the main article is by Philip Heseltine, the first letter is signed Peter Warlock while the last letter has the nom de plume, *Cambrensis*²⁰ at the end.

The long article, *A Note on the Mind's Ear*, an article of some 2000 words filling almost four columns, deals with one of Warlock's pet subjects, the functions of the brain both in the hearing and composing of music. As one would expect it is full of

¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Taylor to Warlock, 30.11.1922.

¹⁸ *Musical Times*, 1922, pp.88-90.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.123-125.

²⁰ "Cambrensis" is the Latin for a Welshman. It is also the name of a Welsh cleric and author, Giraldus Cambrensis (Gerald de Barri), c.1146-c.1223, mentioned by Warlock in an article, "London", *Music and Letters*, January 1920, v.1, no.1, p.71.

interesting ideas, well-argued and well-expressed. Scholars writing on or researching into Warlock and his music cannot fail to take especial note of the ironic comment in the lines:

...But methods of work have a perennial fascination for the curious; and apart from the class of being for whom an artist's personality is more engagingly revealed in anecdotes about his habits than his work, there is no doubt that the study of methods and the resultant attention paid to sketch-books and variorum readings may yield results of considerable educational and psychological value.²¹

In addition, the article is not without Warlock's own particular brand of mordant humour as the following excerpt well illustrates:

The general public clings to the notion that composition is impossible without the aid of the pianoforte, or some other keyboard instrument. This belief was recently fortified by a pronouncement from Dr. Vaughan Williams (whose methods of composition have, it is rumoured, led to complaints from his neighbours); and Mascagni²² has even made use of an ingenious instrument which notates automatically whatever is extemporized on the pianoforte to which it is affixed. The composer who cannot play any instrument, and the music-lover who claims to read a score, are still generally regarded with a certain scepticism and incredulous contempt. When Berlioz was found wandering about the mountains, note-book in hand, sketching his Overture to *King Lear*²³ he was arrested as a spy, and his protests that he was not making notes in a secret cipher were received with ridicule by the police. "It is well known", they said, "that music cannot be composed without a pianoforte". Berlioz we know could not play the pianoforte. But his case provides no rule and the fact remains that a great deal of music, especially at the present time, is either extemporized at the keyboard or else built up of fragments discovered, more or less fortuitously at the pianoforte and afterwards unskillfully glued together.²⁴

Warlock had always admired the poetry of W.B. Yeats and had begun setting his poems as early as 1913. He met the poet himself in April 1918 during the "Irish" year and described this meeting in a letter to Gray:

²¹ Heseltine, "A Note on the Mind's Ear", *Musical Times*, 1922, pp.89.

²² Pietro Mascagni, 1863-1945, Italian opera composer and conductor.

²³ Op.4 (1831).

²⁴ Heseltine, op.cit., pp.89-90.

A few nights ago I met W.B. Yeats and his wife...He talked for several hours about the moon, and the talk was as illuminating and as beautiful as the moon of the fourteenth night itself.²⁵

Unfortunately Yeats was not very musical and had such strong feelings on the subject of setting his poetry to music that he appointed a special musical censor to consider all submitted settings.

Warlock's letter to the *Musical Times*²⁶ attempted to bring the situation to the attention of the public and to throw down the gauntlet to the poet and his musical censor. It is not without a typically Warlockian touch of humour: in giving the background to Yeats' reluctance in allowing his poetry to be set to music he relates that this was the result:

...born of his horror at being invited by a certain composer to hear a setting of his Lake Isle of Innisfree - a poem which voices a solitary man's desire for still greater solitude - sung by a choir of a thousand Boy Scouts.²⁷

In this letter to the *Musical Times* Warlock then tells of the problems he had experienced with this musical censor. When some of his settings had been turned down, he had written to the censor to ask in what respect his "unfortunate little songs had offended", suggesting "that much trouble and annoyance would be saved if the censor would reveal the principles to which musical settings of Mr. Yeats's lyrics are expected to conform". Needless to say, the answer hardly satisfied him:

To the more personal query no reply was given. It appeared, however, that insuperable difficulties prevented compliance with my 'admirable suggestion', because, 'however carefully principles are laid down...so much in art must always be a matter of individual feeling. For instance, might it not be perfectly possible to follow every given rule, and yet for the general atmosphere and character of the music to be utterly unsuited to the poetry it was intended to enhance?'²⁸

²⁵ Undated letter from Warlock to Gray, Gray, op. cit., p.182.

²⁶ Warlock, "Mr. Yeats and a Musical Censorship", *Musical Times*, 1922, pp.123-124.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p.123.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p.123.

By writing this the censor played right into Warlock's hands. In the last three paragraphs of his letter he points out that "if the music of a song were so flagrantly at variance with the poetry with which it was associated, it would not be impossible for any capable critic to show the reason why", and goes on to say that "it is not, I think, unreasonable on the part of composers to request that he [Yeats] shall appoint as his censor some competent musician who will be consistent in his judgments and articulate when they are called in question". With this letter he enclosed two of his rejected songs requesting that if the editor of the *Musical Times* found the "general atmosphere and character of the music to be utterly unsuited to the poetry" they would not print this letter. He evidently had his supporters in the *Musical Times* offices in Wardour Street.

Gray tells of the "acrimonious correspondence which ensued between poet and composer" resulting in the termination of "the friendly relations which had hitherto existed between them".²⁹ Warlock had evidently tried to think up devious ways of circumventing the ban: of printing the poems backwards, or in anagrams or with nonsense verse substituting the original poetry.³⁰ Given Warlock's sense of humour, if such had ever appeared they would certainly have made highly entertaining reading.

In his notes accompanying the 1975 edition of the earliest Warlock setting of a Yeats poem, *The Everlasting Voices*, Tomlinson quotes the following, almost regretful words of Yeats written sometime after Warlock's death:

Years ago he and I fell out because of his rudeness to a harmless, well-bred woman who acted as a kind of musical agent for me. I hardly knew her but felt I had to protect her. The result was that very regretfully, for I knew his music was good, I forbade him to use my words in future and he was of course enraged. He threatened to pirate my words and I called in the

²⁹ Gray, op.cit., pp.248-249.

³⁰ Tomlinson, *A Peter Warlock Handbook volume 1*, Triad Press, London, 1974, p.31.

Society of Authors. One thing led to another. I rather think he left unpublished music to words of mine which I would of course gladly see published - one's quarrels stop at the grave.³¹

Two years later, in the summer of 1924, Taylor paid his honeymoon visit to England when he and Warlock took the opportunity of seeing each other on several occasions. A letter written to Taylor from Warlock's lodgings at 6A Bury Street Chelsea tells of a meeting where they were able "to gibber away regardless".³² In fact Warlock begins this letter by apologizing for his egotistical conversation at their recent reunion and eagerly looks forward to their next meeting. He also mentions that he is working at present on "a translating job" which was "taking longer than was expected". This was presumably work on the book he was writing in collaboration with Gray, *Carlo Gesualdo: Prince of Venosa: Musician and Murderer*.³³

This book on Gesualdo, eventually printed in 1926, was expanded from articles which had appeared previously in *The Sackbut*³⁴ and *The Chesterian*.³⁵ Gray gives a full and typically florid account of the genesis of this book in his autobiographical *Musical Chairs*, parts of which are worth quoting even if one feels that for much of the time that Gray is revelling in a display of his own scholarly gifts:

He [Warlock] dealt with the music of this singular personality, I with the biography, which entailed a vast amount of research....

Philip came across the first clue, in connexion with a quotation from a madrigal of Gesualdo, which is to be found in Dr. Burney's *History of Music*,³⁶ which the author described as "exceedingly shocking and disgusting to the ear", but which seemed to us to be not only astonishing in its harmonic daring for the time in which it was written, but also of intrinsic expressive beauty; and we thereupon resolved to find out more concerning this singular composer.

³¹ Tomlinson, notes accompanying Warlock's setting of Yeats' poem *The Everlasting Voices* (1915), Thames, 1975.

³² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.6.1924.

³³ *Carlo Gesualdo: Prince of Venosa: Musician and Murderer*, Kegan Paul, London, 1926.

³⁴ *The Sackbut*, October 1920, v.1, no.6, pp.259-272.

³⁵ *The Chesterian*, September 1922, v.4, no.25, pp.5-10.

³⁶ 4 vols. 1776-1789.

Shortly after this resolution I happened to be reading a volume of short stories...one that deals with *L'Histoire de Donna Maria d'Avalos*, who was murdered by her husband, a Prince of Venosa - another member of what must have been a remarkable family, I thought. I next came across a reference, also seemingly by chance, to a Prince of Venosa in the unlikely context of the German romantic writer, E.T.A. Hoffmann,³⁷ in his *Serapionsbrüder*:-

*"O ruft euch doch nur jenen Venusinischen Prinzen ins Gedächtniss, dessen Campanella erwähnt! Der gute Furst könnte nicht anders zu Stuhle gehn als wenn er vorher von einem dazu ausdrücklich besoldeten Mann erklecklich abgeprügelt worden!"*³⁸

Stranger and stranger, I thought - what a family! On checking up on Hoffmann's reference to the Neapolitan philosopher Campanella, in the Reading Room of the British Museum, I found...the following passage:-

*"Princeps Venusiae musica clarissimus nostro tempore cacare non poterat nisi verberatus a servo ad id adscito."*³⁹

This discovery was electrifying - the composer of this extraordinary music was obviously identical with the Hoffmann-Campanella gentleman who was unable to go to stool without being soundly beaten. But more was to follow. When browsing through the entrancing pages of Brantôme⁴⁰...I came once more across the story of one Maria d'Avalos, married to a Prince of Venosa, who murdered her on account of her infidelity. Was it possible that he also was identical with the bizarre figure I had already discovered? To cut a long story short, he was. Dr. Burney's Prince of Venosa, who wrote music like late Wagner or Delius at the end of the 16th century, the Prince of Venosa who murdered his unfaithful wife under more than usually revolting circumstances, and the Prince of Venosa whose constipation could only be removed by means of flagellation - they were all one and the same person. Philip and I realized that we were on the trail of one of the most fantastic figures of his age, or of any age, and certainly quite the most fantastic in the entire history of music, besides being completely unknown....

Philip, being an expert on old music, undertook the task of following up the track from that angle, while I, with my knowledge of Italian language, history and literature, pursued our prey from the biographical side....

³⁷ E.T.A. Hoffmann, 1776-1822, German writer, composer, music critic, painter and lawyer.

³⁸ O call to mind the Prince of Venosa who is mentioned in Campanella. The good Prince could not go to the closet without having been beaten by a man specially paid to do so.

³⁹ The Prince of Venosa, the most famous musician of our time, was not able to defecate unless beaten by a slave provided for that purpose.

⁴⁰ Pierre de Bourdeilles Brantôme, c.1540-1614, French soldier, author and chronicler.

One final comment on this work must be left to Gray for what it is worth. Here are his rather scathing remarks about his association with Warlock whilst writing this book:

And again, as I ought to have known perfectly well from bitter experience, he proved as exasperating a colleague as on the former occasion,⁴¹ for after I had finished my share of the book it was several years before I succeeded in inducing him to finish his, and even then only by threatening to write it myself.⁴²

Tomlinson outlines the contents of the book briefly in the second volume of his *Peter Warlock Handbook*:

Part I, by Cecil Gray, is a biography of Gesualdo, with the letters from Tasso,⁴³ a bibliography and an iconography. In Part II Gray considers the murder from an artistic standpoint. Part III *Gesualdo the Musician* by Philip Heseltine [16,800 words + 33 musical examples + lists] contains a brilliant historical survey of chromaticism in music, expanded from the article originally in the *Chesterian*, September 1922,⁴⁴ and an analysis of Gesualdo's genius.⁴⁵ There are several bibliographical appendices, and the musical examples, some in the text, others in another appendix, are reproduced from PH's handwriting.⁴⁶

Despite all the various delays Warlock was at last able to promise Taylor copies of the two books about which he had been writing for some time. Here is the relevant extract from a letter from Eynsford written in 1926 in which he repeats, like some doom-laden litany, the belief that his inspiration to compose seems to have dried up:

I shall send you a copy of Gesualdo in a few days' time, when I hope to be able to include in the parcel my book on "The English Ayre" which the Oxford Press expect to have ready by the middle of the month. Meanwhile

⁴¹ During the *Sackbut* period.

⁴² Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, pp.211-212.

⁴³ Torquato Tasso, 1544-1595, Italian Renaissance poet and author.

⁴⁴ Heseltine, "Early Chromaticism in the Light of Modern Music", *The Chesterian*, September 1922, v.4, no.25, pp.5-10.

⁴⁵ The book was reviewed in the *Musical Times*, 1.9.1926, p.814 where the reviewer praised Warlock's contribution as "very good criticism". A copy of this review is preserved together with Warlock's letters to his mother in London, BL, Add MS 57963.

⁴⁶ Tomlinson, op. cit., p.91.

I enclose for your amusement a little puff-pamphlet Chesters have just brought out, with a complete list of my publications, both ready and in the press...As far as original composition is concerned, I have completely dried up...⁴⁷

The "puff-pamphlet" referred to was the small volume in the so-called series, *Miniature Essays*, "Peter Warlock - Philip Heseltine", published by J.W. Chester in 1926. Although the six-page essay was printed without an author's name, it was in fact written by E.J. Moeran.⁴⁸ Warlock had written a similar essay of about 2200 words on Moeran which appeared in the same series that year. A copy of this *Miniature Essay*, presented to the University of Cape Town Library by Fred Tomlinson in 1975, is now part of the Colin Taylor Collection.⁴⁹

In the essay Moeran gives a brief account of Warlock's achievements as composer, writer and editor. As befits such a "miniature" work he writes in fairly general terms about Warlock's music, mostly the solo vocal works (including *The Curlew*) but also makes brief mention of the *Three Carols* for chorus and the *Serenade* for string orchestra. Warlock's books on Delius and Gesualdo are cited as examples of his literary activities. Moeran summed up his friend's gifts in two generous and well-written sentences:

He has achieved the very considerable reputation he now enjoys in England, not only as a composer but also as a critic, and as a connoisseur and editor of old music, by reason of the consistently original qualities displayed....

He writes as he feels, very much as the secular musician of the middle ages did; but with this difference, that he had had the advantage of studying at

⁴⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.9.1926.

⁴⁸ This volume included a two-page summary in French, a list of Warlock's published works and a facsimile of the song, *Johnnie wi' the Tye* (no.2 of *Lillygay*, Chester, 1923)

⁴⁹ Cape Town, UCT Library, BC76 C3.14. See unpublished letter from Tomlinson to Jean Laurenson, University Librarian, 12.5.1975, Cape Town, UCT Library, Manuscripts and Archives correspondence file.

first hand the music of that period with which he is most in sympathy - which is the golden period of English music.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ [Moeran, E.J.] *Peter Warlock (Philip Heseltine)*. J.W. Chester Ltd., London, 1926, pp.1 and 8.

CHAPTER 9

WARLOCK WRITES ABOUT BRITISH COMPOSERS

Promiscuous laudation of mediocrity continues apace in English music....¹

One of the most important features of the Warlock/Taylor correspondence is the fascinating light which it throws on many figures in contemporary English music, both composers and performers. Right from the beginning of the Warlock-Taylor correspondence Warlock's ambitions for English music are apparent:

I tried to persuade a very keen German critic to come to England for the Balfour Gardiner Concerts, to hear a little real English music. They had an English concert in Cologne, and Steinbach² gave them Parry and Stanford and Elgar's "Sea-Pictures"³!⁴

In these letters there is a great deal of valuable documentation, not only of the kind of music being written and performed in England in the first thirty years of the 20th century, but also many illuminating comments on composers and their music. Amongst the names mentioned in these letters are some of the most important figures in early twentieth-century British music, such as Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Holst, Lambert and Walton. But there are also a number of shadowy composers whose works and whose names have been almost totally forgotten.

"A is for Apple...." begins a nursery rhyme of the alphabet and what better way to start this section than with William Arthur Aikin (?1857-1939). A qualified London surgeon, he was also an excellent musician who composed a number of songs, one of which, a setting of Shakespeare's, *Sigh no more ladies*⁵ achieved a certain popularity.

¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

² Fritz Steinbach, 1855-1916, German conductor and composer. He was a frequent visitor to England in his later years when he conducted the London Symphony Orchestra; appointed director of the conservatoire in Cologne in 1902.

³ Song-cycle for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, Op.37 (1897-9).

⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.3.1912.

⁵ Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act II, scene iii, lines 59-76.

He also did research into voice-production and wrote a book on the voice.⁶

Warlock had this to say about Aikin's song in a letter to Taylor:

I was charmed by his whole repertoire, which contained one song which I would without hesitation call quite perfect - there are few modern songs which justify that word! - a setting of "Sigh no more, ladies" by W.A. Aikin. Never, I think, has the very quintessence of the spirit of the Elizabethan lyric been so perfectly expressed in music, save by the Elizabethan composers themselves - and this song is well worthy to rank even with their works. If you don't know it already, get it and introduce it to every singer you know....⁷

This kind of song and, to a much greater extent, the songs of Roger Quilter, were the major influences on Warlock in his early days of composing. It is also interesting to note how Warlock chose to compare the spirit of Aikin's song to that of the Elizabethan composers. These words were prophetic of what would one day be written about some of Warlock's own songs.

A second little-known figure, Algernon Ashton (1859-1937) also appears, albeit fleetingly, in one of the early letters to Taylor from Newbold Pacey vicarage. Ashton was a minor composer and teacher who studied in Leipzig and Frankfurt, later becoming a professor of piano at the Royal College of Music in London (1885-1910). Besides composing five symphonies, concertos and chamber music, he published two volumes of his letters to the press on every conceivable subject. A fascinating, if somewhat macabre, hobby was his exploration of graveyards and writing to the press about the condition of the graves of famous people. He felt so strongly about this subject that he evidently kept many of the graves in a state of repair himself. Here is what Warlock writes about him:

By the way do you know of any published works of Algernon Ashton...? I should very much like to see some of his music. Rutland Boughton⁸ has apparently no hesitation in acclaiming him as "the greatest living composer!"⁹

⁶ Aikin, A., *The Voice: Its Physiology and Cultivation*, Macmillan, London, 1900.

⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.7.1918.

⁸ 1878-1960, English composer.

⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.11.1912.

Although seemingly enthusiastic about his music as a young man, one of Warlock's pet-aversions in his later years was Frederick Austin (1872-1952). He combined a musical career both as a successful baritone soloist and as a composer, though his achievements in the latter field were rather eclipsed by his singing successes. He took part in many musical festivals, not only in the established repertoire but also in performances of significant modern works such as Delius's *Sea Drift* (its first British performance at the Sheffield Festival in 1908). He also produced a highly successful arrangement of *The Beggar's Opera* in 1920 and was eventually appointed artistic director to the British National Opera Company in 1924. He composed a number of serious works, including a symphony in E, produced at the Queen's Hall in one of Balfour Gardiner's concerts in 1913.¹⁰ Here is what Warlock had to say about this particular work in a letter to Taylor from Didbrook:

I forgot to mention that Delius heard Austin play his symphony on the piano, and liked it, though he did not seem frightfully enthusiastic.

It made a tremendous impression on me at the B.G. [Balfour Gardiner] concert, especially the first movement, with it's [sic] quite wonderful 1st subject - which, of course, I have forgotten!¹¹

This is what the music critic of the *Musical Times* wrote about this same performance of the Austin symphony in the May 1913 issue:

Another important item was Mr. Frederick Austin's new Symphony in E. This is a serious and earnestly-written work...it must suffice to say that while the unconventionality of the construction of the work provided some problems for the listener, it was obvious that the composer had much to say of great interest, and that some of the music made a strong appeal on the ground of its power and beauty. At this hearing the orchestration seemed too continuously thick, but it displayed considerable command of colour.¹²

¹⁰ The eighth and last concert of the series, 18.3.1913, with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Balfour Gardiner. Other works on the programme were the first London performance of Bantock's *Fifine at the Fair*, Bax's *In the Faery Hills*, Gardiner's *Shepherd Fennel's Dance* and the Delius piano concerto of which, strangely, Warlock makes no mention in this letter. Lloyd, *Balfour Gardiner*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984, pp.242-245.

¹¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.4.1913.

¹² *Musical Times*, 1913, p.319.

Although Warlock's early comments about Austin are complimentary, there must at some stage have been an acrimonious altercation between the two men. Here is an excerpt from a letter to Warlock from Austin which is so intriguing that it would indeed be fascinating to know what prompted it:

There are blackguards of so offensive a type that contact with them is so distasteful to the point of nausea.

You are one of them.¹³

Among the Cecil Gray papers in the British Library are a number of odd jottings by Warlock including lists of amusing names, lewd verses and limericks about composers and critics. Included amongst these is the following clever short sentence about Austin doubtless written as a result of this same feud. It is also a satire of the novelist, James Joyce's stream-of-consciousness technique as used in *Ulysses*.

FredAustin go and bugger you. selffish monger ellawheeler will cocksstand up for godsavethekingcupbearer cheque mate.¹⁴

Granville Bantock (1868-1946), a composer and important academic of the period, is accorded a few passing references in letters written in 1912. The first is merely a brief comment about a new work that had recently been performed in Manchester, *Atalanta in Calydon*,¹⁵ novel in that it was a choral symphony for unaccompanied voices:

Bantock's Choral Symphony seems to be making a great stir in Manchester. Have you done your wordless choruses yet?¹⁶ They ought to quite outdo Bantock in choral novelty.¹⁷

¹³ Tomlinson, "Photocopies of letters to PH from various writers". Attachment to *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, March 1977, no.20, n.pag. Copies of letters sold at Sotheby's in 1965.

¹⁴ London, BL, Add MS 57796.

¹⁵ Choral symphony for unaccompanied mixed chorus (published 1911) words by Algernon Swinburne, 1837-1909.

¹⁶ Taylor had evidently been working at some "wordless choruses". In an unpublished letter to Taylor, 27.12.1911, Warlock wrote "...wishing you the best of New Years and successful completion of the Wordless Choruses...."

¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.1.1912.

A regular reader of the *Musical Times*, Warlock's information had probably come partly from a report about *Atalanta in Calydon* which appeared in the December 1911 issue:

The Hallé Choir is busily at work on Bantock's unaccompanied Choral ode in symphonic form, three of the four movements already being in the hands of the choir, and the fourth will be ready by the beginning of December. The composer took a rehearsal of the slow movement (no.2, in twenty parts, for mixed voices) during the second week in November, and was thoroughly satisfied that his ideas are practicable, as well as beautiful in themselves, and the choir have evident zest in preparing the score.¹⁸

During the Birmingham Festival of that year (October 1-4) Warlock and Delius saw a good deal of each other and the latter must have introduced Warlock to some of the distinguished musicians at the festival.¹⁹ One of these was Bantock, as this letter reveals:

This morning he [Delius] and I were taken to the Midland Institute of Music by its great professor, Granville Bantock....²⁰

On his return from the festival Warlock wrote from Wales the following week telling Taylor how much he had enjoyed himself. Included are these comments about the Bantock piece that had been featured, the so-called "orchestral drama", *Fifine at the Fair* (1901).²¹ Warlock adds a final sentence like some musical imprimatur:

...later on, however, came the new Bantock work, which was quite splendid. Even Delius liked it!²²

Some years later (c.1919) Warlock produced the following somewhat irreverent rhyme about Bantock:

The Herr-Professor GRANVILLE BANTOCK

¹⁸ *Musical Times*, 1911, p.812.

¹⁹ Warlock also met Balfour Gardiner on 3.10.1912. He wrote to Taylor on 9.10.1912: "On Thursday evening Balfour Gardiner turned up in his motor to hear 'Sea-Drift', and I had a long conversation with him after the concert: he is an extremely nice person - very cheerful and 'hearty'".

²⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 2.10.1912.

²¹ Inspired by a dramatic poem (1872) by Robert Browning, 1812-89.

²² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.10.1912.

Struts about his young admirers like a grand cock.
 At first sight his imposingly long list of works somewhat appals,
 But a critical examination of the actual music reveals the sad fact that it is
 mostly -----²³

It is a well-documented fact that Warlock was a great admirer of the music of Arnold Bax (1883-1953).²⁴ Bax in turn had a high regard for his.²⁵ Warlock first wrote of him to Taylor in extravagant terms:

I have received this week the vocal score of a work which has thrilled me more than anything I have seen or heard in music since Delius' "Songs of Sunset", which is saying a good deal: I am absolutely enchanted with it; I play parts of it over and over again, and the music haunts me all day. The work is Arnold Bax's "Enchanted Summer".²⁶ I can find no words that will adequately express my admiration for this perfectly glorious music! Surely the man who could write this and the "Celtic Song-Cycle"²⁷ must be the coming British composer?²⁸ I suppose Delius would say he does not count as English, being an Irishman and a Celt!²⁹

Warlock wrote again about this same work from Newbold Pacey vicarage a short while later in equally ecstatic terms:

Are you going to hear that glorious work of Bax's "Enchanted Summer" again next week? I am frightfully sick at being obliged by my exam to miss a performance of it: I have come across no new work since the last of Delius that has appealed to me more than this lovely thing.³⁰

Aware of his interest in the music of Bax, Taylor wrote the following in a letter to Warlock:

²³ No.VII of *One dozen Cursory Rhymes dedicated to the British Music Society and the Society of British Composers*, London, BL, Add MS 57967.

²⁴ Warlock could, however, be critical of Bax: "...he has not passed through the Royal Academy of Music unscathed: in many of his works the neo-Brahmsian characteristics acquired at this institution have proved as fatal to his own delicate and capricious lyricism as crabbéd age is wont to prove to youth". Heseltine, "The Condition of Music in England", *The New Age*, June 1917, no.1292, v.21, no.7, p.155.

²⁵ See undated letter from Bax to Warlock praising the part-song, *The Shrouding of the Duchess of Malfi*, quoted by Gray, op.cit., pp.255-256.

²⁶ *Enchanted Summer* for tenor, chorus and orchestra (1909); Act II, Sc.ii from Shelley's lyric drama, *Prometheus Unbound*, set for tenor, chorus and orchestra (1909). Lewis Foreman describes it as marking "the peak of Bax's early development. Then his most extended and complex work...." Foreman in notes accompanying a recording of the work, Chandos records ABTD 1314, Colchester, 1989.

²⁷ *Celtic Song-Cycle*, five songs for voice and piano, words by Fiona Macleod (1904).

²⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor. 27.9.1912.

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.12.1912.

By the way, I was introduced to Bax at the Russian Ballet the other night - Do you know him? I have always pictured him as a slow speaking dreamy man - Dreamy he may be, but in speech he is short, dry, quick and unpoetical. He told me he has a splendid "book" for a Ballet & that he is longing to get to work on it.³¹ At present however he is finishing a work for (I think he said) Norwich Festival.³² A Ballet should suit him.³³

However in his reply³⁴ to this letter Warlock makes no reference to Taylor's enquiry about Bax. He is more concerned with the Grieg piano concerto, the composer, Balakirev, and the part-song, *So Sweet is Shee*,³⁵ which Taylor had just dedicated to him.

Some years later, in 1925, Bax stayed with Warlock for a short while as part of the Eynsford menage and during his time there wrote the *Romantic Overture* for small orchestra and piano. Of this period in Bax's life his biographer, Lewis Foreman, writes as follows:

We may be sure that Bax joined with zest in the Eynsford atmosphere, encountering the young Constant Lambert for the first time, and probably also Patrick Hadley.³⁶ It is easy to picture the riotous company into which he had strayed where weekends were devoted to the pub, but weekdays to musical hard work, and to imagine his ease at being able to relax after the strain of the previous year. It was doubtless this atmosphere which encouraged him, in an amusing jeu d'esprit, to make a two-bar quotation from the César Franck Symphony in the *Romantic Overture*. The example of *The Old Codger*, one of Warlock's *Cod-pieces* (where he lampoons the Franck), would have been hard for Bax's sometimes schoolboyish sense of humour to resist.³⁷

Bax also "obliged him with some special translations from the Irish for the *Merry-go-Down*³⁸ anthology".³⁹ It is interesting to note that Warlock preserved fourteen of Bax's letters and also dedicated the song *Sorrow's Lullaby* (1927) to him. Having

³¹ Possibly *Tamara*, a Little-Russian Faery Tale in action and dance (King Kojata) (1911), piano score only, never orchestrated, unpublished.

³² *Spring Fire* for orchestra (1913, unpublished).

³³ London, BL, Add MS 57964.

³⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1913.

³⁵ Curwen, 1913.

³⁶ 1899-1973, English composer, professor of music at Cambridge (1946-63).

³⁷ Foreman, *Bax: a composer and his times*, Scholar Press, London, 1983, pp.223-224.

³⁸ Noolas, Rab, decorated by Collins, Hal, *Merry-Go-Down: A gallery of gorgeous drunkards through the ages. Collected for use, interest, illumination and delectation of serious toppers*, Mandrake Press, London, 1929

³⁹ Copley, op. cit., pp.31-32.

been introduced by Warlock to Sir Walter Raleigh's poem *Walsingham*, Bax also paid a return compliment by dedicating a setting of the poem⁴⁰ (for tenor solo, orchestra, chorus and obbligato soprano) to him, probably also to show "his gratitude both for the hospitality and literary and musical assistance"⁴¹ he had received at Eynsford. The work received its first performance in the Queen's Hall on 6th June, 1929 with Charles Kennedy Scott conducting.

Here are some further comments on Bax's music written to Taylor on other occasions. It had obviously made a strong impression on him:

I should love to hear something of Bax. I have been studying some of his songs lately with immense enjoyment. Do you know his "Song in the Twilight"?⁴² It is quite thrilling, I think.⁴³

Of recent English songs I can cordially recommend...Arnold Bax, "Youth"⁴⁴⁴⁵

When Bax heard of Warlock's death he wrote as follows to his friend, Mary Gleaves:

I have had rather a shock for poor Peter Warlock committed suicide on Tuesday night. He must have been preparing to do so at the very time that we were listening to his beautiful 'Corpus Christi' carol. He was always a very unhappy fellow and used to try to escape from himself by drug-taking and wild drunken riots and bad behaviour in general. But fundamentally he was an idealist; and in many ways I was fond of him.⁴⁶

Bax not only subscribed to the Wigmore Hall memorial concert on 23.2.1931 organised by Gray, but accompanied three singers who performed sixteen of Warlock's songs. He sent his contribution to Gray saying:

⁴⁰ "Bax's text departs from the original in 14 places, suggesting that Heseltine quoted it to his friend from memory, a suspicion underlined by the fact that Bax does not ascribe a name to the author of the words on the published vocal score, merely writing "sixteenth century". Foreman, *Sir Arnold Bax (1883-1953)*, notes accompanying Chandos recording ABTD 1314, Colchester, 1989.

⁴¹ Foreman, op. cit., p.224.

⁴² Composed 1905, words by Freda Bax, 1907.

⁴³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.2.1912.

⁴⁴ *Youth* (1921), words by Clifford Bax, 1886-1962, author and playwright, Arnold Bax's brother.

⁴⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

⁴⁶ Foreman, op. cit., pp.275-276.

As I originally said I am quite willing to go a little further if necessary...I am so glad that you approve of the idea of my acting as pianist on this occasion...it gives me a sad sort of satisfaction to be taking an active part in this affair.⁴⁷

A lesser-known name that appears twice in the correspondence is Benjamin Dale (1885-1934), a composer and educationalist whose works include choral and orchestral pieces, solo compositions for the violin and viola and a piano sonata in d (1902) about which the youthful Warlock enthused:

I have heard no other music lately, though I am haunted night and day by Benjamin Dale's Sonata.⁴⁸

This sonata evidently made a great impression on him for he was still writing about it a short while later:

The Dale Sonata...I think it is just about the most altogether lovely piano work I have ever come across: certainly the finest sonata.⁴⁹

Walford Davies (1869-1941), composer and organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor (1927) is probably known only to church choirs today by his much-sung motet, *God be in my head*. He was a popular broadcaster in the early days of the B.B.C. and among his compositions are choral and orchestral works, songs, church and chamber music. Writing about the music heard at the 1912 Birmingham Festival, Warlock slates Walford Davies's oratorio, *Song of St. Francis*⁵⁰ which was given its first performance on that occasion:

I thought the Verdi⁵¹ appalling, as also Walford Davies' oratorio: the libretto of the latter (composed by St. Francis of Assisi) is the most ridiculous thing I have ever seen set to music, and the music is heavy and academical. It occupied 3/4 hour of Wednesday's concert.⁵²

⁴⁷ Foreman, *ibid.*, p.276.

⁴⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1913.

⁴⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1913.

⁵⁰ Op.36, for solo voices, chorus and orchestra.

⁵¹ *Requiem* (1873-74).

⁵² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.10.1912.

Mention has already been made of Thomas Dunhill who had been one of the assistant music masters at Eton (1899-1908). Warlock knew him well and wrote to Taylor from Chadlington about some of his songs:

When are Mr. Dunhill's Yeats songs coming out? I thought they were to be done this year sometime. I came across a very beautiful song of his a little while ago, in a magazine, now non-existent [sic], called "The Dome" (date about 1900): it was a Yeats song: "Aodh to Dectora."⁵³⁵⁴

The Yeats songs referred to in the first sentence are probably *The Cloths of Heaven* and *The Fiddler of Dooney*,⁵⁵ two of Dunhill's most popular vocal settings.

As the end of the 20th century approaches it is comparatively easy to look back and assess what has been achieved musically during the last ninety years. In this regard most people would acknowledge that three of the greatest names in English music of this period are Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten (1913-1976).⁵⁶

The music of Elgar may not have been the kind of music the youthful Warlock would normally enthuse over.⁵⁷ He did, however, recognise both the stature and genius of the man as he was to show most generously in his later years. At the age of eighteen he wrote to Taylor from Birmingham rather critically about Elgar's *The Music Makers*, Op.69 (1902-12), a first performance in the festival which had obviously left him cold. His criticisms of Elgar's conducting confirm suspicions which have for years circulated in the musical world of England by word of mouth only:

⁵³ From the collection of Yeats' poetry, *The Wind among the Reeds*, Elkin Matthews, London, 1899.

⁵⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.5.1912.

⁵⁵ Also from the collection, *The Wind among the Reeds*.

⁵⁶ English composer, pianist and conductor.

⁵⁷ C.W. Orr wrote: "I was delighted to find that he shared my admiration for the greater works of Elgar, and well remember standing next to him at one of the Promenade concerts to hear the A flat Symphony, which, strange as it may seem to the young avant-garde to-day, we both regarded as a first-class masterpiece". Orr, op. cit., p.1.

...after which the "piece de resistance" of the evening - Elgar's new choral work. I did not like it at all:⁵⁸ it seemed to me to be "sound and fury signifying nothing".⁵⁹ The enormous number of quotations from his own works, and the obscure references to persons and things which do not in the least matter struck me as being quite absurd.

Elgar himself looked ill and care-worn,⁶⁰ and conducted in a very lifeless manner, though at times a sort of nervous energy seemed to come over him for a minute or two. I can't imagine how people can follow his beat. Scriabin's "Prometheus"⁶¹ had to be abandoned because Elgar wanted so many rehearsals for this wretched work!⁶²

It sounds rather as if Warlock was somewhat prejudiced against this new work. The music critic of the *Musical Times* was far more enthusiastic describing the performance as "a remarkably fine one" revealing "most if not all the subtle and suggestive charm of the music".⁶³ The contralto soloist, Muriel Foster (1877-1937),⁶⁴ "a past master in the interpretation of Elgar's music", was especially singled out for giving "a needed note of personal intimacy". The only words of criticism levelled at the performance of what the critic called, this "striking" novelty, was that "the orchestration in places was overpowering, and could not be balanced by the choir".

Warlock's reputation for fighting for a cause in which he passionately believed is nowhere better illustrated than in his reactions to the infamous Edward Dent (1876-1957)⁶⁵ article on Elgar written for a German *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*. In this article Dent produced the following two paragraphs which had so outraged Warlock:

⁵⁸ Warlock's opinions were possibly influenced by Delius who was staying in the same hotel. Delius wrote to his wife: "Last night I heard the 'Music Makers' Elgar...Elgars [sic] work is not very interesting - and very noisy - The chorus treated in the same old way & very heavily orchestrated - It did not interest me...." Letter from Delius to his wife, 2.10.1912, Carley, op. cit., p.93.

⁵⁹ Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act V, scene 5, line 27.

⁶⁰ Here Warlock showed perception. Elgar wrote six days later: "I was really ill all last week & you must forgive much to a sick man". Letter from Elgar to Alice Stuart-Wortley, 7.10.1912, Hereford and Worcester County Record Office 705:445:7109, quoted by Northrop Moore, J., *Edward Elgar: a Creative Life*, O.U.P., London, 1987, p.640.

⁶¹ *Prometheus* (1909-10); an immense work for orchestra, chorus, piano, organ and colour keyboard; first performed in 1911.

⁶² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 2.10.1912.

⁶³ *Musical Times*, 1912, p.724.

⁶⁴ English contralto.

⁶⁵ Professor of music at Cambridge, 1926-41.

He was a violin player by profession, and studied the works of Liszt, which were abhorrent to conservative academic musicians. He was, moreover, a Catholic, and more or less a self-taught man, who possessed little of the literary culture of Parry and Stanford....

For English ears Elgar's music is too emotional and not quite free from vulgarity....⁶⁶

In his superb book on Elgar, Jerrold Northrop Moore writes as follows about Warlock's reaction:⁶⁷

Professor Dent could not have done Edward's music a better turn had he tried. His remarks published in Germany, quickly found their way back to England. And when they did, they touched a nerve of growing public apprehension that justice had not been done to Elgar and his music for a long time. A letter of protest was organized by Delius's pupil [sic] Philip Heseltine and sent to all the leading newspapers of England and Germany:

We the undersigned, wish to record an emphatic protest against the unjust and inadequate treatment of Sir Edward Elgar by Professor Dent... At the present time the works of Elgar, so far from being distasteful to English ears, are held in the highest honour by the majority of English musicians and the musical public in general.

Professor Dent's failure to appreciate Elgar's music is no doubt temperamental; but it does not justify him in grossly misrepresenting the position which Sir Edward and his music enjoy in the esteem of his fellow-countrymen.

The letter was signed by Heseltine, Emile Cammaerts, John Goss, Harvey Grace, Leslie Heward, Beatrice Harrison, Hamilton Harty, John Ireland, Augustus John, Robert Lorenz, E.J. Moeran, André Mangeot, Philip Page, Landon Ronald, Albert Sammons, Richard Terry, William Walton and Bernard Shaw.

In the final years of his life Warlock was able to write far more flatteringly about Elgar than he had as a teenager seventeen years earlier. Here is his last reference to Elgar in a letter to Taylor from London:

⁶⁶ Northrop Moore, op. cit., p.789 (translated from the German by Basil Maine in his book, *Elgar: his Life and Works* v.2, Bell, London, 1933, pp.277-278).

⁶⁷ Northrop Moore, *ibid.*, pp.789-790.

On the whole I would bracket V.W.'s Pastoral Symphony⁶⁸ with Elgar's Introduction and Allegro for strings⁶⁹ as the best orchestral music of this century.⁷⁰

Elgar must have been very moved by this young man's determination to see musical justice done. Eric Fenby recounts a meeting with Elgar in London 1931 when Elgar questioned him "very searchingly about Delius, and the life he led at Grez, and deplored the death of Philip Heseltine. 'I can assure you, I felt it as much as Delius,' said he".⁷¹ He could not have paid the young composer a greater tribute.

The Goossens were a notable musical family in England this century. Born of a Belgian grandfather, four of the children distinguished themselves in different fields of music : Eugene (1893-1962) as a conductor, composer and violinist, Leon (1896-1988) as an oboist and the sisters, Marie (b.1894) and Sidonie (b.1899), both as fine harpists.

It is Eugene who features in the Warlock correspondence. The two men first met in the early summer of 1915 shortly after Warlock had taken up his post as a music critic on the *Daily Mail*. Goossens evidently made such an impression on the young Warlock that he wrote earnestly to Taylor:

...in December I am going to begin a long and strenuous course of lessons with Goossens, in the hope that I may be relieved of the fear which is haunting me, that I have no musical bowels at all!!⁷²

Warlock's next reference to Goossens in a letter to Taylor from London is in glowing terms:

...Goossens...the one real genius of the younger generation - my admiration of his work knows no bounds. I copied his first quartet⁷³ and sent it to

⁶⁸ 1916-21.

⁶⁹ Op.47 (1905). "Give him his way, and he would make every student buy the score of Elgar's Introduction and Allegro for Strings, for he considered it to be the finest piece of writing for strings in the whole literature of music." Comment made by Warlock to Fenby in the same year as this letter, 1929, and quoted by Fenby, *Delius as I knew him*, G.Bell & Sons, London, 1936, p.65.

⁷⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

⁷¹ Fenby, op. cit., p.113.

⁷² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.11.1915.

⁷³ *Fantasy string quartet* Op.12 (1915).

Delius who pronounced it the finest work that ever came from an English pen!⁷⁴ No English publisher would look at it, though Delius assures me that Tischer and Jagenberg will take it with joy after the war, regardless of its "nationality" - (what humbug all this talk about "national" music is!) Get Goossens' Concert-Study for Piano,⁷⁵ just issued by Chester - not one of his best or most characteristic works, but interesting and amusing to play, if you have agility enough!⁷⁶

The next month, still caught under the spell of this new composer, Warlock wrote eloquently and quite emotionally at great length and in unusually precise detail about a concert devoted entirely to Goossens' music:

Goossens gave a concert of his own works last Friday, and the Aeolian Hall was more full and certainly more enthusiastic than I have seen it since the war began. The programme was long and varied and afforded one a better opportunity of estimating the value of Goossens' work as a whole, as one achievement, than has hitherto been possible. Of the 8 pieces or sets of pieces presented there were only two that one would not gladly have had repeated. First there was the wonderful Phantasy Quartet,⁷⁷ which Delius considers the finest music ever performed in England, then the delicious Suite for violin, flute and harp⁷⁸ which we heard together, two "Proses lyriques"⁷⁹ to French poems by Edwin Evans, two settings of Alfred de Musset,⁸⁰ an early Suite for piano, flute and cello⁸¹ and two Two Sketches for string quartet⁸² which, without hesitation, I acclaim as the most perfect and wholly satisfying pieces I have ever heard for that combination. One, "By the Tarn", is a picture of moorland solitude, so miraculously wrought that one is at first too amazed at the perfection of it to cry for its sheer loveliness. Never has the strange, half-heard, intermittent, uncertain note of gentle winds in the far distance been so subtly caught in music and woven into the spell of spacious skys [sic] and wide, lonely uplands. The very form of the piece - though this it shares with many other works of its creator - suggests perfection...The other sketch, "Jack o'Lantern" is a fantastic portrayal of light, flitting moods symbolised by the marsh-fires, Will o'the Wisp, Ignis fatuus,⁸³ or whatever you like to call it...everything seems to come straight through - the technique is so masterly, so right, that it does not seem to exist - one forgets it just as one forgets the technique of speech as something separate from expression...for Goossens there are no barriers - he travels where he will, explores everywhere; his sole limitation is that he cannot explore everything at once. Unquestionably he is the most

⁷⁴ Delius's exact words were: "Just a few words to tell you how much I like Goossens quartet: it is the best thing I have seen coming from an English pen & full of emotion - Tell Goossens that I will get it published for him as soon as the war is over...." Letter from Delius to Warlock, 22.1.1916, Carley, op. cit., p.163.

⁷⁵ Op.10 (1915).

⁷⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.3.1916.

⁷⁷ Op.12 (1915).

⁷⁸ Op.6 (1914); the work has three movements: Impromptu, Serenade and Divertissement.

⁷⁹ Op.8 (1916); the full title is *Deux proses lyriques*.

⁸⁰ Two Songs Op.9 (1914).

⁸¹ Op.5, *Four Sketches* (1912), later withdrawn.

⁸² Op.15 (1916). 1. *By the Tarn* 2. *Jack o' Lantern*.

⁸³ A light that sometimes appears in the night, usually over marshy ground and usually attributable to the combustion of marsh gas.

significant composer we have in England since Delius - though doubtless the tide of mediocrity will sweep over him and cover him, as it has covered Delius, from the eyes of the multitude. But a few discerning ones will know that beneath the swirl of the waters two figures at least stand firm. And one day the tide will ebb.⁸⁴

One thing which becomes obvious whilst reading these letters are the chameleon-like changes which Warlock's tastes and opinions often undergo over the years. Occasionally he is not always entirely objective when it comes to dealing with a particular cause or enthusiasm once it has possessed him.⁸⁵ For example his later attitude towards Goossens (as illustrated in this letter written from Dublin) clearly shows this, made all the more unpleasant by the bitter turn of phrase. Here he makes an angry attack on Goossens for preferring to perform Stravinsky's *Fireworks*⁸⁶ rather than a work by van Dieren. Tomlinson suggests that this work was the *Interlude* (sometimes referred to as *Nocturne*), a compilation of non-vocal sections of his Symphony no. 1 and dedicated to Warlock⁸⁷. Warlock had written out a full score of this, so-called "*Chinese*" *Symphony* as well as a score of the *Interlude* in 1916. This would explain the phrase "has now possessed for nearly two years an orchestral work of van Dieren's". In this letter Warlock also takes the opportunity of criticising the musical public and music profession in general:

I observe...that our friend Goossens (who seems to be acquiring a vast reputation as a conductor) produced a new work by Stravinsky some weeks ago - a work meant to be funny but no doubt requiring a vast amount of trouble in rehearsal, resulting in - good old Musical Times phrase! - Pandemonium! It makes my blood boil to think that, if the public are to be treated to Pandemonium, (and everything is Pandemonium, regardless like, nowadays - Schönberg, Scriabin, Bartók, van Dieren, Ornstein and God knows who else! nobody knows the difference!!) that they should be given works which are admittedly trivial, jeux d'esprit, of no significance - works that the public can laugh at and have a right to laugh at - indeed, are meant to laugh at! With the result - such is their utter lack of discrimination, which a man like Goossens knows perfectly well - if a serious and significant work by Schönberg or van Dieren comes to be presented, the poor collective beast knows no better than to bray loudly - oh, mulish public,

⁸⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 20.4.1916.

⁸⁵ By 1917 he was already writing about Goossens: "With the majority of modern composers he has embraced the fallacy that music can spring from music and not solely from the fullness of being. And until he discards this notion, we shall have to be content with brilliant and tantalisingly promising pièces-d'occasion from him". Heseltine, op. cit., p.155.

⁸⁶ 1908.

⁸⁷ Tomlinson, *Warlock and van Dieren*, Thames, London, 1978, p.9.

mulish public! But, as I have always maintained, the public are not really to blame - they are only a poor mule - they know not what they do. It is, as always the professional musician - and more especially the "advanced" musician that's to blame - is not this a supreme justification of my axiom that there is no greater enemy of music than the music profession?⁸⁸

Think of the trouble and expense that must have been lavished upon those ridiculous Humoresques - while van Dieren's stupendous String Quartet (which Goossens knows very well and, when Cecil Gray or I are present, lavishes extravagant praise upon) lies unheeded and unheard - and van Dieren himself lies, neglected and unhonoured, at the gate of Death! Goossens has now possessed for nearly two years an orchestral work of van Dieren's which is wonderful - full of strange, poignant beauty and emotion. I copied the full score for him myself and he promised to do his utmost to secure its performance, that very winter - 1916. What is the result? He is now the leading conductor in England - second only to Beecham - the musical press cannot sing his praises loud enough - he can do what he likes. And what does he do? Stravinsky's "Fireworks"!!!!!! - Squibs, not beauty, is what he wants!....⁸⁹

In his autobiography, written towards the end of his life, Goossens gives some brief impressions of the Warlock he knew. It is a fair and, on the whole, generous tribute to someone who had not always written quite so kindly about Goossens himself, particularly in his later correspondence with Taylor:⁹⁰

The [Phantasy] quartet was very well received, and among the critics who praised it was a young man - Philip Heseltine - who, had he lived, might have exerted considerable influence on English music...I first met him in the company of Cecil Gray, when he had just been offered the post of music critic of the *Daily Mail*. His was an elusive, shy, intelligent personality, cynical beyond his years, and unaccountably bitter towards his fellow men. I saw something of him early that summer in the Cotswolds, where he had rented a bungalow on the slopes of Crickley Hill, overlooking the Vale of Evesham. Here, with Cecil Gray, most caustic of critics, Adrian Allinson, who painted Cotswold elms like no one else, and his East Indian mistress⁹¹ (whose dusky charm caused considerable comment among the neighbours), he spent the long relaxing days of an English summer.⁹² Sometimes Philip and I, on a decrepit motor-cycle, would explore together the neighbouring countryside for old parish churches and hostelrys: the former to sketch, and the latter to sample the local Cotswold brew....

My early friendship with Philip might have done much to remove the lack of confidence he felt in his own powers as a composer had he carried out

⁸⁸ cf. Unpublished letters from Warlock to Taylor of 8.11.1916, 13.6.1918 and the Dublin lecture, *What Is Music*, all of which express the same sentiments.

⁸⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.4.1918.

⁹⁰ Goossens, op. cit., pp.111-112.

⁹¹ Minnie Channing (Puma).

⁹² In her short story, "Till September Petronella", *London Magazine*, January 1960, v.7, no.1, pp.19-39, Jean Rhys, 1894-1979, writes autobiographically about the few days she spent as a member of that party. Warlock is portrayed as Julian Oakes, Adrian Allinson as Andy Marston and Minnie Channing as Frankie Morell. Jean Rhys herself is the central character, Petronella Gray.

his intention of studying with me. But he procrastinated, and between his passion for Delius, his own misgivings about his ability to write worthwhile music, and his dabbling in literature - which was his real *forte* - he never got round to it. He had written to his friend Colin Taylor: "In December I am going to begin a long and strenuous course of lessons with Goossens in the hope that I may be relieved of the fear that is hounding me that I have no musical bowels at all!"⁹³ Successive Decembers came and went till that fatal day in 1930 when he was found dead...A brilliant spirit was lost in his passing, and a handful of printed works bear witness to the talent which might have more considerably enhanced the lustre of English music had he survived.

The Australian-born Percy Grainger (1882-1961) was a colourful and eccentric figure in the English musical scene. He was a pupil of Busoni and a friend of Grieg, of whose Piano Concerto in a⁹⁴ he was a noted interpreter. For a time he collected and edited English folk-songs, including *Brigg Fair* from Lincolnshire, his arrangement of which so delighted Delius that he wrote a rhapsody based on the tune. The two men remained close friends until Delius's death in 1934. There are three references to Grainger in these Warlock letters all dating from 1912 when the latter was eighteen. He writes from Cologne:

Of course you have seen the quite thrilling prospectus of the Balfour Gardiner concerts! I would give anything to be at the concert of March 13th⁹⁵ - Bax, Delius and Grainger etc, but I fear it will not be possible for me. I enquired at Augener's [publishers] after Grainger's works, but I could only get the folk-songs "dished-up for piano"! They are, however, very beautiful, especially the Irish Tune⁹⁶ from County Londonderry, which is heavenly.⁹⁷

Warlock also refers to Grainger's settings from Rudyard Kipling's⁹⁸ *Jungle Books*⁹⁹:

⁹³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.11.1915.

⁹⁴ Op.16 (1868).

⁹⁵ The programme included Bax's *Enchanted Summer*, Delius's *Dance Rhapsody*, no.1, Grainger's *Irish Tune from County Derry*, *Faeroe Isles Dance: Father and Daughter* and three settings of Kipling songs, Gardiner's *News from Whydah*, (which Warlock described at "a choral ballad of the finest order" Heseltine, op. cit., p.156) and W.H. Bell's *The Baron of Brackley*. Gardiner, Grainger and Arthur Fagge, 1864-1943, shared the conducting of the London Choral Society and New Symphony Orchestra.

⁹⁶ *The Londonderry Air* (1911).

⁹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.2.1912.

⁹⁸ 1865-1936, English author and poet.

⁹⁹ 1894 and 1895.

I got a copy of Grainger's Kipling choruses at Schott's after I left you yesterday: "We have fed our seas"¹⁰⁰ is very fine, but I am sure the "Tiger-tiger"¹⁰¹ came from the piano: still they are all good stuff,¹⁰² and should be immensely effective on the voices: his "Brigg Fair" was sold out, so I suppose it is going to be performed somewhere.¹⁰³

In June he writes from Hemel Hempstead a letter in which he quotes Delius's comments on Grainger's music:

I heard from Delius the other day, and he said he considered Grainger the most gifted English composer because he was the only one who has written real English Music - "with something of the old English robustness and vigour in his music - that part of England which has long ago ceased to exist or which has emigrated".¹⁰⁴

Grainger, however, was not immune from Warlock's biting wit as the following manuscript poem illustrates:

The personal appearance of that ingeniously culinary composer P.
GRAINGER
Was of a kind that frequently causes young virgins to be in great danger.
BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND,
He had lived with Mama ever since he was a tiny kid,
And so
He never did.¹⁰⁵

Considering his friendship and long association with Cecil Gray, it is surprising that Warlock makes only one reference to him in the letters he wrote to Taylor. Gray studied at Edinburgh University and later in Birmingham with Granville Bantock and, although he wrote three operas (to his own librettos), he is now remembered solely as an author of a number of books on music including the one he wrote in collaboration with Warlock, *Carlo Gesualdo: Musician and Murderer* and his memoir on Warlock.

¹⁰⁰ For 6 part mixed chorus and brass choir, strings at will, *Kipling settings* 2 (1900-11).

¹⁰¹ From *The Jungle Book* for unaccompanied male chorus, optional tenor solo, *Kipling settings* 4 (1905).

¹⁰² These two Grainger-Kipling works were performed at the Balfour Gardiner Concert of 13.3.1912 at which Warlock would almost certainly have been present.

¹⁰³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.6.1912.

¹⁰⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.6.1912.

¹⁰⁵ No.VIII of *One dozen Cursory Rhymes dedicated to the British Music Society and the Society of British Composers*, London, BL, Add MS 57967.

Hubert Foss, Head of the Music Department of the O.U.P., had this to say about Gray's writing:¹⁰⁶

Gray's literary work is distinguished both by the honesty of his purpose and by his lively prose style. Accepted views were not for him; but his individual outlook was invariably based on first-hand knowledge of his subjects.

Warlock and Gray first met in 1916 and the many fruits of their friendship included the sponsorship of a concert of the music of van Dieren and their work together on the journal, *The Sackbut*. Warlock's loyalty to his friend is clearly evidenced in the following extract from a letter written to Taylor from Eynsford. It also contains some very perceptive and cynical comments on what he considered to be composers' unwise choice of the medium of opera:

Gray has at last completed his opera "Deirdre"¹⁰⁷ - 400 pages of full score, and if it is not entirely a masterpiece, it is certainly one of the most beautiful works that has been made in this country during the present century. But why do people write operas? There is no rottener form in which to cast good music, nor one that so militates against the music's chance of being heard.¹⁰⁸

Joseph Holbrooke (1878-1976) was a prolific composer whose music has almost entirely been forgotten. Warlock had written a letter to *The New Age*¹⁰⁹ entitled "British v. German music" attacking the parochial attitude that Holbrooke had shown in an earlier series of articles. A few years later he wrote once again rather caustically about Holbrooke in an article entitled "The Condition of Music in England" in *The New Age*:

Joseph Holbrooke's Wagnerian musical-box is, like Johnny Walker, 'still going strong'; and so is Joseph's tongue, declaiming against the pernicious influence of Huns on British music.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Macmillan, London. 1961, v.3, p.766.

¹⁰⁷ The first of his three operas, on an Irish subject to his own libretto. A 201-page vocal score of this work in Warlock's handwriting is in the British Library, Add MS 57776.

¹⁰⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.9.1926.

¹⁰⁹ *The New Age*, 3.12.1914, no.1160, v.16, no.5, pp.134-135.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, 14.6.1917, no.1292, v.21, no.7, pp.154-156.

In this following extract from a letter to Taylor, Warlock writes again about Holbrooke, this time with just a touch of humorous irreverence. Alvin Langdon Coburn was an American enthusiast (a photographer and painter) who produced a large number of pianola rolls, especially of modern music, and every Sunday afternoon played three rolls at a free concert for the poor given by a wealthy music-lover in Holland Park:

I forgot to mention that I met Joe Holbrooke at Coburn's - (Coburn is to play Stravinsky's "Fireworks" on the pianola at one of his concerts for wounded soldiers!) Fortunately, he did not associate my name with the terrifically abusive letters that appeared in the "New Age" 18 months ago! He is very deaf, very waggish and already - most properly - considers himself out of date. In appearance he struck me as being curiously like Pussy¹¹¹ Lloyd grown a little younger, though Holbrooke has harder features. Their noses are almost identical.¹¹²

Warlock seems to have had very little time for the music of Gustav Holst (1874-1934), the *Planets*¹¹³ in particular being one of his especial dislikes. He wrote two articles about this work in *The Sackbut* in less than complimentary terms as one of the titles, "That Butchered Cosmos Again", well illustrates.¹¹⁴ Considering his enthusiasm and support for so many lesser English composers it is somewhat surprising to read Warlock's scathing remarks about Holst and his music. He does not give any reasons for his dislike of Holst's music in the three attacks recorded below. Perhaps it is better to let his words speak for themselves as there seems to be more than just a blind spot when he writes so disparagingly about an acknowledged major figure in English music during the first half of this century.

After Taylor had moved to Cape Town, Warlock often wrote to give him some of the latest news from the English music scene, news often couched in somewhat cynical terms:

Promiscuous laudation of mediocrity continues apace in English musical life. Money seems to flow more copiously than ever in support of British

¹¹¹ Eton schoolboy nickname for the Precentor, Dr. C.H. Lloyd.

¹¹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.4.1916.

¹¹³ Op.32 (1914-16).

¹¹⁴ *The Sackbut*, March 1921, v.1, no.9, p.402.

music, despite high prices. Holst is considered a first-rate genius though his utter lack of inventive power and his impudent habit of helping himself to everybody else's tricks become more and more obvious to all save those who won't see - and nobody apparently will.¹¹⁵

In replying to a question from Taylor about the composer and scholar, W.G. Whittaker (1876-1944),¹¹⁶ he cannot resist a swipe at Holst as well:

He [Whittaker] is even worse than Holst, which is saying a very great deal.¹¹⁷

The cruellest bit of writing about Holst (with its reference to an accident in 1923 when he fell from a platform whilst rehearsing in Reading) is reserved for a later letter:

...[Vaughan Williams'] Pastoral Symphony,¹¹⁸ the highest point yet reached by a contemporary Englishman. (Holst's much-lauded Choral Symphony¹¹⁹ incidentally represents about the lowest point yet reached; since he fell off the platform and cracked his head, in a fine frenzy of conducting, his music has become even more putrid than it was before - which is saying that he has almost achieved the impossible!)¹²⁰

John Ireland (1879-1962) was a composer for whose songs Warlock expressed a certain degree of admiration. Although he wrote a small number of orchestral works, a piano concerto, some chamber music and a choral work for baritone solo, chorus and orchestra, *These things shall be* (1936-37), Ireland, like Warlock, is remembered rather for his small scale works such as his songs and pianoforte pieces.

As a young man Warlock wrote to Taylor from Dublin asking for the loan of some of Ireland's music so that he could form a better judgment of the composer's achievements:

However, for the sake of complete fairness, I should like to examine the latest works by John Ireland - those published during 1917 and 1918 I mean - I have seen an advertisement and eulogies of them - piano pieces and a

¹¹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

¹¹⁶ English composer, conductor, organist and scholar.

¹¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.6.1925.

¹¹⁸ No.3 (1916-21).

¹¹⁹ *Choral Symphony* for soprano, chorus and orchestra, Op.41 (1923-4).

¹²⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

violin sonata.¹²¹ If you have them I should be very grateful for the loan of them some time. I heard once part of a very dull Violin sonata¹²² by this man, and I have seen some equally dull "Decorations"¹²³ for the piano and a poor song called "Sea-Fever".¹²⁴ But I cannot believe that even Edwin Evans¹²⁵ would deliver a whole lecture on the works of a man who never rose above the level of these uninteresting compositions....¹²⁶

Four years later he wrote to Taylor recommending a number of songs by John Ireland:

Of recent English songs I can cordially recommend John Ireland's "Adoration",¹²⁷ "Spring Sorrow"¹²⁸ (one of the loveliest songs I know), "I have twelve oxen",¹²⁹ "Love is a sickness"¹³⁰ and "The merry month of May"¹³¹ (Winthrop Rogers: the firm by the way, is now being run by his daughter, Celesta Rogers); and "The Land of lost content"¹³² (Augener) which is a cycle of 5 songs - two being good.¹³³

Warlock met Ireland in 1928 and shortly before his death was planning to write an article on his recently completed Piano Concerto in E flat. As has already been noted Ireland was one of those who gave evidence at the inquest after Warlock's death. In reply to the coroner's question as to whether he could throw any light on the circumstances of his death Ireland replied that the only thing he could say was that he thought Warlock was worried about his work as a composer:

I think he felt, as, I suppose, many composers do, that he had not yet received the recognition his work deserved.¹³⁴

Gray, however, dismissed Ireland's remarks:

¹²¹ No.2 in a (1915-17).

¹²² No.1 in d (1908-9, revised 1917).

¹²³ Three pieces: *The Island Spell*, *Moonglade* and *The Scarlet Ceremonies* (1912-13).

¹²⁴ 1913, words by John Masefield.

¹²⁵ 1874-1945, a music critic who promoted the cause of contemporary composers through lecturing and journalism. He also had the distinction of being involved in a punch-up with Peter Warlock in the Café Royal during an argument over Bartók's music. (See Gray, *Musical Chairs*, Home & Van Thal, London, 1948, pp.112-113 and Goldring, op. cit., p.183).

¹²⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.8.1918.

¹²⁷ 1918, words by Arthur Symons.

¹²⁸ 1918, words by Rupert Brooke.

¹²⁹ 1918, words early English.

¹³⁰ 1921, words by Samuel Daniel.

¹³¹ 1921, words by Thomas Dekker.

¹³² Settings of poems from A.E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*, (1920-22).

¹³³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

¹³⁴ Gray, *Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, p.294.

Quite apart from the fact that there was no lack of appreciation for his work, either in musical circles or with the general public, he was the least to care, one way or the other. It was not the approbation of others that he desired or sought, and lacked, but of his own self - the only critic, the only audience to whose opinion he attached the slightest weight or consideration.¹³⁵

It was not only Gray who took exception to Ireland's remarks at the inquest. Kaikhosru Sorabji, who had known Warlock for "the best part of twenty years", wrote vehemently about Ireland's evidence:

It is unpleasant and incongruous to have to introduce a jarring note into this tribute...by registering a most emphatic and indignant protest against the entirely gratuitous, offensive and grotesque remarks which a certain composer - a self-alleged "friend" of Philip Heseltine's - saw fit to make without ever being called upon to give evidence at the inquest. This gentleman, whose "friendship" with the late Mr. Heseltine, those who really knew and were intimate with the latter over a long period of years have the best of reasons for supposing little more than acquaintance, had the impertinent fatuity to suggest that a man of Philip Heseltine's mental and moral calibre was depressed by lack of public recognition, a suggestion as fantastic as it was untrue. Philip Heseltine had, and knew he had, the recognition and appreciation of those only whose recognition and appreciation matter to an artist, while his name was a household word with a familiar public, further, whose approval or the reverse it is a damnable insult and slander to his memory to imagine he would ever condescended to give a moment's thought to. What service this gentleman imagined himself to be doing either to truth or to the artist's memory it is not easy to see, for statements so fantastic and inapt could not give a moment's credence with those who, like myself, had known Mr. Heseltine for the best part of twenty years; but it is important for such pestilent nonsense to be contradicted lest Heseltine's memory is wronged by those who did not know him believing it.¹³⁶

Constant Lambert (1905-1951), composer, conductor and critic, was considered one of the brighter talents on the English musical scene. His early death was mourned by many who realised what a loss the musical life of England had sustained. He was very much part of the Warlock circle and in one of the last letters written to Taylor, Warlock had the following to say about this promising young musician:

The only other young Englishman under 25 is Constant Lambert - a more interesting composer and a much finer intelligence than Walton. He has written an admirable Rio Grande¹³⁷ (nothing to do with sea shantys! [sic])

¹³⁵ Gray, *ibid.*, p.297.

¹³⁶ Sorabji, "Music", *The New Age*, January 15, 1931, no.2001, v.48, no.11, pp.128-129.

¹³⁷ 1927, words by Sacheverell Sitwell.

for piano solo and orchestra (strings, brass and percussion only) with a mixed chorus; also an enchanting ballet-suite Pomona¹³⁸ for small orchestra (O.U.P.)¹³⁹

Here is an extract from an article, entitled "Master of English Song", which Lambert wrote on Warlock for the *Radio Times*. On writing to congratulate Warlock on having "recovered his form as a composer" he received the following reply, referring to van Dieren's influence on Warlock's writing and the fact that he had given up heavy drinking:

My dear Sir, how ludicrous to think that after all these years one has returned to where one started off - van Dieren and water.¹⁴⁰

Warlock first met E.J. Moeran when he visited the latter to say how much he had enjoyed one of his songs. Moeran was an English composer of Irish descent who studied at the Royal College of Music under John Ireland. For a while he lived in Norfolk where his father was a vicar and here he collected folk songs from some of the older inhabitants.¹⁴¹ He first attracted public attention in 1924 when Sir Hamilton Harty commissioned a symphony from him.

The following year Warlock invited Moeran to join him in the "wild and eccentric camaraderie"¹⁴² in the Eynsford cottage where Warlock lived from 1925 to 1928. During this period Moeran wrote a miniature essay on Warlock and Warlock wrote a similar one on Moeran.¹⁴³ He had, in fact, already written an article on the life and work of Moeran for the June 1924 edition of *The Music Bulletin*.¹⁴⁴ They also

¹³⁸ 1926.

¹³⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

¹⁴⁰ Lambert, "Master of English Song", *Radio Times*, July 1, 1938, v.59, no.770, pp.12-13.

¹⁴¹ Warlock wrote the following about Moeran's skill as a collector of folk-songs: "He collects these songs from no antiquarian, historical or psychological motives, but because he loves them and the people who sing them...For him, as for them, the song itself is the thing...It is no good appearing suddenly at a cottage door, notebook in hand, as though you might be the bum-bailey or the sanitary inspector...nor should you spoil the ground for other collectors by forgetting that old throats grow dry after an hour's singing...." Heseltine, "Introductions XVIII: E.J. Moeran", *Music Bulletin*, June, 1924, v.6, no.6, pp.170-174.

¹⁴² Self, op. cit., p.61.

¹⁴³ Author of the pamphlet not given but it was, in fact, Warlock. *E.J. Moeran*, J. & W. Chester Ltd., London, 1926.

¹⁴⁴ Heseltine, op. cit., pp.170-175.

combined their talents to compose jointly the song *Maltworms* in 1926. Considering the fact that they were such close friends it is surprising that Moeran's name only appears twice in his correspondence with Taylor. In 1925 he sent Taylor four songs from Eynsford with an accompanying letter:

I enclose four old songs...and a pretty tune which Moeran got from an old man in Norfolk - a queer mixture of folk-song and music hall as you will see from the explanatory note.¹⁴⁵ Moeran's own songs and folk song settings just issued by Oxford Press are all first rate.¹⁴⁶

Warlock writes again about Moeran in 1929 after the two men had left Eynsford and Warlock was once again back in London. In this extract he seems to adopt a rather patronising air when he writes about Moeran's *Rhapsody* while the reference to Moeran's excessive drinking habits,¹⁴⁷ although certainly humorous, has just a hint of unkindness about it, the joke being rather at Moeran's expense.

The only tolerably good orchestral work of Moeran (*Rhapsody* no.2) is still in MS;¹⁴⁸ his last composition - a fantasy for small orchestra on a theme by Whythorne¹⁴⁹ - was unfortunately not picked up by the kindly Brussels gendarme who found its composer in a state of beatific coma in the gutter some years ago; and nothing has been heard of it since.¹⁵⁰

In the *Musical Times* article¹⁵¹ mentioned earlier Cockshott has recorded a number of Moeran's reminiscences of Warlock including his methods of composition and his musical enthusiasms (the Elizabethans, Delius, van Dieren, Bartók, Vaughan

¹⁴⁵ *Yarmouth Fair*, O.U.P., 1925.

¹⁴⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

¹⁴⁷ Geoffrey Self has the following to say about this: "[Moeran's] drinking eventually became chronic alcoholism. Whether this first became a problem during the three riotous years Moeran spent with Warlock or whether...it was attributable to the effects of his war wound, it is not possible to say with any degree of certainty". Self, op. cit., p.234.

¹⁴⁸ *Rhapsody* no.2 in E (1924, revised 1941); composed for the Norfolk and Norwich Centenary Festival.

¹⁴⁹ Thomas Whythorne, 1528-95, English composer; a short orchestral piece by Moeran, *Whythorne's Shadow*, was published in 1931. "It is not possible to say to what extent, if any, the published work is based on or reconstructed from the fantasy mentioned in Heseltine's letter [to Taylor]". Self, op. cit., p.88. Foreman writes of this work: "Here the ghost of Heseltine speaks as loud as that of Whythorne, and the example of Warlock's *Capriol Suite*, a product of the Eynsford years, was not lost on Moeran". Foreman, notes accompanying the Chandos recording of this work (CHAN 8807), Chandos Records, Colchester, 1990.

¹⁵⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

¹⁵¹ Cockshott, op. cit., pp.128-130.

Williams and Liszt amongst others). Although a comparatively short article it is a useful document providing, as it does, information about Warlock from a source other than Gray.¹⁵²

The songs of Roger Quilter (1877-1953), were an early enthusiasm of the young Warlock and his influence can be clearly seen in Warlock's early efforts. He too was a product of Eton, studying later at Frankfurt under Iwan Knorr (1853-1916)¹⁵³ who had a number of distinguished English pupils, known as the "Frankfurt group" and which included Cyril Scott (1879-1970), Balfour Gardiner (1877-1950) and Norman O'Neill (1875-1934). He first attracted attention in the early years of this century with his fine settings from Shakespeare which, in the words of H.C. Colles (1879-1943),¹⁵⁴ "besides showing a gift for vocal melody had a certain distinction of touch and harmony which was piquant and novel at the time".¹⁵⁵ In October 1912 Warlock wrote to Taylor from Newbold Pacey vicarage in extravagant terms about Quilter:

...Quilter's "O Mistress mine"...is one of the very few things that simply send me into ecstasies every time I play it. It is really magnificent. Could Schubert have written a better song, or rather anything to touch it? (!! don't be shocked, please!)¹⁵⁶

Judging from the slightly chastened tone in the reference to Quilter in Warlock's next letter, it would seem that Taylor had not been over impressed by the comparison of Quilter to Schubert. In his reply Warlock seems to be rather on the defensive:

I do not see why one's admiration for a song of Quilter's involves appreciation of Schubert, any more than appreciation of Schubert involves a love for Monteverde or Tubal Cain!¹⁵⁷ Chopin was influenced by

¹⁵² See also Cockshott, "Warlock and Moeran", *Composer*, Autumn, 1969, no.33, pp.1, 3-4.

¹⁵³ German composer and teacher.

¹⁵⁴ English music critic.

¹⁵⁵ *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol.VI, Fifth Edition, edited by Eric Blom, London, Macmillan, 1966, p.1034.

¹⁵⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 28.10.1912.

¹⁵⁷ Son of Lamech and Zillah, brother of Naamah, and "the ancestor of all metal-workers, in bronze or iron". Genesis 4: 22.

Bellini¹⁵⁸ to a large extent, but I am sure no one would ever dispute Chopin's superiority to the Italian tune-monger.¹⁵⁹

The next year Warlock mentions Quilter again, this time in a letter from Winchcombe, after having heard a performance of Stravinsky's *Firebird* (1909-10) which had obviously impressed him. He is here trying to put into words the way he feels when he is deeply moved by a piece of music:

...it [the *Firebird*] is one of those things that stand out far and away above everything else: it is, as you say, the real thing, which I very seldom feel about any music.

It is interesting, to me, to consider, on looking back, how often I have felt this: sometimes it has been in quite small things, like Quilter's "O Mistress mine",¹⁶⁰ which, for me, is one of the most perfect lyrics in the world....¹⁶¹

It is interesting to note the echoes of this enthusiastic description of the same song in a letter to Viva Smith a few months later:

Today I have been playing some of the songs of Roger Quilter - who is to my mind the most perfect lyric song writer in the world. His setting of Shakespeare's "O Mistress Mine" is the most exquisite and entirely lovely lyric I know - it always gives me that curious, shivering, positively physical thrill that I only feel in the presence of the highest beauty. The poem, too, is, I think, the most wonderful in the world: and the music reflects and intensifies it so beautifully - one feels absolute perfection in the three brief pages.¹⁶²

Four years later his admiration for Quilter had in no way lessened. There is a fleeting reference to his work in the following sentence written to Taylor from London:

...men like...Quilter who have done a small amount of exquisite work without breaking new ground.¹⁶³

As has already been noted, 1918 was the year when Warlock penned his tirade against Winthrop Rogers for his rejection and criticism of the music of van Dieren.

¹⁵⁸ Vincenzo Bellini, 1801-35, Italian opera composer.

¹⁵⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.11.1912.

¹⁶⁰ 1905.

¹⁶¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1913.

¹⁶² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Viva Smith, 18.10.1913, London, BL, Add MS 58127

¹⁶³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 18.1.1917.

In his fulminations against the firm Warlock mentions Quilter's name. Angry and disappointed at finding that Quilter is a friend of and sometime musical advisor to Rogers he writes almost petulantly about his music:

...I am just a little surprised and grieved at the inclusion of Quilter's name among this crew. He is a man of far greater refinement and intelligence than most musicians, and although as a composer he had very little to say and has already said it several times over, that little was at first of a rare and exquisite quality and the best lyrics that he wrote ten or more years ago remain the sole examples of modern English music that can be heard over and over again with undiminished pleasure. Apart from Delius, Quilter's lyrics are easily the best music England has produced during the twentieth century. However he is absolutely played out now: he has no more to say and he cannot better benefit his reputation than by keeping silence.¹⁶⁴

Early in 1922 Warlock wrote to Taylor in Cape Town mentioning in his letter some of the latest English songs that had been published. Quilter's name is included in the list:

...Of recent English songs I can cordially recommend...Quilter's second set of Shakespeare songs¹⁶⁵ (Boosey) contains two good ones.¹⁶⁶

It is interesting to note that on one occasion Warlock sent a copy of an unidentified song to Quilter acknowledging his debt with the inscription: "To R.Q. without whom there could have been no P.W."¹⁶⁷ Warlock was without doubt much influenced by Quilter as a study of Warlock's own setting of *O Mistress Mine* (*Sweet-and-Twenty*) reveals. Although there is, of course, something quite unique in Warlock's setting with its unmistakable harmonies and melodic lines, the refined atmosphere and gentle, sophisticated melancholic sensitivity of the Quilter songs is never far away.

In one of the letters there is a strange, almost tongue-in-cheek, reference to a popular drawing-room ballad song-writer of the period, Wilfred Sanderson (1878-1935). Included amongst his many songs were three particular favourites, *Drake*

¹⁶⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.8.1918.

¹⁶⁵ *Five Shakespeare Songs* (1921).

¹⁶⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

¹⁶⁷ Copley, op. cit., p.49.

Goes West, *Shipmate O'Mine* and *Until* which enjoyed an immense popularity. For its curiosity value the relevant passage is here included, mainly because it shows how Warlock judged music according to his own very personal and honest standards and how forcibly he could justify these. It also illustrates how otherwise and outrageous he could be if he wanted to make a statement which he hoped would shock the musical establishment:

Incidentally, I have decided for myself what is, in its own category, the most absolutely perfect and marvellous piece of music ever written (I am not fooling, since I confine myself to its own category) - to wit "Until" by W. Sanderson!¹⁶⁸

There is still an enormous amount of research to be done on that exotic figure, Kaikhosuru Shapurji Sorabji, who was born in 1892 and died in 1988, aged 96. He was the son of a Parsi father and a Spanish Sicilian mother and was largely self-taught as a composer. He was also a fine pianist but for over fifty years (from the early 1920s until the mid 70s) he discouraged performances of his works. These are noted not only for their complexity but also for their great length; the piano composition, *Opus Clavicembalisticum*, for example, lasting over two hours.¹⁶⁹ Needless to say, as a kind of cult figure in the early years of this century, he attracted the attention of the young Warlock who first wrote about him in not very complimentary fashion early in 1914. It would appear, reading between the lines, that although Warlock found him amusingly interesting, he rather sensed that Sorabji was perhaps developing too much of an interest in him:

You are a real Sherlock Holmes! The blackamore [sic] whom you spotted at Ravel's concert¹⁷⁰ was the very man! I asked him in a letter where he sat, and he replied that he was immediately in front of the critics. Isn't it appalling?!! I shall never dare visit him now, and I am beginning to fear that, amusing as his correspondence is, I shall soon repent having encouraged it, since I am sure I shall never get rid of him again! He becomes more and more queer, every letter he writes, but it is getting much

¹⁶⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1917.

¹⁶⁹ A 260-page manuscript copy of this work, dated 1930, is in Cape Town, UCT Library, m/f. BCZA 86/1. Sorabji and Erik Chisholm (professor of music at UCT, 1945-65) were friends hence the gift to UCT.

¹⁷⁰ 17.12.1913.

too personal: I am "the most sympathetic person he has ever met ", etc, etc (although he has never met me - for that, at least, I am thankful!)

Moreover he is convinced that in a former incarnation, I must have been closely related to him!! What funnys these Parsees are!¹⁷¹

At the risk of digressing a little from the subject under discussion, it is perhaps worth giving just a few details of this concert of 17.12.1913 in the Bechstein Hall, London that Warlock, Taylor and Sorabji attended. Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)¹⁷² appeared both as pianist and conductor in the programme, the concert being reported in the *Musical Times* thus:

[Ravel's] string quartet in F,¹⁷³ and "Introduction and Allegro"¹⁷⁴...earned their customary favour, the latter proving especially attractive under the composer's conductorship. M. Ravel, in playing the accompaniments to a selection of his songs, showed how greatly tone-gradation and tone-value can enhance their effectiveness. The singer was Miss Rhoda van Glehn and the instrumentalists included the English String Quartet and Miss Gwendolen Mason (harp).¹⁷⁵ Pianoforte works of Scriabine were played by Mr. F.S. Kelly^{176,177}

Fifty-two years later Gwendolen Mason wrote about her memories of this particular concert:

It was in the winter of 1913 that I had the great pleasure of meeting Maurice Ravel at one of a series of Chamber Concerts at the Bechstein Hall.

I had introduced the "Introduction and Allegro" at my recital (also in that Hall)...treating it as a septet. Now it was to be rather different; the harp to be treated as a solo instrument, accompanied by the six players, and to that end Ravel had me seated on his extreme right and all the other players on the extreme left!!

This was quite an experience as Ravel, a very short man, conducted from a very high stand, with a short baton, in the middle of the platform. The work was received with great applause....¹⁷⁸

¹⁷¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.2.1914.

¹⁷² French composer and pianist.

¹⁷³ 1902-3.

¹⁷⁴ 1906.

¹⁷⁵ Harpist in the Royal Opera House and London Symphony Orchestras.

¹⁷⁶ Frederick Septimus Kelly, 1881-1916, Australian pianist and composer; educated at Eton, Oxford and in Frankfurt with Iwan Knorr; killed in action in France.

¹⁷⁷ *Musical Times*, 1914, p.118.

¹⁷⁸ Mason, G., "Ravel", *United Kingdom Harpists' Association*, March 1979, Magazine no.50, p.12.

Two years later there is more about Sorabji in a letter Warlock wrote to Taylor from London:

Sorabji, the Parsee son of an Anglo-Spaniard, has written a soul-shattering Piano Concerto, in a style evolved from late Scriabin & Ravel with a dash of Stravinsky (post - Petrouchka period), but not ape-ishly imitative of any of them. He claims perfect mental auditory powers, for all the complexity of his harmonic scheme. If it's true, he is a psychological phenomenon of the most astounding order - for a year ago he had no thought or even desire of composing anything at all. Even the piano passages were evolved without any reference to an instrument!!¹⁷⁹

Warlock was obviously fascinated by Sorabji's composing methods for when he wrote the article on him for the 1924 edition of Dent's *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, he made particular reference to them. It is interesting to note that in this article Warlock gives Sorabji's date of birth incorrectly as 1895, not 1892. Had Sorabji perhaps knocked off a few years to make himself appear younger than Warlock, or was it part of the inscrutable mystique Sorabji was so assiduously creating for himself? Warlock seems happy to add to this with his tongue-in-cheek references to Sorabji's sources of inspiration:

S.'s compositions are not for the amateur. The technical difficulties of his extremely individual style of pf. writing are insurmountable by any but first-rate pianists. His compns. are of great length and complexity, and when an orch. is employed it is usually of Gargantuan proportions. It is of interest to note that they are written straight down in fair copy - in the case of the orch. works, in full score. No sketches are made, nor is even the figuration of the piano music determined at the keyboard. One is reminded of Blake's methods in composing the *Prophetic Books*;¹⁸⁰ but these, we are told, were dictated by angels. If we are to say the same of S.'s music we must use the word in its literal sense of "messenger" without its usual connotation of celestial origin and moral content.¹⁸¹

The only other reference to Sorabji in the correspondence is a passing one in a paragraph about music publishing in a letter written in 1921. For the sake of completeness it is included here. Warlock had been relieved of the editorship of the

¹⁷⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.3.1916.

¹⁸⁰ The *Prophetic Books* date from 1793 and the years immediately following. Inspired by the French Revolution Blake elaborated a series of cosmic myths and epics in which he set forth a complex philosophical scheme.

¹⁸¹ Hull, A.E., (editor) *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, Dent, London, 1924, p.469.

magazine *The Sackbut* a few months earlier, hence the comment about his difficult financial situation:

Sorabji is publishing all his works at his own expense in Austria - very cheaply, the crown standing now at 7000 to the £. The Sonata and some piano pieces which I think you heard are out already - obtainable at the London and Continental Music Co., 40 Great Marlborough St. W. I'd send you them and other things but I'm dead broke and heavily in debt as well.¹⁸²

It is interesting and not a little amusing to note that soon after Sorabji had published these pieces in 1921 he vetoed their performance although he went on to compose an enormous amount of music including eight piano concertos.

It was Warlock's championing of Sorabji's cause that was one of the reasons for the full-scale quarrel with the famous music-critic, Ernest Newman.¹⁸³ Sorabji also contributed an article entitled, "Examples of Modern Piano Technique", for *The Sackbut*¹⁸⁴ which included three pages of musical examples written out by Warlock. After his death Sorabji wrote a generous tribute in *The New Age* describing Warlock as:

one of the finest musical minds of our time, a critic and writer further of unparalleled brilliance, insight and subtlety...A song-writer of exquisite delicacy, jewel-like craftsmanship, and flawless rightness of instinct, he has been equalled by few and surpassed by far fewer....¹⁸⁵

As has already been noted, Sorabji was also one of those who refused to accept the idea that Warlock's death had been the result of suicide.¹⁸⁶ When a full-scale study

¹⁸² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

¹⁸³ Sorabji was aware of his debt to Warlock: "What I owe personally to his early encouragement, sympathy, and championship I can never adequately express...." Sorabji, "Music", *The New Age*, 15.1.1931, no.2001, v.48, no.11, p.128.

¹⁸⁴ *The Sackbut*, July 1920, v.1, no.3, pp.116-120.

¹⁸⁵ Sorabji, op. cit., pp.128-129.

¹⁸⁶ Sorabji wrote: "It is painful that I should have to start off with a sort of elegiac tribute to a great, and honoured and deeply admired friend...Peter Warlock, with whose loss, through a wretched accident, for no sane person acquainted with the facts, as distinct from journalistic inventions, can regard it as otherwise...is gone from us one of the finest musical minds of our time, a critic and writer further of unparalleled brilliance, insight, and subtlety". Sorabji, op. cit., p.128.

of this composer eventually appears it will be fascinating to read more about this eccentric figure in British twentieth century music.¹⁸⁷

In his final years Sorabji lived the life of a virtual recluse and Miss Virginia Fortescue recalls visiting him together with Professor Erik Chisholm (1904-1965)¹⁸⁸ some years ago. She was so intrigued by the notice on the gate that she asked Sorabji for a copy. He happily obliged, supplying at the same time a footnote explaining the significance of the words "genuine Catholic":

No Charity or Flag Day Touting
No Hawkers Circulars or Canvassers
Political or Other
Genuine Catholic (i.e. Roman) Sisters Welcome*

* This is to warn off these ersatz persons calling themselves ANGLO-CATHOLIC...Anglo they MAY be, Catholic they certainly are NOT. They always make me think of that muck called "British wines port TYPE"...Again, the same truth holds...British they may be, and doubtless ARE...but port of any type on this earth they are not!

At the door of his house was an equally uncompromising notice:

Social calls and visits strictly barred unless previously arranged.

Until this point all the composers discussed have, apart from Elgar, been of comparatively minor importance. The next two, Ralph Vaughan Williams and William Walton, are very much major figures.

Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was one of the leaders in the revival of English music in the early part of this century. A product of the establishment (Charterhouse, Cambridge and the Royal College of Music), he studied for a short while with Ravel before returning to England where he immersed himself in folk-music and the compositions of the 16th-century English composers. This gives his

¹⁸⁷ There are numerous unpublished letters from Sorabji to Warlock in London, BL, Add MS 57963.

¹⁸⁸ Scottish conductor and composer, professor of music at the University of Cape Town, 1945-1965.

style its own characteristic and unmistakable blend of modality and folk-music with just a dash of Impressionism thrown in.

Although the first reactions to Vaughan Williams' music in Warlock's early letters cannot be described as exactly enthusiastic, it is interesting to note how gradually he is won over and comes to recognise and respect his work. Whilst staying with Delius in France in 1914 he wrote to Taylor on the subject of leaving Oxford and asking advice as to whom he should go to study music seriously:

I should like, if possible, to go to someone like Vaughan Williams, rather than any of the real academics - though he is academic enough, in his compositions at any rate.¹⁸⁹

Having said this, it is then somewhat puzzling to find him writing rather disparagingly about Vaughan Williams' *London Symphony* at the end of the same letter. Perhaps being in the Delius household, surrounded by the Master's music, he felt less than sympathetic to Vaughan Williams' very different style. But when it came to selecting a possible teacher he doubtless realised that of all the composers in England at that time, Vaughan Williams was regarded as the contender for number one place.

The "London Symphony" bored me quite stiff - oh, those common chords - one after another, in endless succession.¹⁹⁰

Three years later Warlock himself was beginning to be influenced by the folk-song movement then sweeping across Europe. With the rise of nationalism in music English composers began at last to shake off the dominating influence that German Romanticism had held over their music for so long. In July 1917 he writes the following paragraph, appropriately enough, from Cornwall where he was busy discovering the Celtic heritage. He is still, however, critical of Vaughan Williams, whom he feels has too restricted a view as to the possible harmonic treatment of folk-song:

¹⁸⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.4.1914.

¹⁹⁰ *ibid.*

I am also experimenting with Celtic folk-songs, endeavouring to do for them what Grieg did for the Norwegian,¹⁹¹ Béla Bartók for the Hungarian, in his children's pieces, and van Dieren for the Dutch, in some very interesting recent arrangements - that is, broadly speaking, to set each tune in a short and straightforward manner but without the usual idiotic harmonic restrictions that faddists like V. Williams and Co. like to impose on themselves.¹⁹²

The works in question are the *Folk Song Preludes* for piano (1917), pieces for which Warlock seemed not to have a very high regard. This is confirmed both in a letter to Gray¹⁹³ and in E.J. Moeran's recollections.¹⁹⁴

By 1921 his opinion of Vaughan Williams had risen considerably and he could write the following paragraph, even if it does sound a trifle patronising:

Vaughan Williams is perhaps the most hopeful British proposition though a few years ago he seemed quite hopeless. He may become a great master at 70. The London Symphony¹⁹⁵ - originally a work of portentous and unprecedented dullness - became after drastic revision a thing of real power and beauty; and now I hear there is a new "Pastoral" Symphony¹⁹⁶ of his awaiting performance.¹⁹⁷

Although by now a convert to the music of Vaughan Williams, Gray records two occasions where Vaughan Williams was nonetheless a victim of Warlock's irrepressible humour:

I well remember once in later years Philip pointing out "V.W." to me at a Prom., "That big man there, standing by himself, who looks as if he ought to have straw in his boots!" On another occasion after a performance of "V.W.'s" *Pastoral Symphony* he exclaimed, "A truly splendid work!" and then, with a smile, "You know I've only one thing to say against this composer's music: it is all just a little too much like a cow looking over a gate."¹⁹⁸ None the less he is a very great composer and the more I hear the more I admire him".¹⁹⁹

¹⁹¹ For example in his *Norske Folkeviser*, op.66, for piano (1896) and other later collections.

¹⁹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1917.

¹⁹³ Gray, op. cit., p.184.

¹⁹⁴ Cockshott, "E.J. Moeran's recollections of Peter Warlock", *Musical Times*, 1955, p.128.

¹⁹⁵ *London Symphony* (1914, revised 1920).

¹⁹⁶ Performed in London for the first time on 26.1.1922.

¹⁹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

¹⁹⁸ In 1917 Warlock wrote: "Vaughan Williams is chiefly remarkable for having portrayed, not in one work, but in nearly all, the peculiar state of mind engendered by prolonged contemplation of a cow in a field on a foggy evening. He is one of

The sincerity of this last statement is confirmed in a letter written from Eynsford in 1925 and quoted below. By this time Warlock had contributed a succinct and most perceptive article on Vaughan Williams for *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, even managing to be polite about the "common chords...in endless succession":

All V.-W.'s works are characterised by strong melodic invention (often traceable to folk-song sources), and a most original fund of contrapuntal resource in which there is nothing even faintly reminiscent of scholasticism. With the purely harmonic developments of the XX century V.-W. shows but little sympathy in his work. We certainly find extremely novel combinations of sounds in some of his later compositions, but they are almost invariably conditioned by the movement of individual parts, of which the line is often seen in a higher dimensional aspect, so to speak, through the addition to each note of the two other notes necessary to complete the common chord. It is easy to realise that lines of 5-3 or 6-3 chords handled contrapuntally as though they were lines of single notes may lead logically to what seem to be most surprising harmonic combinations, though the methods by which such chords are arrived at are radically different from those of the deliberate harmonist.²⁰⁰

Warlock dedicated his *Three Carols* (*Tyrley Tyrlow*, *Balulalow* and *The Sycamore Tree*, 1923) to Vaughan Williams who gave the first performance with the Bach Choir and orchestra in the Queen's Hall on 18.12.1924 in a programme which included his *Pastoral Symphony*. It was, in fact, he who persuaded Warlock to arrange them in this form, writing to him after the performance, saying:

We all enjoyed performing your beautiful carols very much - and they went "con amore" if not with deadly accuracy - the poor old B[ach] C[hoir] has never moved so fast before!²⁰¹

The critic of the *Musical Times* wrote favourably about this first performance of these carols:

those for whom mysticism means mistiness and vacuity rather than exceptional clarity of vision. Misty subjects have an irresistible attraction for him - London, the Sea, the Fen Country. He aims at the sublime by sheer ponderosity, as Handel did: but where Handel achieved a colossus, Vaughan Williams only manages a rather uncomfortable rhinoceros with flabby legs". Heseltine, "The Condition of Music in England", *The New Age*, June 1917, no.1292, v.21, no.7, p.156.

¹⁹⁹ Gray, op. cit., pp.78-79.

²⁰⁰ Hull, (editor) op. cit., pp.508-509.

²⁰¹ Copley, op. cit., p.195.

The finale was Three Carols by Mr. Peter Warlock...The second of them, sweet in tune and harmony (sweet as a bed of flowers rather than a bowl of sugar) was encored. Choral society conductors, if present, surely took notice....²⁰²

In December 1925 Warlock wrote to Taylor with great enthusiasm and conviction about Vaughan Williams's music:

I shall send you a work for chorus and orchestra by Vaughan Williams, which has been lately published - "Sancta Civitas"²⁰³ - which seems to be one of the greatest achievements of our time - certainly, with the Pastoral Symphony, the highest point yet reached by a contemporary Englishman....

Vaughan Williams is the only outstanding figure we have - and he is getting steadily better and better. As soon as it is available, you should get the Cape Town Orchestra to do his suite "Flos Campi"²⁰⁴ for viola solo, small orchestra and a small chorus (no words): a work of unique originality and purest beauty.²⁰⁵

In one of his last letters to Taylor Warlock again mentions two of his favourite Vaughan Williams works:

The best new work for chorus and small orchestra that I know is Vaughan Williams's Flos Campi; the score and parts are now published (O.U.P.). On the whole, I would bracket V.W.'s Pastoral Symphony with Elgar's Introduction and Allegro for strings as the best English orchestral music of this century.²⁰⁶

In fact, such was his enthusiasm for Vaughan Williams' *Pastoral Symphony* that he wrote practically all of it out in a two-stave piano reduction, presumably with the intention of studying it.²⁰⁷ From time to time in this study reference has been made to Warlock's scurrilous and unprintable limericks about some of his contemporaries. In most cases decency forbids only verbal mention. His one on Vaughan Williams, with its clever play on English upper-class accents, is, however, innocuous enough not to cause any offence:

²⁰² *Musical Times*, 1924, p.167.

²⁰³ First performed in Oxford the following year.

²⁰⁴ 1925.

²⁰⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

²⁰⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

²⁰⁷ Tomlinson, *A Peter Warlock Handbook Vol.2*, Triad Press, Rickmansworth, 1977, p.81.

The first name of Williams is Vaughan,
 'Twas decreed so before he was born.
 Now I'm glad to relate
 It's the same up to date
 And will be the same when he's gaughan.

Together with Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Benjamin Britten and Michael Tippett (b.1905),²⁰⁸ William Walton (1902-1983) is probably the other most important of the British twentieth century composers. Largely self-taught after his time as a chorister at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, he was taken up by the influential Sitwell family in 1919 and exposed to many of the important figures in the London artistic world at an early age. The first performance of his innovative work *Faade* (1921), for speaker and chamber orchestra, caused a stir at its first public performance in 1926, but it was his Viola Concerto, first performed in 1929 at a Prom concert with the composer, Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)²⁰⁹ as soloist, that established his reputation and career as a composer.

The young Walton was for a time part of Warlock's London set of friends²¹⁰ but, as he remarked some years later in a conversation with Ian Copley, he found the pace even more than he could cope with as a young man. Writing about this Copley uses a rather coy euphemism - "[Walton] found the convivial pressures more than he could manage".²¹¹ In the biography of her husband, Susana Walton writes that of the musicians who gathered at the Sitwell home:

...some William didn't like very much, like Heseltine (known as Peter Warlock), who led a tormented life, indulged in black magic practices, and eventually committed suicide.²¹²

When Warlock wrote to Taylor from London in 1929 telling him about this promising new young composer, Walton had written but a handful of works; his

²⁰⁸ English composer.

²⁰⁹ German composer, conductor, violist and teacher.

²¹⁰ Gray records Warlock's early prediction about Walton: "'You will see,' he said to me one day, 'that youth will go a long way'...." Gray, *Musical Chairs*, Home & Van Thal, London, 1948, p.285.

²¹¹ Copley, op. cit., p.18.

²¹² Walton, S., *William Walton: Behind the Faade*, O.U.P., Oxford, 1989, p.543.

choral masterpiece, *Belshazzar's Feast* (1931) and the two Symphonies (1935 and 1960) were yet to come:

There is a good *Sinfonia concertante*²¹³ for piano and orchestra, in three movements, by Walton (Oxford Press). His *Portsmouth Point*²¹⁴ is exhilarating, but it needs a very large orchestra and is extremely difficult.²¹⁵

In one of his last letters to Gray written two months before his death, Warlock included a long paragraph about contemporary British music referring to Walton in particular. The references to Bax, Ireland and Elgar are interesting as they show the direction Warlock's tastes had taken towards the end of his life:

Walton's work impresses at every hearing. He is the best musician this century has produced for a long while. Lambert is perhaps more talented, but I do not feel that music is his ultimate mode of expression. His keen observation, sensibility, wit, and critical intellect seem rather to point to literature as his medium, whereas Walton is specifically musical or nothing. Bax, as usual, drove me out of the hall after ten minutes. Ireland's concerto²¹⁶ is very interesting but by no means a great or particularly original work. My greatest musical experience has been Elgar's second symphony²¹⁷ of which the old gentleman gave a most moving performance.

The "Severn Suite"²¹⁸ is all balls, of course.

In conclusion an example of Warlock at his most devastating in condemning a composer: Taylor had asked his opinion of the works of W.G. Whittaker, described in music dictionaries as composer, organist, conductor and scholar. His two volume studies of the Bach Cantatas²¹⁹ is, in fact, a superb piece of scholarship and still the standard English reference book on the subject. As will be seen in a later chapter on Warlock's scholarly work, the two men had disagreements over matters of editorial practice. Whittaker was for a time general editor of the Oxford Choral Songs series in which a number of Warlock's transcriptions were published. Their dealings had not always been to Warlock's satisfaction so it is not surprising that in

²¹³ 1927, revised 1943.

²¹⁴ A concert overture (1925).

²¹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

²¹⁶ Concerto for piano in E flat.

²¹⁷ No.2 in E flat, Op.63 (1903-11).

²¹⁸ Elgar's *Severn Suite*, originally written for brass band in 1930, was orchestrated by the composer two years later.

²¹⁹ O.U.P., London, 1959.

his reply to Taylor there are some rather dismissive remarks about Whittaker's compositions. Warlock finds it helpful to bring in his *bête noir*, Holst, for good measure just in case Taylor was left in any doubt as to the intensity of his contempt for poor Whittaker:

You asked me recently what I thought of the works of W.G. Whittaker. I have seen two choral works - "The Celestial Sphere" and "A lyke-wake dirge"²²⁰ which seem to me to be pretentious and turgid rubbish of the very worst kind, without a single trace of anything that be regarded as a redeeming feature. He is even worse than Holst, which is saying a very great deal.²²¹

It is interesting to speculate as to what Warlock would have had to say about the music written in England since his death sixty years ago. No one can, of course, predict what his reaction to something as subjective as music would be, but in the case of Warlock two things are quite certain: first that he would have continued to expose and criticise what he thought to be less than honest and, secondly, he would have championed those causes and that music in which he believed just as fervently as he did during his tragically short life.

²²⁰ For chorus and orchestra.

²²¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.6.1925.

CHAPTER 10

WARLOCK WRITES ABOUT FOREIGN COMPOSERS

Béla Bartók has done some very fine small works...Schönberg still shows a cold, white light, but he will never escape from the toils of his self-imposed originality - I cannot think of a single other name that does not seem to belong to a barrel-organ grinder or his performing monkey rather than to a composer.¹

In his reminiscences of the schoolboy Warlock at Eton, Taylor commented that:

When reading the earlier Philip Heseltine letters the date of the writer's birth, 1894, should be kept in mind. Although some of the letters bear the stamp of adolescence and its attendant vehemence and restlessness, most of them show astonishing maturity of thought and expression. Hardly a page but reveals a penetrating and analytical mind. Occasionally we may be tempted to smile a little at the bewildering rapidity of mood changes and at the enthusiasms which jostle and supercede one another, but Heseltine was never of those who allow enthusiasms or opinions to become atrophied.²

In the course of his correspondence with Taylor, Warlock wrote in some considerable detail about forty-five different composers, twenty-three of whom are British and twenty-two foreign: Austrian, Finnish, French, German and Hungarian. Most of these are contemporary composers but included in his writings are established names from the Classical and Romantic eras such as Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. Whilst still a schoolboy Taylor had instilled in Warlock an interest in contemporary music which remained with him throughout his life. Often in the face of hostility from press and public alike he nevertheless continued to champion the cause of modern composers, especially those he felt had been unjustly neglected.

Warlock's writings about these many diverse composers and their equally diverse styles make fascinating reading. As has been noted in the previous chapter these letters not only document the kind of music performed in England during the first

¹ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 15.5.1918, quoted by Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, pp.173-176.

² Taylor, *A Note on the Philip Heseltine Letters in the Possession of Colin Taylor*, Cape Town, UCT Libraries, BC76 C3.11.

quarter of this century but also offer first-hand information about Warlock's changing tastes, his enthusiasms, his dislikes and also his all-pervading sense of humour.

For example in November 1918 he writes ecstatically from London about the Mozart *Clarinet Quintet* in A (K 581):

Yesterday I heard for the first time a work that is surely one of the most nearly perfect and flawless masterpieces that has ever been written - Mozart's Quintet for clarinet and strings. Not for a long time have I been so completely surprised by any piece of music, nor so completely enchanted.³

Some six years earlier he had written to Taylor from Cologne about works by Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms which he had recently heard:

I heard Mozart's "Figaro"⁴ at the Cologne opera shortly before I left, with very great, though unexpected, enjoyment!

Also a Mozart symphony, though I entirely failed to appreciate works by Beethoven and Brahms at the same concert.⁵

Although appreciative of Mozart, the young Warlock was not so enthusiastic about some other major classical composers. There seems almost to be a hint of the wilful rebel when in 1912 he writes the following about Beethoven. The concert in question was one given in the Oxford Town Hall on 23.5.1912 with Hugh Allen conducting a programme of works by Mendelssohn, Smetana, Beethoven and Delius. Stanford conducted his 7th Symphony in the same programme:

I liked the Beethoven⁶ very much, though after hearing "Brigg Fair",⁷ I am afraid I came no nearer to sympathizing with people who say Beethoven was the greatest musician that ever lived!⁸

³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.11.1918.

⁴ *Le Nozze di Figaro*, K.492 (1786).

⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.3.1912.

⁶ Symphony no.5 in c, Op.67 (1804-8).

⁷ *Brigg Fair: an English Rhapsody for orchestra*; variations on a Lincolnshire folk-song (1907).

⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.5.1912.

And again, five months later, he describes a concert he had been to in Birmingham the previous day, a concert which included works as diverse as a Bach Brandenburg Concerto, "some monkey-tricks" (as he describes them) by Moriz Rosenthal (1862-1946),⁹ Elgar's *The Music Makers* (Op.69. 1902-12) and "Coriolan"¹⁰ which bored me to distraction...I know no 'classical' music whatever that appeals to me at all strongly".¹¹

The following comments on Beethoven, in a letter from Cefn Bryntalch the next year, were even more vehement in their condemnation:

How I loathe Beethoven! I wonder why - I don't exactly know, but the fact remains.¹²

It is to his credit that some six years later he could write so openly of his reconsidered opinion - from his so-called "loathing" to an exuberant enthusiasm coupled with an almost humble respect. His request asking Taylor to send him Beethoven scores once again illustrates his eager and constant desire to expand his musical horizons:

Not so very long ago I should have laughed if anyone had suggested that in 1919 I should go to a concert and be enchanted, overwhelmed by a Beethoven Symphony after the performance of a new Delius work had left me cold and disappointed! Yet this happened last Saturday at Queen's Hall: and I do not yet know whether my sadness at the decline of one whose earlier works have moved me perhaps more than any other music, and indeed do still, is not compensated by the intense delight that has followed upon my ears becoming suddenly opened to the splendour of Beethoven! I am more than ever convinced that young people ought to begin with the moderns and work back through them, through a surfeit of them, to the older masters. And really, there is something in the "test of time": the world at large is as nearly always wrong about its contemporaries. Even Beethoven has not yet come fully to his own, for one sees that the very best work of all - the most mature, which are not yet a century old, are still comparatively unknown, or at least seldom played - the last quartets, the 9th Symphony,¹³ the marvellous Diabelli Variations¹⁴ and others. And yet one knows what the verdict of time will be on these works far more surely than one knows how it will treat one's contemporaries - even those one is

⁹ Polish pianist and pupil of Liszt; considered one of the greatest artists of the time.

¹⁰ Op.62 (1807), by Beethoven.

¹¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 2.10.1912.

¹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1913.

¹³ Op.125 (1817-23).

¹⁴ Op.120 (1819-23).

most sure of oneself: and this certainty, I rather think, gives a kind of satisfying solidity and firmness to one's joy in the older masters - a superadded delight that one cannot feel in more recent art, even though in some respects it may move one more profoundly.

P.S. If you have any Beethoven handy that you could lend me I'd be very grateful. The Symphonies are absolutely unprocurable in score and I do not even possess the later piano sonatas. What was that nice edition you used to have at Eton with green covers and introductory notes?¹⁵

It is interesting to read a contemporary account of this same concert (Queen's Hall, 11.1.1919) which appeared in the *Musical Times*. Here are the full details of the programme, typical in London at that time:

The hall was crowded on January 11, many people being turned away. One would like to think that the music was the main attraction, but it was evident that the majority had come to greet Madame Calvé,¹⁶ and to revive memories of past operatic joys. The famous singer delighted the audience with Gounod's¹⁷ 'O ma lyre immortelle', David's¹⁸ 'Charmante oiseau', and the 'Habanera' from 'Carmen'. The musical interest of the concert centered in the first performance of an Orchestral Ballad by Delius, 'Once upon a time' [*Eventyr*], based on Norwegian folk-lore but with no definite programme.¹⁹ The ballad is highly imaginative in a fantastic way, and is beautifully scored. Thanks to some thrilling climaxes, it may achieve the popularity that the composer's works have so far escaped. Mr. Delius was present, and had a very cordial reception. Mr. de Greef²⁰ gave a notably fluent performance of Saint-Saëns's second Concerto.²¹ The Symphony was Beethoven's A major^{22, 23}

One of Warlock's life-long enthusiasms was the music of "poor neglected" Hector Berlioz (1803-1869),²⁴ as he described this eccentric 19th-century French composer. In Cologne he had heard some of his music at a concert (which included Debussy's *Images pour orchestra*, the second movement *Iberia* being one of his favourites) and wrote the following to Taylor:

¹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.1.1919.

¹⁶ Emma Calvé, 1858-1942, French operatic soprano, particularly noted for her performances as Carmen.

¹⁷ Charles Gounod, 1818-1893, French composer, conductor and organist.

¹⁸ Felicien David, 1810-1876, French composer.

¹⁹ *Eventyr* (1917).

²⁰ Arthur de Greef, 1862-1940, Belgian pianist and composer.

²¹ For piano in g (1868).

²² No.7, Op 92 (1811-12).

²³ *Musical Times*, 1919, p.83.

²⁴ French composer, conductor and critic.

At the same concert, Berlioz' delicious "Queen Mab" ²⁵ was played. I have become very enthusiastic over poor neglected Berlioz, since reading his splendid autobiography, which is one of the most wholly delightful books I have ever come across. I went to Aachen a fortnight ago to hear his "Requiem",²⁶ which is absolutely thrilling! The passage from the Dies Irae, quoted in his book on orchestration, where the four brass bands and the army of drums sound the "last trump" is immensely effective, and worth going any distance to hear. I liked the whole work very much indeed - far, far better than the heavy, gloomy Requiem²⁷ of Brahms, which was the last work of this kind I heard. I suppose that would be called "bad taste"!

Have you any idea why Berlioz is so neglected? I should like to know, since all that I have heard of him has struck me as being particularly fine, interesting and modern.²⁸

For one who composed mostly miniature works it seems strange that Warlock should often write with such obvious admiration of works conceived on an enormous scale (Sorabji's works are another example of Warlock's enthusiasm). His admiration of Berlioz, especially of the *Requiem*, remained throughout his life²⁹ and in the two other references to the composer in the Taylor correspondence there is further praise for the work, this time in letters written from Eynsford:

I find there's very little music that makes a journey to town worth while - though for one of the big works of Berlioz I'd go much further. Gray went to Manchester for the "Requiem" the other day, and tells me he was never more completely overwhelmed by any music.³⁰

And then again, two years later:

Last month I heard the great Berlioz concert at Albert Hall under Hamilton Harty³¹ - a most wonderful and memorable experience - the Hallé chorus with a vast orchestra including 4 of each woodwind, 8 horns, 13 trumpets, 17 trombones, 6 tubas (which ought to be ophicleides) and about a dozen drums. The "Requiem" is undoubtedly one of the very greatest of all musical creations - worthy to rank with the Matthew Passion and the 9th Symphony.³²

²⁵ Orchestral scherzo from the *Romeo et Juliette* symphony, Op.17 (1839).

²⁶ Op.5 (1837).

²⁷ Op.45 (1857-68).

²⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

²⁹ He wrote an article, "Berlioz's 'Mass for the Dead': an Interesting Revival", for the *Daily Telegraph*, a few months before he died, 27.9.1930, p.17.

³⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

³¹ Sir Hamilton Harty, 1879-1941, Irish composer, conductor, organist and pianist.

³² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.2.1927.

As has already been seen from his comments on the Brahms *Requiem* quoted above, Warlock's opinions were less favourable about this work when comparing it with the Berlioz setting. His only other comment on Brahms appears in connection with the Mozart *Clarinet Quintet*:

The Brahms work for the same combination was also played³³ - but though it does not approach the model in any essential respect: the slow movement and the scherzo, however, are excellent - the latter full of the most charming effects. Both works were a great treat for me as I had heard neither of them before - although they were vilely played by four females and an ancient clarinettist (labelled Mus. Bac. in the programme) with indifferent finger technique, no gradation of tone and - to judge from the gaps that were audible at the back of the hall before every phrase - no control whatever over his lungs!³⁴

It is fascinating to read some of Warlock's comments on other important foreign composers. Figures in nineteenth and twentieth century music as varied as Isaac Albeniz (1860-1909), Mily Balakirev, Achille-Claude Debussy (1862-1918), Edvard Grieg (1843-1907), Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881), Alexander Skryabin (1872-1915) and Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896) all appear in the correspondence. Of Albeniz,³⁵ for example, he writes the following postscript to a letter with delightful humour in the last throwaway sentence:

You probably know Albeniz' "Iberia"³⁶ but it was new to me a few days ago and I am completely enchanted. Albeniz died of women, I believe.³⁷

The acquisition of a pianola opened up a veritable treasure chest of musical opportunities for the young Warlock as the following extract from a letter illustrates. It also shows how his youthful enthusiasm, particularly for contemporary music, was coupled with an enquiring and critical mind (e.g. the comments on Bantock and Holst):

I have also, thanks to the pianola, begun to rave over Balakirev of whom I long to know more. I am going to send for a further half dozen rolls of him:

³³ Clarinet quintet in b, Op.115 (1891).

³⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.12.1918.

³⁵ Spanish pianist and composer.

³⁶ 12 piano pieces published in 4 vols (1906-9).

³⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 20.4.1916.

I have three at present, including the amazing Oriental Fantasy, "Islamey",³⁸ which in spite of being 30 years old - a fact that seems incredible when listening to it - licks the orientalism of people like Bantock and Van Holst into fits. It's truly an astounding work. Oh, that one could know all these interesting and wonderful composers, instead of having Bach and Beethoven rammed down one's throat ad nauseam!...Do you happen to know of any book containing information about Balakirev? I have Breitkopf's list of his works, with a brief account of him by Rosa Newmarch,³⁹ but I long to know more about him. His face is too delicious, and his letters to Tchaikovsky (published in T's "Life and Letters") reveal a delightful personality, and a thoroughly modern and keen musical sense, though he used to give it to Tchaikovsky pretty hot when he didn't come up to the mark!⁴⁰

Earlier that month he had already enthused about another work by Balakirev, the symphonic poem, *Tamara*:

Balakireff's "Tamara"...was one long delight to me: the music, per se, is quite marvellous, but when it is embellished by such wonderful scoring as Balakireff has lavished upon it, the effect is indescribable. I have never heard any of his music before, but I have ordered some for the pianola.⁴¹

Throughout his life Warlock showed a great admiration and love for the music of Debussy as illustrated in the following extracts. In an early letter to Taylor from Cologne he is already very articulate on this point and it is interesting to note how he gives Debussy the highest of accolades, placing this work alongside those of his beloved Delius:

Last month a new orchestral work by Debussy was played here: "Iberia":⁴² I will not weary you with any more of my enthusiastic superlatives, but I must say that, next to Delius, this is the finest orchestral work I have ever heard! I heard it twice, rehearsal and performance: it is perfectly marvellous in its subtle impressionism, and absolutely original. Whoever before has undertaken (and really achieved) a musical portrayal of "Les parfums de la nuit", as Debussy has in this work? It is quite wonderful. The audience (or at least half of them) hissed at the end!!!! I was told afterwards, however, that the audience on these occasions consists more of "smart society" people than of music-lovers, like Covent Garden in the summer, so that this disgusting and narrow-minded demonstration is accounted for, though by no means excused by this fact!

³⁸ Pianoforte solo (1869).

³⁹ 1857-1940, English writer on music; writer of programme notes for Promenade Concerts and an early champion of Sibelius and Janáček.

⁴⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1913.

⁴¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1913.

⁴² *Images pour orchestre* no.2 (1906-10).

I believe the work has not been performed in London, except in a 2 piano arrangement. You must hear it when it is played: you would rave over it, I am sure....⁴³

In this same letter Warlock expresses his refreshing delight in a programme of French music which he had heard at a concert the previous week and which had included music by Debussy:⁴⁴

There is not much music here at present except the opera, where a gorgeous production of Meyerbeer's⁴⁵ "Africaine"⁴⁶ is being presented to "Ausverkaufte" houses!...There was a little French concert here last week, where I heard some good things - a sonata for violin by Lekeu,⁴⁷ Debussy's "Minstrals"⁴⁸ [sic] and a lovely "Prélude" by Moret - all exceptionally beautiful - the last a gem! After many doses of Strauss and other modern Germans, I am still convinced of the superiority of contemporary British (& French) composers!

The next two extracts both refer to Debussy's *Prélude à L'Après-midi d'un faune* (1892-4). In July 1913 he referred to a performance of the Debussy work in the ballet version:

About "L'après-midi", I did not mean so much that I liked the dance, and the setting, or thought them particularly appropriate, as that I felt anything that was beautiful was such a relief, after having to listen to music in a horrid concert hall, and stare at a nasty lot of men in white shirt fronts, when one ought to feel in Arcady.⁴⁹

During his discovery of the music of van Dieren, Warlock turned briefly against a number of romantic and impressionist composers (including, to a certain degree, Debussy). Here is the relevant excerpt from a letter written in London:

⁴³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

⁴⁴ The following notice appeared in the *Kölner Stadanzeiger*, 26.1.1912, Abend-Ausgabe, p.2 : "On Friday, 2nd February the Cologne Music Society will present in the Ibach Hall a French evening...." This is obviously the concert referred to by Warlock. Unfortunately the papers provide no further details nor do any reference works give information about the composer, Moret.

⁴⁵ Giacomo Meyerbeer, 1791-1864, German operatic composer who worked mainly in Paris. C.W. Orr wrote that Warlock had "a great and perhaps somewhat uncritical admiration for Liszt and, more surprisingly, Meyerbeer. These I discovered were composers greatly admired by van Dieren, who had a considerable influence on Philip...." Orr, op. cit., p.1.

⁴⁶ 1838-65.

⁴⁷ Sonata for violin and piano in G by Guillaume Lekeu, 1870-94, Belgian composer.

⁴⁸ *Minstrels*, Douze Préludes, Book 1 (1910).

⁴⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1913.

The day of turgid scores has passed with Wagner and Tchaikovsky: and with Debussy, Ravel and Co. who will die sooner, will pass the day of scoring for the eye rather than the ear...early Debussy, of course, excepted - "L'après-midi" is marvellously scored.⁵⁰

Debussy is again referred to in one of his last London letters to Taylor:

...Though by no means new, I think the present century has given us few things more lovely than the best works of Debussy - especially those that are little known, such as the quite late *Etudes* for piano,⁵¹ which are wonderful. Of the orchestral works *La Mer*,⁵² *Iberia*, and *Rondes de Printemps*⁵³ are of rare beauty. *Pelleas*⁵⁴ I'm afraid I can't stomach.⁵⁵

Another enthusiastic discovery on the pianola was Grieg's *Piano Concerto* in a (1868), the only work of his mentioned in the letters. Here is the relevant extract from a letter to Taylor:

Grieg's piano concerto provides me with ecstasies twice daily on the pianola: it really is too wonderful for words.⁵⁶

His only other reference to Grieg comes in a letter written from Newbold Pacey vicarage. Thanking Taylor for a list of piano pieces he writes: "The Grieg ballade I adore, but it is too difficult for me...."⁵⁷ This is presumably Op. 24, *Ballade i form av variasjoner over en norsk folkvis* (1875).

If it were not for his skill as a writer of chansons it would hardly be worth quoting the very brief but sweeping statement Warlock makes about Reynaldo Hahn (1875-1947)⁵⁸ in a letter from Dublin. It is also an important quote because of Warlock's knowledge of and enthusiasm for the French school, particularly the music of Debussy:

⁵⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 18.1.1917.

⁵¹ *Douze Etudes*, to the memory of Chopin, (1915).

⁵² 1903-5.

⁵³ No.3 from *Images pour orchestre* (1906-10).

⁵⁴ The opera, *Pelleas et Melisande* (1892-1902).

⁵⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

⁵⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 31.7.1913.

⁵⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 28.10.1919.

⁵⁸ French composer and conductor.

Do you know the Berceuses of Reynaldo Hahn for piano duet? They are worth all the modern French school put together.⁵⁹

Another minor figure in German music who receives a short mention in an early letter to Taylor is Karl von Kaskel (1866-1943). He was a fairly successful composer living in Dresden and later in Munich who produced orchestral and piano pieces as well as songs and operas. It is about one of the latter, *Der Gefangene der Zarin*⁶⁰ that Warlock wrote from Cologne. His reference to Puccini suggests that he was familiar with his operas and had probably, at some time or another, seen either *La Bohème* (1896), *Tosca* (1900) or *Madama Butterfly* (1904), all of which were composed before this particular letter was written:

The opera here is quite splendid!...I have seen two pieces...a new and melodramatic opera by Karl von Kaskel "Der Gefangene der Zarin", which I enjoyed very much. The music is fairly modern, and very pleasing, though quite unoriginal and rather Puccini-like,⁶¹ with a little bit of the "Tiefland"⁶² style. It was received with immense enthusiasm.⁶³

Despite Warlock's great admiration for the music of Franz Liszt whom he "considered a great composer and was capable of defending with some heat",⁶⁴ there is only one youthful reference to him in the Taylor correspondence. From Newbold Pacey vicarage he writes about one of Liszt's piano transcriptions which he had heard Jan Paderewski (1860-1941)⁶⁵ play the week previously:

I heard Paderewski play in Leamington last week and was immensely disappointed in him. To begin with, he played a horrible piano...he started off with Liszt's transcription of a Bach fugue⁶⁶...which was horrible after having heard Dr. Lloyd play it so often and so splendidly on the organ.

⁵⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 22.8.1918.

⁶⁰ First performed in Dresden, 1910.

⁶¹ Giacomo Puccini, 1858-1924, Italian opera composer.

⁶² Opera (1903) by Eugen d'Albert, 1864-1932, Scottish-born pianist and composer of Anglo-French parentage, German by adoption.

⁶³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

⁶⁴ Cockshott, op. cit., p.128. See also footnote 45.

⁶⁵ Polish pianist, composer and statesman.

⁶⁶ From the *Fantasia and Fugue in g* for organ, BWV 542. In this unpublished letter Warlock quotes the opening two bars of the fugue with the following words written underneath: "O Ebenezer Prout, you are a bloody fool". Ebenezer Prout, 1835-1909; English teacher and theorist who produced innumerable textbooks on music.

Then there was a Beethoven sonata, Schumann's Carnival,⁶⁷ some Chopin pieces (his reading of the heavenly Nocturne in G major⁶⁸ struck me as being almost a caricature) and a Liszt group, with an unutterably loathsome transcription of "Isolde's Liebestod"⁶⁹ as a final encore! Such murderings of Wagner ought to come under the jurisdiction of the censor!⁷⁰

Warlock's writings about Mussorgsky are especially interesting in that he expresses two very contrasting opinions. Firstly there is the nineteen-year old writing about the horror of a four-hour performance of the opera *Khovanshchina* (1873, 5th act unfinished) which he saw at Drury Lane as part of a Russian opera season.⁷¹ Three operas were produced altogether and *Khovanshchina* was performed on 1.7.1913 with a cast that included the legendary bass, Fyodor Chaliapin (1873-1938).⁷² Warlock writes about the performance in some detail:

I went to see Moussorgsky's opera "La Khovantchina" - marvellously staged, acted and sung (especially by the chorus, which is the finest I have ever heard), and, as an historical pageant exceedingly interesting: but the music bored me to distraction, except for a dozen bars in Act II, completely isolated from their context, and as different from the rest of the opera as chalk from cheese. There is a good deal of what sounds exactly like very old ecclesiastical stuff, with a little local colour: which is alright occasionally, since it gives fine opportunities for the chorus, but after four hours of it I was nearly dead. Still, I'm glad to have seen the piece, owing to its marvellous reproduction of the whole atmosphere of Old Russia.

Why has Moussorgsky been so grossly overrated? Hearing Balakireff the next night, I simply could not imagine how anyone would ever have considered Moussorgsky as the best of the bunch, as so many people do.

His songs, of course are quite wonderful in their way, but "Khovantchina" nearly made me sick.⁷³

Some of his opinions changed with time and twelve years later it is revealing to find Warlock writing about the opera, *Boris Godunov*⁷⁴, realizing it to be the masterpiece it undoubtedly is:

The original version of "Boris Godounov" has at last been published. It is a revelation - one of the greatest works ever written. Rimsky-Korsakov had

⁶⁷ *Carnaval; Scènes mignonnes sur 4 notes*, Op.9 (1834-35).

⁶⁸ Op.37, no.2 (1839).

⁶⁹ G.447 (1867); from Wagner's opera, *Tristan and Isolde* (1857-59).

⁷⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.11.1912.

⁷¹ *Musical Times*, 1913, p.535.

⁷² Russian bass singer.

⁷³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.7.1913.

⁷⁴ 1868-9, revised 1871-2.

hardly left one bar untampered with in his addition, had rewritten whole passages, made extensive cuts and otherwise so messed up the work as to deserve the title of arch-pedant of musical history. Henceforth one should say - not Beckmesser⁷⁵ but Korsakov.⁷⁶

Leo Ornstein (b.1895)⁷⁷ was a Russian-born composer and pianist who settled in America in 1907. His early works caused an immense stir on account of their extreme modernity and they have been described as "shatteringly discordant".⁷⁸ Whilst Warlock was a student, Ornstein paid a visit to Oxford to give a recital. Warlock wrote of him thus:

Tomorrow there comes to Oxford, at the invitation of Willie King,⁷⁹ one Léo Ornstein, a wonderful pianist, aged about 20, who has recently given some recitals in Paris with much success. The "Musical Times" describes him as a "young ultra-modern composer who is said to out-Schönberg Schönberg"! I am looking forward immensely to hearing Schönberg played by someone who really understands him, as this man does, since he plays him in public.⁸⁰

Three days later he wrote at length about this concert, the music of Ornstein obviously having held some kind of morbid fascination for him:

Leo Ornstein, he who out-Schönbergs Schönberg,...has regaled us with the strangest of strange musics! Until yesterday I considered Schönberg as being, harmonically, a kind of "ne plus ultra", but, honestly, without the slightest exaggeration, Ornstein is as far "beyond" Schönberg (at any rate in the complexity of his harmonic scheme) as Schönberg is beyond Richard Strauss!! He played us...his own "Wild Men's Dance",⁸¹ "Impressions of the Thames"⁸² and other nameless pieces. Never have I heard anything remotely like them! Technically, they must be, by a very long way, the most difficult pieces in existence. "Sequences" are things abominable to this weird composer! He admits of no system, or form whatever: he claims, like Schönberg, direct inspiration: he is but a medium himself. "What I hear, I write down: when I hear no more I stop", he says. Apparently, his new style all came with a rush one morning, about a year ago! During the last year he appears to have written large quantities of it, but although he is only 20, he

⁷⁵ A reference to the character in Wagner's opera *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1862-7) who steals a song which he thinks is the composition of the cobbler Hans Sachs.

⁷⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1925.

⁷⁷ Ornstein evidently claimed that this date was an error and that he was born in 1892. Perlis, V., "The Futurist Music of Leo Ornstein", *The Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association*, June 1975, v.31, no.4, p.736.

⁷⁸ Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 5th edition, Vol.VI, Macmillan, London, 1961, p.449.

⁷⁹ A contemporary of Warlock at Eton.

⁸⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1914.

⁸¹ *Wild Men's Dance (Danse Sauvage)*, op.13, no.2.

⁸² *Impressions de la Tamise*, op.13, no.1.

has also published a good deal of "ordinary" stuff. The later work is, as yet, in MS. He is not in any sense a follower of Schönberg, whom he thinks too intellectual and formal, because of his "thin" (!) harmony, and use of definite sequences! He had never heard of Schönberg when he began composing in his present style. Calvocoressi⁸³ has lectured about him in Paris,⁸⁴ and is going to do so in London, where Ornstein will give a semi-private, invitation concert, for critics and musicians only, at Steinway Hall on April 24th. The programme will contain only his own and Schönberg's compositions. These developments of "music"(?) are truly fearful and wonderful: we are all old academics now!!⁸⁵

In the typed transcript of this letter in the University of Cape Town Library, Taylor has written in the margin next to the date of the London Ornstein concert, 24th April, "I was present. C.T." There appears, however, to be some confusion as to the date on which this concert actually took place. From examination of copies of *The Times* of London and the *Musical Times* it appears that Ornstein played only twice in London during that particular visit to England: 27th March and 7th April. There is no mention of a concert given on 24th April as stated in Warlock's letter. Judging from the content of this concert of March 27th (Schönberg and Ornstein) in the review which appeared in the *The Times*, this would appear to be the concert referred to above:

Mr. Ornstein is a trick pianist of the first order. An energetic housemaid with a duster might do some of the things he did, but not nearly all of them. His facility is amazing, even if it granted that the actual notes he plays may be the chance of the moment. The "Wild Men's Dance", which has a strong basis of rhythm, was the one among these things which impressed us the most. Probably the writer of the programme note was right in saying that they are meant to be felt, not analysed. They are quite unthinkable, but one is stirred by their crudity, their energy, and often by their absurdity.

...Ornstein played...two numbers from Schönberg's Op. 11...the six little pieces, Op. 19, played continuously so that they were indistinguishable to those who did not know them. Certainly Mr. Ornstein's pieces are more exciting than Schönberg's.⁸⁶

⁸³ Michel Dimitri Calvocoressi, 1877-1944, French-born music critic; after a career in Paris he settled in London.

⁸⁴ At the Sorbonne.

⁸⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.2.1914.

⁸⁶ Also included in the programme were Ornstein's *Two Impressions of Notre-Dame*, Op.16, nos. 1 and 2, *Three Moods* ("Anger, Grief, Joy") Op.22, the *Sonata*, op.26 and a *Prelude*, Op.20, no.2.

The *Musical Times* was more generous in its review of the second concert which took place on April 7th. It is worth quoting an extract if only for the brief reference to the abortive attempt to disrupt the proceedings:

It is not easy to know whether this eccentric player is to be taken seriously...As an executant he displayed some extraordinary special technique, and used it so often as to suggest that his compositions are inspired more by his peculiar command of the keyboard than by any other source...Two very shamefaced young men slunk in for a few minutes and stupidly threw something in the direction of the player, and then slunk out as though they were afraid, or, as we may hope, ashamed of their inane rudeness.⁸⁷

It is perhaps inevitable that a composer like Skryabin should for a time have fascinated the young Warlock. What more tempting to an impressionable, youthful mind than the music of a Russian composer who, in Brussels in 1908, in the words of Michael Kennedy (b.1926):⁸⁸

...came under influence of theosophy and mystical influences [and] regarded his works from that date as preparation for a 'supreme ecstatic mystery' which would accompany a final cataclysm.⁸⁹

Discussing Skryabin's theories in a letter from Winchcombe he writes the following, not without a typically delightful touch of humour:

I think Scriabine's theories for the union of the arts, or rather, the employment of new arts, to help the appreciation of music, are very sound. He is experimenting with Colour and Perfume to fit the music. Having sat through two Wagner operas by the side of a German who had been consuming onions, I appreciate the latter point very fully! From a scientific point of view, I believe the relations between colour and sound are exceedingly interesting.⁹⁰

His opinions on Skryabin were, however, to change rather dramatically over the next few years. In 1917 he wrote in *The New Age* that Skryabin in attempting:

⁸⁷ *Musical Times*, 1914, p.331.

⁸⁸ English critic, author and journalist.

⁸⁹ Kennedy, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music*, O.U.P., 1980, p.602.

⁹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1913.

...to blend the romance of Chopin with the eroticism of 'Tristan', and to press the alloy into the service of theosophy...only succeeded in becoming a kind of psychopathic Gounod.⁹¹

By 1922 he had taken such a dislike to his music that he could write the following letter to the editor of the *Musical Times* under the pseudonym, *Cambrensis*, criticising a proposed performance of the *Poem of Ecstasy*⁹² at the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival that year on the grounds of it being "quite unsuitable for performance in a place of Christian worship".⁹³ His comment to Taylor about this letter after it appeared in print is typical: "any stick being good enough to belabour bad music with!"⁹⁴ The style of this letter is almost a send-up of the rather archetypal, pompous and outraged tone which people of that period sometimes affected when they wrote to the press:

SIR, - It is with considerable astonishment that I observe, in the preliminary programme of the next Three Choirs Festival, that it is proposed to perform Scriabin's *Poem of Ecstasy* in Gloucester Cathedral...It is thoroughly morbid, erotic and sensational in the worst sense of these terms, and its performance at Gloucester would create a most undesirable precedent. Music performed at these festivals cannot fail to influence the general opinion as to the style of composition that is fit and proper for use in our churches...The admission to our Cathedral festivals of a composer whose influence...would be even more destructive of good taste than that of the saccharine school of the last century, might prove a serious hindrance to the success of devoted and learned enthusiasts such as Dr. Edmund Fellowes,⁹⁵ Dr. R.R.Terry,⁹⁶ Archdeacon Gardner,⁹⁷ Mr. Martin Shaw,⁹⁸ and last, by no means least, yourself, Sir, who are now endeavouring to purge our worship music of the impurities of this school - of whom Scriabin is a worthy

⁹¹ Heseltine, "The Condition of Music in England", *The New Age*, June 1917, no.1292, v.21, no.7, p.155.

⁹² *Poem of Ecstasy* (1907-8).

⁹³ Warlock's protest was in vain; the *Poeme d'Extase* was, in fact, the opening item of the Thursday morning cathedral concert at the 1922 Gloucester Three Choirs Festival. Included in the programme were two works by Parry, the first performance of Bliss's *Colour Symphony*, Goossens' *Silence*, Op.31, a poem for chorus and orchestra, as well as Holst's *Two Psalms* (1912) and Verdi's *Requiem*. Williams, C. Lee, Chance, H. Godwin, and Hannam-Clark, T., *Annals of the Three Choirs of Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester: Continuation of the History of Progress from 1895 to 1930*, Minchin & Gibbs, Gloucester, 1932.

⁹⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.2.1922.

⁹⁵ Edmund Horace Fellowes, 1870-1951, English musicologist and editor, Minor Canon of St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

⁹⁶ Sir Richard Terry, 1865-1938, English organist, composer, conductor and scholar; organist of Westminster Cathedral, 1901-24.

⁹⁷ The Ven. George Lawrence Harter Gardner, 1853-1925, Archdeacon of Cheltenham and Honorary Canon of Gloucester Cathedral (1920); author of *Worship in Music*, S.P.C.K., London, 1918.

⁹⁸ Martin Shaw, 1875-1958, English organist, composer and conductor.

successor - and to reveal to us the more worthy treasures of our grand old English tradition.⁹⁹

This brief compliment paid to the clergyman-scholar, Fellowes, an editor of Tudor and Jacobean music, is, by the way, not typical of Warlock's writings about this particular musical cleric. As will be seen in the next chapter Warlock disapproved strongly of some of Fellowes' editorial practices and regularly criticized him in print during the 1920s.

Finally, reading what he has to say about the French operatic composer, Ambroise Thomas, in a letter to Taylor from Cologne it must not be forgotten that this is a seventeen year old writing what appears to be a very dismissive and superior criticism. Yet out of what appears to be entirely negative comes the embryonic scholar probing a possible source of a later Debussy work.

...the fact that the box [at the opera] was going prevailed upon me to go to see Thomas' "Mignon",¹⁰⁰ which I must admit quite frankly is the very worst, most absolutely uninspired and banal music I have ever heard, while the plot is absurd beyond description. I can often enjoy a good vulgar song, but this kind of music is something too awful for words! The only point of interest to me was that a chorus in the first act revealed a possible source of the chief figure in Debussy's Arabesque¹⁰¹ in G.¹⁰²

Besides writing about these 19th-century composers, Warlock's letters also refer to several major figures in 20th century music, names such as Bartók, Berg, Kodály, Schönberg, Sibelius, Strauss and Stravinsky.

Warlock's associations with and writings about Bartók are of particular importance. Malcolm Gillies has written fully on this subject in a chapter entitled "Bartók, Heseltine, and Gray" in his comprehensive study, *Bartók in Britain: A Guided Tour*.¹⁰³ Here he begins by saying that "among Bartók's early supporters in Britain

⁹⁹ *Musical Times*, 1922, p.124-125.

¹⁰⁰ 1866.

¹⁰¹ A piano piece of 1888.

¹⁰² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

¹⁰³ Gillies, M., *Bartók in Britain: A Guided Tour*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, pp.115-130. See also the two articles by Gillies: "Bartók, Heseltine and Gray: A Documentary Study", *Music Review*, August-November 1982, v.43, nos.3-4, pp.177-191 and "Bartók in Britain: 1922", *Music & Letters*, July-October 1983, v.63, nos.3-4, pp.213-225.

few demonstrated their enthusiasm as keenly and as personally as Philip Heseltine (alias Peter Warlock) and Cecil Gray".¹⁰⁴ Warlock was, however, still very much under the spell of Schönberg's music when he wrote the following early, rather unenthusiastic paragraph to Taylor:

Béla Bartók, about whom my tame Parsee¹⁰⁵ waxed so enthusiastic, disappointed me greatly; I got some piano pieces of his the other day and I find them crude and barbaric, with a considerable element of Hungarian folk-song and "snappy" rhythms, but harmonically they are merely dull - some of them are in two parts throughout, but they sound strange on account of the extraordinary intervals by which the parts progress. His style is as unlike Schönberg as it is possible to imagine!¹⁰⁶ I notice, from the list of his piano works, two sets of easy pieces, without octaves, which might be useful to you for teaching purposes:¹⁰⁷ the first set is merely called "10 leichte Klavierstücke",¹⁰⁸ but the second is called "Gyermekeknek".¹⁰⁹ Apró darabok kezdő zongorázóknak (oktávfogás nélkül) magyarországi gyermek- és népdalok felhasználásával (!!)

This surely rivals the gibberish in Berlioz' "Faust"!¹¹⁰

It appears to mean, Easy pieces for children, based on folk-songs: but it looks truly fearsome in print.¹¹¹

It would seem that Taylor took up his former pupil's suggestion for in 1964 he wrote thus in his reminiscences about the Eton days:

In those days...I was playing and teaching Debussy, Ravel, Schönberg, Scriabin and the then available Bartók hot off the press....¹¹²

During the fruitful year in Ireland Warlock began to develop an interest in and to reassess his opinions of Bartók's music. "He now saw Bartók as a leading composer,

¹⁰⁴ Gillies, *Bartók in Britain: A Guided Tour*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, p.115.

¹⁰⁵ Kaikhosru Sorabji.

¹⁰⁶ The pieces referred to are probably the 14 Bagatelles, Op.6 (1908).

¹⁰⁷ This rather contradicts Gillies' opinion that Warlock was introduced by Taylor to the music of Bartók whilst still a schoolboy. Gillies, op. cit., p.115. From this letter it would seem that it was Warlock who introduced Taylor to Bartók's music by suggesting some of it as possible teaching material.

¹⁰⁸ 1908; two of these pieces were transcribed for orchestra in 1931 and form part of *Five Hungarian Sketches*.

¹⁰⁹ *Three Hungarian (Csikmegyei) folksongs* (1907).

¹¹⁰ Op.24 (1846). In the final scene of this work the chorus of demons sing nonsense words such as: "Tradioun marexil fir tru dinxe burrudixe".

¹¹¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.2.1914.

¹¹² Taylor, op. cit., pp.9-10. He was probably referring to the *10 Easy Pieces* (1908) and *For Children* (1908-9).

similar in stature to van Dieren, Delius, and, with some qualification, Percy Grainger and Irving Berlin":¹¹³

...one is left with three outstanding figures, one summing up the whole quintessence of the past, the other two pointing the road to the future:- Delius, Bernard van Dieren and Béla Bartók. With these I would link the names of Percy Grainger and Irving Berlin,¹¹⁴ who work in narrower fields but achieve, in their restricted area, what genius alone can.¹¹⁵

By the next year he was writing to Taylor with unreserved enthusiasm, completely revising his earlier opinions:

The Bartók Bagatelles¹¹⁶ are magnificent: they are by far his best work. Looking at them anew after nearly a year without music, I find most wonderful revelations in them...Last year I never hoped to be able to perform the Bartók bagatelles, and even thought of having them cut for pianola: now I am well on the way to their mastery - even of no. X - the best (save, perhaps, for XII - with the repeated notes and curious little scales - which is a marvel and the hardest of them all.¹¹⁷

The next day he wrote to Delius expressing similarly enthusiastic, if rather cynical, sentiments:

At present there is only Bernard van Dieren who can even share the name of composer with you: Béla Bartók has done some very fine small works, but I have seen nothing of his that is less than ten years old. I hope the war has left him unscathed: he might become a very great man.¹¹⁸

In fact his admiration for Bartók's music had increased to such a degree that in 1918 he wrote to Gray telling how he was attempting to use some of the Hungarian's techniques in the composition of his *Folksong Preludes* for piano:

¹¹³ Gillies, op. cit., p.116.

¹¹⁴ 1888-1989, Russian-born American composer of popular music.

¹¹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 18.1.1917. In the same year he wrote in similar vein: "[Grainger] may be said to express modern England in much the same way that Irving Berlin expresses modern America...Grainger builds upon the folk-songs of the day before yesterday: Irving Berlin *makes* the folk-songs of to-day. Both these composers excel in the expression of simple, effervescent jollity, alternating with simple, unashamed sentimentality. Both are real primitives - which is a healthy sign". Heseltine, op. cit., p.156.

¹¹⁶ 14 Bagatelles, Op.6 (1908). No.14 was transcribed for orchestra, the second of *Deux Portraits*, Op.5 (1907-8).

¹¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.5.1918.

¹¹⁸ Letter from Warlock to Delius quoted in Gray, op. cit., p.173-176.

I have lately made a great many experiments with Celtic tunes without approaching the solution of the problem of their adequate...treatment...Any attempt to make little works which coincide with the structure of the melody - extending nothing, curtailing nothing - formally analogous in method to Grieg with his Norse tunes and Bartók with the Hungarian - seems foredoomed to failure.¹¹⁹

His knowledge of and admiration for Bartók's music continued to increase over the next few years and in the September 1920 issue of *The Sackbut*¹²⁰ he hailed Bartók "as the equal of van Dieren, second only to Delius".¹²¹

"By early November Heseltine thought it was time to establish personal contact with Bartók. In a letter, now lost, he expressed his admiration of Bartók's music, [and] told of *The Sackbut*'s plans to promote it".¹²² As a result of this letter the two men began corresponding, Bartók being delighted by the fact that his music was being propagated in Britain and sensing also that such a friendship could be of benefit to him. Warlock even invited him to contribute articles for *The Sackbut* and one entitled "The Relation of Folk Song to the Development of the Art Music of our Time" was published in the June 1921 issue.¹²³

Although Warlock was replaced as editor of *The Sackbut* in 1921, thus losing his most potent means of promulgating his views, both he and Gray continued to promote Bartók's cause, acting as the "British watchdogs" of his reputation.¹²⁴

In April 1921, during the course of a holiday which took him to North Africa and Italy, Warlock managed to include a visit to Budapest where he met both Bartók and Kodály, staying with the former.¹²⁵ With typical enthusiasm he wrote to Delius from the Hungarian capital saying: "Bartók is quite one of the most lovable

¹¹⁹ Undated letter from Warlock to Gray, quoted in Gray, op. cit., p.184.

¹²⁰ *The Sackbut*, September 1920, v.1, no.5, pp.220-221.

¹²¹ Gillies, op. cit., p.119.

¹²² Gillies, *ibid.*, p.119.

¹²³ *The Sackbut*, June 1921, v.2, no.1, pp.5-11.

¹²⁴ Gillies, op. cit., p.124.

¹²⁵ "Many years later, Bartók's first wife's strongest recollections about this visit concerned Heseltine's personal appearance: pink shirt, lilac-coloured cravat, and reddish beard!" Dille, D., "Vier unbekannte Briefe von Béla Bartók", *Oesterreichische Musikzeitschrift*, September 1965, v.20, p.456, quoted by Gillies, op. cit., p.122.

personalities I have ever met".¹²⁶ On his return to Wales he wrote to Taylor telling of this meeting:

While travelling about last spring I went to Budapest and made the acquaintance of Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály and heard many of their works. They have both been for a number of years too much absorbed in their own work to pay overmuch attention to that of their contemporaries - which is a very healthy sign in these days when everybody's music sounds exactly the same as everybody else's. Bartók has done some stupendously great works - great in conception and idea, not in size - always multum in parvo. But he has, alas, now got the ballet craze¹²⁷ - rather late in the day - which is a pity.¹²⁸

Having met Bartók, Warlock was even more determined to promote his cause as much as he could. Correspondence between them continued and in March 1922 the *Musical Times* published an article by Warlock, "Modern Hungarian Composers",¹²⁹ a kind of preparation for Bartók's forthcoming tour of Britain. In this short article Warlock attempted to make people aware of the unaccountable neglect of these composers in the contemporary English music scene. It is interesting to note that after visiting the University of Aberystwyth, during his 1922 concert tour of England, where the Professor of Music, Walford Davies, had invited him to play some of his own piano compositions, Bartók broke his journey back to London and visited Warlock at Cefn Bryntalch on Friday, March 17th. The evidence for this is contained in a telegram sent from London by Warlock to Bartók in Aberystwyth:

Take morning express through to Newtown¹³⁰ to-morrow will meet you there much regret unavoidably detained here today Heseltine.¹³¹

In his memoir Gray confirms that this visit did, in fact, take place.¹³²

¹²⁶ Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1943, p.213.

¹²⁷ A reference to Bartók's two ballets: *The Wooden Prince*, Op.13 (1914-16) and *The Miraculous Mandarin*, Op.19 (1919).

¹²⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.19.1921.

¹²⁹ *Musical Times*, 1922, pp.164-167.

¹³⁰ Cefn Bryntalch is about five miles from Newtown.

¹³¹ Aberystwyth, University College of Wales, telegram from Heseltine to Bartók, 16.3.1922, quoted in Gillies, *Bartók in Britain: 1922*, Music and Letters, July-October 1983, v.63, nos.3-4, p.220.

¹³² Gray, op. cit., p.213.

Although Warlock, Gray and Bartók met during the latter's subsequent visit to Britain in May 1923, it would seem that the friendship was "not maintained at its previous level...there was a drifting apart in interests rather than any confrontation".¹³³ When Bartók made a second tour of Britain later in 1923 there is no evidence that they met though Warlock had made a point of especially praising Bartók's opera, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* (1911), in his book on Delius which appeared the same year.

One of Warlock's last references to Bartók in his letters to Taylor appears in one where he also expressed some criticisms of Delius's music:

Delius, I think, wears very badly...one long[s] for the clean lines, harmonic purity and formal balance of the Elizabethans and of Mozart - or else for the stimulating harshness and dissonance of Bartók, and...Stravinsky....¹³⁴

These comments are echoed in an exchange about a recent broadcast of Bartók's 4th Quartet (1928) which took place between Delius and Warlock at the time of the Delius Festival in October 1929. Eric Fenby recalls the occasion:

Now it happened that just at that moment...Delius...was holding forth to Bernard [van Dieren] about some work being 'infantile and horrible.'

'What is that, Fred, that you are talking about?' asked Heseltine.

'Oh, Bartók's Fourth Quartet,' replied Delius. 'Did you hear it, Phil?'

'Yes.'

'So did I. I thought it was dreadful! I'm sick and tired of this laboured writing, all this unnecessary complication, these harsh, brutal, and uncouth noises. How anybody can listen to such excruciating sounds with understanding and pleasure is beyond me! What did you think of it, Phil?'

'I'm sorry, Fred, but I don't agree with you. I think it is a masterpiece. For sheer beauty of sound it is one of the wonders of music.'

'Well,' sighed Delius, shaking his head, 'well!...' and relapsed into silence.¹³⁵

¹³³ Gillies, *Bartók in Britain: A Guided Tour*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989, p.126.

¹³⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

¹³⁵ Fenby, op. cit., p.61.

The very same year that Arnold Schönberg published his treatise on harmony, *Harmonielehre* (1911), a rather puzzled seventeen-year-old Warlock wrote to Taylor from Cologne about this new strange modern composer he had just discovered:

I have also studied carefully a piano piece by Schönberg!¹³⁶ That is, the harmony, for I could not play it. It is appalling, to my ears! One interesting point about the piece is what seems to be an experiment in piano harmonics! (Also he writes for a 3 pedal piano!) The chord F, A, C sharp, E is directed to be held but not struck, in the right hand, while the left hand plays the notes of the chord, in various different forms below (without pedal) causing the sustained chord itself to vibrate! Above the chord for the right hand is a G in brackets with the word "Flag," which I take to mean "harmonic" from the chord, though I cannot hear it!...Schönberg has written a book about his harmony, the foundation of which is, I am told, 4ths instead of 3rds as in ordinary harmony. Consequently, a profusion of minor 9ths and other horrors, instead of octaves! Not that 9ths are not often very pleasant, but his are awful!¹³⁷

Although not yet really coming to terms with Schönberg's music himself, he was quick to jump to his defence when he read a rather sneering and derogatory article in the *Musical Times*¹³⁸ by Frederick Corder (1852-1932).¹³⁹ He wrote to Taylor expressing the view, in a passionate and admirable way, how critics should be fair in their writing:

...I positively abhor the writings of F. Corder, whoever he may be, and much as I dislike Schönberg, I think it is disgracefully unfair to allow a person who I should imagine is rather an inferior critic (though I know nothing about him beyond having read a scathing criticism of one of his compositions and also some inane writings of his) to jeer at a man who has conscientiously invented a new method of harmony, has written a book about it, and lectured about it, without placing some idea of his aims and new methods before the public at the same time.¹⁴⁰

The next year he was back in Wales writing to Taylor about a performance of these very pieces that had just been given in London:

¹³⁶ No.1 of 3 *pieces*, Op.11 (1908).

¹³⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

¹³⁸ Corder, F., "An Epoch-making Composer", *Musical Times*, 1911, pp.781-782. The article contained sarcastic phrases such as: "I fancy if they [Drei Klavierstücke, Op.11] were transcribed for the pianola and the roll reversed they would sound still better".

¹³⁹ Professor of composition at the Royal Academy of Music whose pupils included Bantock and Bax.

¹⁴⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.12.1911.

Did you notice in the papers that Arnold Schönberg's three piano pieces were played in London last night...for the first time in England? I suppose the criticisms will be of the usual sneering order, carefully avoiding to give the public any information about his methods.¹⁴¹

Actually Warlock was proved wrong - by one critic at any rate. In the *Musical Times* there is the following report - it can hardly be called a review - of this very concert. There is no sneering although, to be fair, Warlock was right about this particular critic not giving the public any information about Schönberg's methods:

Mr. Richard Bühlig,¹⁴² the able and scholarly pianist, gave recitals at Steinway Hall on January 11, 16 and 22...and played Schönberg's 'Drei Klavierstücke.'¹⁴³

Soon after his return to Germany the next month Warlock wrote to tell of Schönberg's new treatise on harmony which he was in the process of studying:

Arnold Schönberg has just published an exceedingly interesting "Harmonielehre" which deals with the whole of harmony, from the rudiments, down the whole tone scale and the Schönberg method of "Quarten-Akkorde", besides much other interesting matter. I have not yet read very much of it but I can see that at last here is a book which does not lay down the law pedantically, but explains, as the author says, as much from an aesthetic as a technical point of view. I shall devour it all with great interest.¹⁴⁴

In his next letter he writes about an article he had just written on Schönberg which he hoped to have published:

I have just written an article on Arnold Schönberg,¹⁴⁵ compiled chiefly from portions of his book, and two very interesting papers, analyzing his work and methods, which appeared recently in Germany: I propose sending it to the *Musical Times*, though I fear it will not be accepted because such parts of it as are not culled from other sources, are directed against the critics of the Corder type, who consider their judgment infallible, and dub new music, which their limited intelligence cannot grasp with much the same words as they dubbed "Tristan and Isolde" "the climax of cacophony".

¹⁴¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 24.1.1912.

¹⁴² 1880-1952, American pianist who studied in Chicago and in Vienna with Lescheitzky; appointed in 1918 as teacher of piano at the Institute of Musical Arts, New York, eventually settling in Los Angeles as a performer and teacher.

¹⁴³ *Musical Times*, 1912, p.115.

¹⁴⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.2.1912.

¹⁴⁵ The article eventually appeared in *The Musical Standard*. Heseltine, "Arnold Schönberg", *The Musical Standard*, 21.9.1912, v.38, no.977, pp.176-178.

Schönberg is exceedingly interesting, though I cannot claim to understand a single bar of his music!

He admits that his compositions are governed entirely by a strong inspiration, that literally dictates the works to him as he writes! He can find no theory to explain his new chords, but supposes vaguely that the chromatic scale and "fourths" play the same part in that scheme he has not yet fully explored, as the diatonic scale and "thirds" play in the "ordinary" harmonic scheme! It is really very remarkable, especially as those who can understand him (among whom is Busoni) rave over him! He sometimes writes chords containing 11 of the 12 notes of the chromatic scale! However, from all the evidence, I cannot believe it is a pose or a joke.¹⁴⁶

As the article mentioned was refused unseen by the *Musical Times* Warlock sent it to *The Musical Standard* who published it in their September issue. Although it was Warlock's first published article on music it was not, however, his first article to appear in print. That, amazingly enough, was one entitled "The Van Railway" describing a railway in central Wales a short way up the Severn Valley from Cefn Bryntalch.¹⁴⁷

All this discussion about Schönberg must have whetted Taylor's appetite for he probably wrote to Warlock asking him to send him a copy of the *3 Piano Pieces*, Op. 11. Replying from Chadlington, Warlock writes:

I am sending you by the same post as this a miscellaneous collection of music...The themes (!) of the first Schönberg piece are quite easy to follow, such as they are, but I should think it would take anyone some time to unravel the last. But I am sure there must be something in them, from the way of expression.¹⁴⁸

The Schönberg article of some 2400 words and published in *The Musical Standard* is a quite remarkable piece of writing for a seventeen year old. In it he does not attempt a critical assessment of Schönberg's work. Rather he writes of his theories, his aims and the "chief peculiarities of his style" as well as listing Schönberg's compositions to date. In the course of this article he quotes an important sentence from the *Harmonielehre*: "The artist does, not what others consider beautiful, but

¹⁴⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.3.1912.

¹⁴⁷ *The Locomotive*, 15.1.1912, pp.13-16. In a postscript to an unpublished letter to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch, 24.1.1912, Warlock writes: "My first publication, with illustrations by M.G.S. Blane, appears in this month's 'Locomotive Magazine'!!"

¹⁴⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.6.1912.

what for himself is a necessity". His description of Schönberg's style is also very neatly summarised:

"Schönberg has only attained to this mature and absolutely original style by a steady process...The chief peculiarities of his style consist...in the total absence of any definite tonality...His rhythms, too, are very free, bars being of no consequence whatever...."¹⁴⁹

The appearance of this article resulted in an unexpected exchange of correspondence in the columns of *The Musical Standard* between the author and one who signed himself "S.O.G."¹⁵⁰ Although Warlock wrote a long and confident reply in the issue of 12.10.1912¹⁵¹ in which he pointed out clearly that his "article was designed as information, not as criticism" he obviously panicked rather when "S.O.G." wrote yet again asking Warlock to explain what he meant by "chromatic harmony".¹⁵²

In an urgent postscript to a letter he asked Taylor:

Would you be so very kind as to send me sometime before Saturday next, concise definitions of the words "key", "scale" and "tonality" - the latter is most important of all. I have been dragged into a correspondance [sic] in the "Musical Standard" and after having written a letter of great length in reply to a former objection, the objector, one S.O.G. has popped up again and wants me to explain what I mean by "chromatic tonality" - a term which I used in the original article.¹⁵³

Taylor responded almost immediately and Warlock wrote to thank him for his letter "and definitions of Key, etc."¹⁵⁴ Judging from the ensuing correspondence in *The Musical Standard* these came from Parry's articles on tonality and key in Grove's.¹⁵⁵ After a long discussion about his original article and the resulting correspondence

¹⁴⁹ Heseltine, op.cit., p.177.

¹⁵⁰ S.O.G., "What is Cacophony?", *The Musical Standard*, 28.9.1912, Supplement, p.40.

¹⁵¹ Heseltine, "Arnold Schönberg and Cacophony", *The Musical Standard*, 12.10.1912, v.38, no.980, p.233.

¹⁵² S.O.G., "Arnold Schönberg and Cacophony", *The Musical Standard*, 26.10.1912, Supplement, p.44.

¹⁵³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 28.10.1912.

¹⁵⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.11.1912.

¹⁵⁵ Heseltine, Letter entitled "Chromatic Tonality", *The Musical Standard*, November 1912, p.299.

with "S.O.G." he asks Taylor's advice as to whether the examples of so-called "chromatic tonality" which he intended bringing forward if requested, really did exemplify chromatic tonality or the absence of tonality. He ends the letter with the humorous remark:

If I have made an utter fool over myself over this tonality affair, I shall have to get out of it some how, if only by saying it was all meant for a huge joke!!!!

There is the feeling that, although a little out of his depth and perhaps a little nervous about this whole affair, Warlock is rather enjoying his public sparring match with "S.O.G." It was to be the first of many such encounters.

The next reference to Schönberg is in a letter from Newbold Pacey vicarage where he writes briefly of the recently composed *Pierrot Lunaire* Op.21 (1912):

Have you visited the "Cave of the Golden Calf" in London? It seems to be rather interesting, and a prospectus announces that much modern music is to be produced, including some Delius and a new Schönberg work and is said to "exceed Schönberg's previous work in 'advancement' ". It is scored for a "reciting voice on different notes, pianoforte, flute, piccolo, clarinet, bass-clarinet, violin, viola and cello"! It is a song-cycle containing twenty-one poems!¹⁵⁶

Two years later he wrote again from Oxford about Schönberg's piano music, this time the *6 Little Pieces* Op.19 (1911):

[Leo Ornstein] played us Schönberg's six piano pieces, Op. 19, which to my mind are the clearest and simplest compositions of Schönberg's later period that I have come across, - in parts, there is a real glimmer of beauty in some of them: also Op. 11, no. 2 of Schönberg.¹⁵⁷

Still on the subject of the piano music he writes to tell Taylor that he has "just got the three Schönberg pieces, op. 11, on the pianola - which reveals them in quite a new light".¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.11.1912.

¹⁵⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.2.1914.

¹⁵⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.3.1916. C.W. Orr wrote: "One day he brought out a pianola roll of some Schönberg pieces which I think he had had specially cut, and pedalled through them...I could make nothing of them nor, I

However by January 1917 there seems to be a note of waning interest, almost of disillusionment, in the man and his music:

...Schönberg, who, though a man of exceptional intellectual powers, seems to lack the all important spiritual spark.¹⁵⁹

Of Schönberg's pupil, Alban Berg (1885-1935), Warlock writes very little. In one of his last letters to Taylor he merely mentions Berg's *Lyric Suite* for string quartet (1925-6):

The best work I know from Central Europe is Alban Berg's *Suite for String Quartet* - very difficult, but extremely beautiful when properly performed. The Philharmonia publish a miniature score¹⁶⁰...but it is not the kind of stuff one can hear from the score by one's fireside!¹⁶¹

Finland's greatest composer, Jean Sibelius (1865-1957), is referred to on three occasions. The first times in the early correspondence (at the time of the Birmingham Festival of 1912) and in one of the last letters from London in 1929:

Sibelius' new symphony¹⁶² was by far the best event of the evening: it is absolutely original - quite in a class by itself, and uninfluenced by anything, save nature!¹⁶³ It struck me as being genuine: "Nature-music"; it is very strange and mysterious, but at the same time, a work of great beauty, which one would appreciate more and more on repeated hearing.¹⁶⁴

Taylor obviously took up these comments on "Nature-music" and in a letter written from Newbold Pacey we find Warlock discussing the whole concept of the

fancy, could he, although he always spoke of Schönberg with respect, in spite of his forbidding idiom". Orr, op. cit., p.1.

¹⁵⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 18.1.1917.

¹⁶⁰ Miniature score Ph 173.

¹⁶¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

¹⁶² No.4 in a, Op.63 (1911). Warlock is here writing of the first English performance in Birmingham (1.10.1912) which was conducted by the composer.

¹⁶³ Here Warlock is perhaps echoing Delius's comments made after the same performance: "Sibelius interested me much more - He is trying to do something new & has a fine feeling for nature & he is also unconventional - Sometimes a bit sketchy & ragged". Letter from Delius to his wife, 2.10.1912, Carley, op. cit., p.93.

¹⁶⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 2.10.1912.

representation of nature in Sibelius' music. He was quoting here from notes written especially about this new symphony for the Festival by Rosa Newmarch:¹⁶⁵

As regards Sibelius' symphony, I entirely agree with you. It would be impossible for a composer to be entirely uninfluenced by other composers. At the same time Sibelius is immensely original and when we are told by Rosa Newmarch that his symphony "is music of an intimate nature, and much of it was thought out and written in the isolation of hoary forests, by rushing rapids, or wind-lashed lakes...There are moments when we feel ourselves alone with Nature's breathing things" we may assume that the music has been inspired by nature - i.e. that it is a record of the impressions made upon the composer's mind by the natural objects around him, which communicates a sense of these things to those who hear it. He does not attempt to describe Nature - rustling of trees, etc - but only the "stimmung"¹⁶⁶ produced by it in the mind. This certainly does not preclude the obvious fact that creative art is superior to nature.¹⁶⁷

In a second letter he tells Taylor which Sibelius works he feels have particular merit:

Sibelius's work is very difficult of access in this country. It is seldom performed, and even the British Museum Library is deficient in regard to him. The early *En Saga*¹⁶⁸ and *Swan of Tuonela*¹⁶⁹ and later Symphonies (especially nos. 4 and 6) are masterpieces; and there is a good light suite *King Christian IV*;¹⁷⁰ but his output is enormous, and there is very little difference in style between early and recent works. When he is not deliberately writing down to the mob level (as in *Valse triste*,¹⁷¹) he is entirely unlike anyone else - and the *Saga* of 1903¹⁷² is just as original as the latest of the symphonies (1926¹⁷³).¹⁷⁴

From the various references to Richard Strauss (1864-1971) it would appear that Warlock had no great love of his music. He had written to Delius in 1911 from Cologne saying that he had heard *Der Rosenkavalier*¹⁷⁵ describing it as being very amusing and musically interesting in parts. However he had to confess "that three

¹⁶⁵ Rosa Newmarch's words were also quoted in the review of the Festival in the *Musical Times*, 1912, p.724: "The fourth Symphony, like the earlier ones, is music of an intimate nature, and much of it was thought out and written in the isolation of hoary forests, by rushing rapids, or wind-lashed lakes. There are moments when we feel ourselves alone with Nature's breathing things".

¹⁶⁶ Lit. mood, atmosphere.

¹⁶⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.11.1912.

¹⁶⁸ Op.9 (1892, revised 1901).

¹⁶⁹ Op.22, no.3 (1893-5).

¹⁷⁰ Op.27 (1898).

¹⁷¹ Op.44 (1904).

¹⁷² Warlock gives the wrong date: *En Saga*, Op.9, was written in 1892 and revised in 1901.

¹⁷³ Another wrong date: Symphony no.7 in C, Op.105, was written in 1924.

¹⁷⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

¹⁷⁵ Op.59 (1911).

hours and a quarter of Strauss (exclusive of intervals between the acts)" was rather more than he altogether cared for. *Heldenleben*¹⁷⁶ filled him "with disgust", the only part he liked being the "adversaries" section which he found "distinctly amusing".¹⁷⁷

Writing to Taylor a few days later about that Cologne concert he comments yet again about the same tone-poem:

At the end of the concert came Strauss' "Heldenleben" - a sad come down to my mind, after the Delius!¹⁷⁸ I think it is the worst piece of Strauss I have ever heard, though I liked "Salome"¹⁷⁹ and "Elektra."¹⁸⁰¹⁸¹

The only other reference to the music of Strauss is a passing side-swipe in a letter apropos of something else where the phrase "...a very great advance on the full-throttle-all-out business of Strauss"¹⁸² is thrown in for good measure.

There are five references to Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) spread over twelve years of correspondence. As an eighteen year old he went to see the Russian Ballet and wrote ecstatically to Taylor:

I went to see the Russian Ballet last week, and was quite enraptured. I have seldom seen anything so splendid - music, dancing, scenery, dresses, all quite wonderful, especially in "L'Oiseau de Feu"¹⁸³ by Stravinsky, which is without exception the most astounding orchestral work I have ever heard performed.¹⁸⁴

The next year he wrote from Winchcombe replying to some reference about Stravinsky in a letter he had received from Taylor:

I more than share your enthusiasm for Stravinsky, though I have not been lucky enough to hear any of his work except "L'Oiseau de Feu", which, to my mind, is one of the three or four most perfect musical works I have ever heard. It is one of those things that stand out far and away above

¹⁷⁶ Op.40 (1898-9).

¹⁷⁷ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 25.11.1911, quoted in Gray, op. cit., pp.40-43.

¹⁷⁸ *Brigg Fair*.

¹⁷⁹ Op.54 (1905).

¹⁸⁰ Op 58 (1909).

¹⁸¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.12.1911.

¹⁸² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 18.1.1917.

¹⁸³ 1909-10.

¹⁸⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 27.6.1912.

everything else: it is, as you say, the real thing, which I very seldom feel about any music.¹⁸⁵

A more mature and rather cynical Warlock writes the following from London four years later. Here one has the feeling that he is being deliberately provocative and outrageous when he compares Stravinsky and the popular composer, Irving Berlin:

Some of Stravinsky's tricks may prove useful in the hands of a musician: one is still waiting for the musician. Stravinsky himself is not nearly as good, as an artist, as Irving Berlin ("The Rag-Picker"¹⁸⁶ - "Watch your step"¹⁸⁷ etc). Both are essentially "popular" composers, but I find the latter more clean, direct and sincere, and also, when considering what he manages to express, more important.¹⁸⁸

By 1921 he seems to have become quite disenchanted with Stravinsky's music and writes scathingly:

In the concert world there is a sickening boom of Stravinsky and kindred charlatans - but I think it will soon subside.¹⁸⁹

His last remarks on Stravinsky in the Taylor correspondence are given to *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1911-13) when he observes in a letter from London:

...Stravinsky...*Le Sacre du Printemps*, which really sounds very good when it is played, as it was last night at Queen's Hall, by an enormous orchestra, with quintuple wood-winds, 8 horns, 6 trumpets, and a whole regiment of drums. His subsequent works are extremely brief.¹⁹⁰

This B.B.C. concert was fully reviewed in the *Musical Times*. It was conducted by Ernest Ansermet (1883-1969)¹⁹¹ and the programme consisting of the *Symphony no. 8 in d* by William Boyce (1710-1779)¹⁹² edited by Constant Lambert; *Introduction and Allegro for Strings* (Op. 47, 1905) by Elgar; *L'Martyr de Saint Sebastien* (1911) by Debussy and *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1911-13) by Stravinsky.

¹⁸⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.7.1913.

¹⁸⁶ The full title of this song is *He's a Rag-picker*.

¹⁸⁷ *Watch Your Step*, a revue, music and lyrics by Irving Berlin; his first complete score; produced in New York, 8.12.1914.

¹⁸⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 18.1.1917.

¹⁸⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 17.10.1921.

¹⁹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.1.1929.

¹⁹¹ Swiss conductor and professor of mathematics.

¹⁹² English composer and organist.

It is a rather carping review implying that there had not been enough time to rehearse two unfamiliar works (the Debussy and the Stravinsky). The critic, E.E.,¹⁹³ must have had some "inside" information for he writes as follows:

There had been, I am told, a lengthy and arduous rehearsal only a little while before the concert, and the playing of all wind instruments is liable to suffer from overstrain. Despite Ansermet's intimate knowledge of the score, and his great dexterity, this fatigue, and in some respects the composition of the orchestra, stood in the way of his securing as good a performance as some others London has heard.

About the Debussy he writes:

This...performance will certainly not help the work to great popularity since...the vocal element was deplorably lacking in interpretative imagination. The soloists ploughed through their parts with stolid determination, and scarcely ever conveyed the slightest suggestion of the mystical side of the work, and the chorus fell short of the B.B.C. standard.

Continuing in similar vein he writes about the Constant Lambert edition of the Boyce Symphony thus:

This being easy music, it had probably had to give way to the "Sacre" and Debussy in the matter of rehearsals, for it was played without any buoyancy whatever. People must have wondered what Constant Lambert could have seen in such music to think it deserved re-editing. He certainly saw what the audience did not hear.

The performance that was least open to adverse criticism was that of Elgar's splendid Introduction and Allegro for strings - one of his best works - which, presumably, every player knew. This provoked enthusiasm, which Ansermet prompted the orchestra to acknowledge in the usual manner. Poor man! He had a stupendous task and made the best of it. But the B.B.C. forces had evidently bitten off more than they could chew, at all events in the time allotted for mastication.¹⁹⁴

Did Warlock feel the same way about the music he heard at that concert? Bearing in mind the incident when Evans and Warlock came to blows in the Café Royal¹⁹⁵ it would have been interesting to have on record his comments about such reporting by this particular critic.

¹⁹³ Edwin Evans.

¹⁹⁴ *Musical Times*, 1929, pp.159-160.

¹⁹⁵ Reported by Gray in *Musical Chairs*, Home & Van Thal, London, 1948, pp.112-113.

CHAPTER 11

WARLOCK'S WORK AS A SCHOLAR

I resolved to do my best to produce an edition of Elizabethan songs which would faithfully present the original music without pedantry, antiquarian prejudices or officious emendations.¹

It is very easy for the present-day musical scholar or performer to take for granted the ease with which authentic editions and performances of early music are now readily accessible. Not only is there a plethora of recordings performed stylishly on period instruments; there are also vast numbers of *urtext* performing editions with scholarly notes available for an incredibly wide range of music, especially that of the early period.

Yet when Warlock began his work as a transcriber and editor of early music there had been few scholars of note and even fewer of real musical integrity. The main workers in this field had been or were Edmund Rimbault (1816-1876),² William Barclay Squire (1855-1927),³ John Fuller Maitland, (1856-1936)⁴, Frederick Bridge (1844-1924),⁵ Arnold Dolmetsch (1858-1940),⁶ Frederick Keel (1871-1954),⁷ Canon Edmund Fellowes and Sylvia Townsend Warner (1893-1978).⁸

When producing a bibliography of modern reprints of Elizabethan ayres in 1926 Warlock himself dismissed some of the early editions of Bridge, Keel and Charles Vincent in two neat sentences:

¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.11.1922.

² English organist and scholar, an early editor of works by Tallis, Gibbons and Morley.

³ English musicologist, scholar and critic; editor of works by Byrd and Purcell.

⁴ English critic, editor and harpsichordist; together with Squire he produced an edition of the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book in 1899.

⁵ Composer, conductor and organist.

⁶ English pioneer (of French-Swiss origin) in the rediscovery of early instrumental music.

⁷ English baritone and arranger of old songs, especially Elizabethan.

⁸ English novelist and musicologist specializing in 16th century notation.

No attempt at fidelity to the original music has been made in these editions. The accompaniments have been entirely re-written in a mid-Victorian style, and even the melodies are not correctly given in many examples.⁹

Coupled with this lack of scholarly integrity was a distinct absence of opportunity to study the art of serious musical scholarship. Apart from Arnold Dolmetsch's pioneering book, *The Interpretation of the Music of the XVII and XVIII Centuries*,¹⁰ there was equally little literature available on the subject.

Warlock's interest in editing and transcribing Elizabethan music came via his knowledge and love of the literature of the period which had already manifested itself during his year at Oxford. As Robert Nichols wrote of their friendship during that year: "Sex, literature (especially Elizabethan literature) and music were our great subjects".¹¹

Apart from some advice and help sought from the eminent organist, choirtrainer and scholar, Sir Richard Terry, it would appear that Warlock was entirely self-taught in the art of editing. Terry was an admirer of Warlock's work as a scholar and had been angered by the opposition that he had received in certain quarters. Warlock too had the highest regard for Terry's work as organist at Westminster Cathedral writing to Taylor in 1925 that "apart from van Dieren and the masses at Westminster Cathedral I find there's very little music that makes a journey to town worthwhile...."¹² Hilda Andrews wrote about Terry's opinion of Warlock's work as a scholar:

He admired the work of Philip Heseltine in the edition of instrumental music of the Tudor period, for his delicate, unerring knowledge of the Elizabethan mind in music, for his independence of spirit; Terry's short essay incorporated in Cecil Gray's life of Heseltine...is a trenchant attack on the kind of collective opposition that men such as Heseltine received at the hands of official music in England. He was bitterly angry that independent

⁹ Warlock, *The English Ayre*, O.U.P., London, 1926, p.141.

¹⁰ Novello, London, 1915.

¹¹ Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, p.69.

¹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925. Fenby quotes Warlock on the same subject in 1929: "In Sir Richard Terry's time...he had been continually in and out of Westminster Cathedral. The music in those days had been worth hearing. He deplored the general apathy of the Catholic clergy to the glorious music of the Church". Fenby, op. cit., p.64.

workers of such high calibre could be boycotted by powerful cliques controlling musical interests, it was an abomination to him that any good musician could be considered outside the pale of academic suitability.¹³

Terry's feeling are sincerely amplified in the generous tribute to Warlock's skill as scholar and editor which Gray included his memoir:

For Heseltine's rivals the contriving of a score of Tudor music...appeared usually to be nothing more than matter of ink on paper. From the very first I could see that for Heseltine the score meant vastly more. And he was able to convey that meaning to others in the finished product. The music sprang to life on the page before him...his mind intuitively leaped to the music's true significance - none of the aloof academicians that imagined themselves to be his rivals ever reached that goal....

Heseltine made no parade of learning, but he *knew*. His knowledge was equalled only by his modesty. Before he had grasped a thing thoroughly he always professed entire ignorance of it, and accepted information on the subject from whatever source with childlike humility.

I remember how once...he asked me to instruct him about ligatures;¹⁴ his textbooks, it seemed, were all vague on that point. I showed him a card on which I had prepared a table of ligatures for the use of pupils. He read it through and then burst into laughter, saying: "so that's what they make such a fuss about? I thought it must be some dark and horrible mystery".

...he was a scholar, but not a pedant; a consummate technician, but withal possessed of vision; a creative artist who could penetrate the minds of Elizabethan composers as no mere transcriber could ever hope to do. With his passing England lost an artist, a scholar, and, in the literal sense of a much-abused term, a gentleman.¹⁵

Warlock's work as an editor of early music was marked by an integrity and respect for the work of the composers which was rare at the time. In fact it is not an exaggeration to say that, in many ways, it was he who prepared the ground for the specialist scholars who followed. He considered that the primary task of the editor was to produce in clear, modern notation a literal transcription of what the early composers had written. In this connection he quoted and praised the following words of the Rev. A. Ramsbotham (1870-1932),¹⁶ a member of the Editorial Committee of the Carnegie Collection of Tudor Church Music:¹⁷

¹³ Andrews, H., *Westminster Retrospect: A Memoir of Sir Richard Terry*, O.U.P., London, 1948, pp.173-174.

¹⁴ Signs which show how two or more notes are to be fitted to one syllable.

¹⁵ "Sir Richard Terry's Tribute", Gray, op. cit., pp.271-273.

¹⁶ English music scholar.

¹⁷ In 1926 the quarto edition of ten volumes of Tudor music appeared under their auspices.

Every editor of early music should regard himself as a steward of treasure, and is required to be faithful in the way he keeps it or deals it out to others. An editor's first business is to set down the notes he finds written by the composer; if he does that he is faithful, and very little else will be required of him...In these days of scholarly research the man who proves unfaithful stands condemned. No one would dare to edit Shakespeare or Ben Jonson by replacing the original phrases with modern clichés; he would have the whole world of literary criticism down on him. But something very similar has too often been done to the composers of Elizabethan and Jacobean times, on the plea that "this old stuff won't go down" unless it is dressed and garnished in accordance with modern taste. The truth of the matter is the exact opposite of this. The writers of the day knew their business as well as any modern, and better than most, and they require none of this wrong-headed "editing".¹⁸

In the bibliography printed at the end of his book, *The English Ayre*, Warlock was at great pains to point out the editorial practice which he and Philip Wilson had followed in their editions of English ayres:

While endeavouring to satisfy every reasonable demand of scholarship, the editors have aimed primarily at the production of a popular edition which can be used by any singer without previous knowledge of Elizabethan music or regard for historical considerations. The accompaniments consist of a literal transcription of the lute and bass-viol parts, without any alterations or additions. The note-values have been shortened in many cases, as the minim and semibreve have come to be regarded, in modern times, as long notes associated with slow tempos, whereas to the Elizabethan a minim was, as its name implies, a note of short duration, of approximately the same value as the present-day crotchet. Bar-lines have been inserted at regular points...A general indication of pace has been suggested at the beginning of each song, but expression marks have been left, as the Elizabethans left them, to the taste of the performer. The spelling and punctuation of the poems have been modernized.¹⁹

In producing a vast number of transcriptions and editions, some of which have not yet been supplanted, Warlock's greatest contribution was that of moving the art of editing and editorial practice in the direction of greater integrity and scholarship. A study of his work in this field reveals that he was, on the whole, meticulous about indicating exactly what was editorial and what was original in his editions. If, however, he is to be judged according to the strictest principles of scholarship, he was not always consistent in matters which today would be taken for granted. For example he occasionally did not indicate his primary sources nor did he indicate the

¹⁸ Warlock, op. cit., p.133-134.

¹⁹ Warlock, ibid., pp.141-142.

original keys, clefs or note values of the original text. Decisions regarding *musica ficta* were also not always indicated where they were purely personal decisions differing from the original text.

Warlock seems to have had a particular aversion for transposing anything from its original key, either being unaware of or unwilling to take into account that standard pitch had varied during different periods. On the other hand he seems to have had few qualms about transposing a song with viol accompaniment and, indeed, re-arranging parts so that these accompaniments could be played on modern instruments. Here also editorial bowing marks, often provided by his violinist friend, André Mangeot (1883-1970),²⁰ are not always clearly distinguishable.

His writings on rhythm and the use of the editorial bar-line in early music also showed a perception and understanding far ahead of that of his colleagues:

Madrigals and other unaccompanied vocal music which was printed in separate part-books were almost invariably unbarred...In setting out this music in modern notation for practical use to-day, we get, paradoxically enough, much nearer to the unbarred freedom of the original by the insertion of unaccentual bar-lines at regular intervals, for the sake of clarity and convenience in reading, than by retaining the conventional associations between bar-lines and strong accents, and barring at irregular intervals determined by the cadences of separate phrases...

How much simpler for the eye is the regular barring...once the principle of accenting by the sense of the words and rhythm of the phrase, and not by the bar-lines, is clearly understood.²¹

As early as 1915, when Warlock was not quite twenty-one, there is a reference in the Taylor correspondence to his awakening interest in early English music. After four disillusioned months as music critic of the *Daily Mail* he resigned and in his free time turned again to that period that had always interested him. He began by studying the keyboard music of some of the early English masters which led him to further research in the British Museum. After some preliminary work there he soon

²⁰ English (naturalised) violinist of French birth; conductor and chamber music coach; leader of the International String Quartet.

²¹ Warlock, op.cit., pp.131-133.

realized what a vast untapped source was waiting for an editor of skill and integrity. Here is what he wrote to Taylor from his Maida Vale lodgings in November 1915:

...I am delving deep into the origins of keyboard music, and receiving daily delights and surprises from the works of Byrd,²² Gibbons,²³ Tomkins,²⁴ Farnaby²⁵ and many another astonishing composer who preceded J.S. Bach by more than a century.

I am also scoring from old part-books in the British Museum a quantity of early 17th century chamber music, which is exceedingly interesting from an aesthetic point of view - a fact entirely ignored by most of the old fogeys, who have taken the trouble to do this in years past.

There is an enormous amount of valuable work to be done in this field.²⁶

During his year in Ireland, Warlock evidently continued this new-found interest in editing and transcribing, as this extract from a letter to Taylor shows:

I am working furiously at a new book of essays and desultorily, at an orchestral work.²⁷ If I can obtain access to the manuscript room in Trinity College Library, I shall transcribe "William Ballet's Lute Book"²⁸ - a collection of priceless Elizabethan tunes not otherwise available, containing, inter alia, the delicious Morris-dance of Staines which I once heard Mrs. Gordon Woodhouse²⁹ exquisitely render on the Harpsichord. It occurred to me the other day what a wonderful theme for a set of variations would be provided by the old tune of "Walsingham"...³⁰

Back in London the following year he was anxious to carry on his editing work as the following letter to Taylor reveals. The latter had obviously helped him find a particular book of music composed for the virginals:

I called for the Virginal books just before 6 o'clock on Wednesday and got them safely. Thank you ever so much for securing them for me: they are absolutely indispensable [sic] for the work I want to start on at once. I am going to begin work among the MSS in the British Museum tomorrow.³¹

²² William Byrd, 1542-1623, English composer.

²³ Orlando Gibbons, 1583-1625, English composer, organist and virginalist.

²⁴ Thomas Tomkins, 1572-1656, English composer.

²⁵ Giles Farnaby, c.1560-c.1640, English composer.

²⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.11.1915.

²⁷ *An Old Song* for small orchestra, Chester, 1923.

²⁸ *The William Ballet lute book*: a collection of English lute and viol music, including many abstract tunes for dances (c.1594), Dublin, Trinity College Library, TCD MS 408 and 410.

²⁹ Violet Gordon Woodhouse, 1872-1948, English harpsichordist, pioneer recorder and broadcaster on the instrument.

³⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 12.9.1917.

³¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.12.1918.

After Warlock had been relieved of the editorship of *The Sackbut* in July 1921 he returned to Wales where, for the next few years, he worked with tremendous energy composing, writing and editing. It was from this period onwards that his work as a scholar really developed seriously and, assisted by Philip Wilson, he began transcribing in earnest. In October 1922 he wrote a typically enthusiastic letter to Taylor from Bury Street, London, close to the British Museum:

Here I am in London again - temporarily, at any rate - transcribing old music and supervising publications on (for me) quite a large scale: I don't know whether you read the Musical Times, but if you do you will have seen that a few months ago I was impelled to protest very strongly against the editorial methods of the Reverend Edmund Phallus³² of Windsor Castle - and, as practical performance is always the best method of criticism - I resolved to do my best to produce an edition of the Elizabethan songs which would faithfully present the original music without pedantry, antiquarian prejudices or officious emendations. Having now transcribed over 300 songs from the original editions (with the useful aid of our mutual friend Philip Wilson) I am glad to be able to tell you that the firm of Enoch has taken up the publication of them with great enthusiasm, and proposes to feature these songs at the 'ballad-concerts'! 54 songs are already accepted by them and ready for press, and if these succeed, as I have every hope that they will, other volumes will follow in quick succession. The first book containing 21 of the best songs of the period will be ready at the end of November (in time for the concert announced on the enclosed bill) and the second will follow before the end of the year.

In addition to this, the Oxford Press is bringing out 25 more songs of this period, in penny leaflets, for use in schools. Novello's are publishing half a dozen part-songs which we have transcribed from the sole surviving copy of the works of an excellent composer Michael Cavendish³³ (1598) - which were lost to the world until 1918 when the book turned up at Sotheby's - and Chester's are doing three long and serious songs with violin obbligato.³⁴ I have always loved this period of English music, but since I have been working seriously at these transcriptions, my admiration has increased ten-fold and I feel sure that these songs will be loved by everyone, whether "musical" or not, wherever they are known.

They are not "antiques" in need of restoration and adjustment to 19th century standards, but living music, as perfect (the best of them) in technique as in vital expression.

Forgive this enthusiasm but, quite apart from personal consideration, I really do feel that every music-lover ought to become acquainted with these marvellous works, and it will be of immense value to us if you can get them taken up in South Africa.³⁵

³² Warlock's irreverent nickname for Canon Edmund Horace Fellowes.

³³ c.1565-1628, English composer of madrigals and lute music.

³⁴ Dowland, J., Two Songs from *A Pilgrim's Solace* (with violin obbligato). The third song with violin obbligato never appeared.

³⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.10.1922.

Before discussing this letter in detail it is important first of all to consider his description of the songs of "this period of English music" as being "living music" not "antiques". This paragraph gives us the clue to his burning interest and enthusiasm: his belief that this was music of the finest order. As he expressed himself more fully in *The Sackbut*:

From the purely aesthetic point of view, music is neither old nor modern: it is either good or bad music, and the date at which it was written has no significance whatever. Dates and periods are of interest only to the student of musical history. The cult of admiring old music merely because it is old is as shallow and insincere as the indiscriminatory admiration that is lavished by the unmusical on each successive idol of "ultra-modernity". All old music was modern once, and much more of the music of yesterday already sounds more old-fashioned than works which were written three centuries ago.

All good music, whatever its date, is ageless - as alive and significant today as it was when it was written.³⁶

His criticisms of the editorial practices of the Rev. E.H. Fellowes appeared in the *Musical Times* in an article entitled "On Editing Elizabethan Songs". Here are a few of the most important and telling points:

If a living composer submits a work to a publisher, he is unlikely to agree to its being radically altered so as more effectually to tickle the vulgar taste which is either shocked or bored by originality. But when the composer has been in his grave for nearly three centuries, his works may be pillaged with infinitesimal risk of his wraith rising in protest, even though in his time he was one of the chief glories of his (and our) country's music. We feel that a certain respect is due to all great artists - more especially when they are at the same time consummate technicians - however much their idiom may differ from that of our favourite modern composer...Some people do not like the harsh dissonances of Schönberg; but you cannot "translate" them into common chords without destroying their significance.³⁷

In his edition of *The English School of Lutenists*³⁸ Fellowes had supplied a piano accompaniment entirely of his own composing below an exact transcription of the

³⁶ Warlock, "The Editing of Old English Songs" (1) and (2), *The Sackbut*, February and March, 1926, v.6, nos. 7 and 8, pp.183-186 and pp.215-220.

³⁷ *Musical Times*, 1922, pp.477-480.

³⁸ Fellowes, E.H., *The English School of Lutenists*, Stainer and Bell, London, 1921-32. This consisted of two series comprising 32 books of some 450 songs "transcribed, scored and edited from the original edition".

lute parts. Warlock objected in no uncertain terms to this practice³⁹ and Fellowes's manner of doing it:

...when we come to the new pianoforte accompaniment supplied by Dr. Fellowes, the polyphonic texture clearly indicated in the tablature is merely hinted at, while an additional part, doubling the voice (a practice never resorted to by the lutenists), has been added.

He then proceeds to criticize Fellowes's editorial practice as regards bar-lines in a manner which just escapes being sarcastic on account of the humour pervading his fluent style. His comments on Frederick Keel's "arrangements" on the other hand are cruelly to the point:

It will be observed that in Dr. Fellowes's version a four-bar phrase of common time [C] has been "somewhat modified with the object of simplifying the interpretation of the music" (General Preface), but no signatures accompany the changes from C to 3/4, 3/4 to 6/4, and 6/4 back to C, which this process of "simplification" involves. There are, in fact, no time-signatures in any of Dr. Fellowes's versions.

The bar in Elizabethan times had none of the rhythmic or accentual significance with which it was subsequently invested. It was used in the song-books chiefly as a convenient method of enabling singer and accompanist to keep together...to replace the old system of irregular barring by a new one is a most unnecessary procedure, seeing that every Elizabethan song can be divided into bars of equal length (changes from duple to triple time being invariably marked in the original editions)....

The average amateur knows little about musical history, and cares less...He merely wants a good song clearly printed in the most readily intelligible form for reading and for singing. Let us suppose him an enthusiastic lover of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson,⁴⁰ Sidney,⁴¹ and the rest. Someone tells him that the songs of the period are as lovely as the lyrics and he goes into a music-shop and opens a volume of Dr. Fellowes's edition. His eye lights at once on hieroglyphics which have no meaning for him and no connection with any form of musical notation he has ever encountered. Accompanying them he sees three staves of ordinary music-type, but even these present an

³⁹ Warlock wrote a letter to Robert Nichols, 15.1.1923, including the following irreverent limerick:

To old lute songs the reverend Fellowes
Adds counterpoints, chords, ritornellos
But the shade of old Jones
Says, "O friends, not these tones -
And you - bugger yourself with the bellows!"

The references are to the Elizabethan composer, Robert Jones (born c.1570), "O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!" (Beethoven's 9th Symphony) and the long-standing joke about the bellows.

⁴⁰ 1573?-1637, English dramatist and poet. Unpublished letter from Warlock to Robert Nichols, London, BL, Add MS 57795.

⁴¹ Sir Philip Sidney, 1554-86, soldier, statesman, courtier and poet.

unfamiliar and forbidding appearance. A bar containing fourteen minims, and followed by one of two without any warning, and breves - another scarecrow - abound. Small wonder if he turns hurriedly from such pages with the thought that they are not for the likes of him. And if he does not altogether abandon his idea of getting acquainted with the music of Shakespeare's England, he will in all probability turn to some edition of Elizabethan song as that produced by Mr. Frederick Keel...Simple tunes in familiar crotchets and quavers, and nice easy accompaniments which anybody could play and many transpose at first sight. So Mr. Keel's volumes are purchased and our amateur begins to entertain his friends with Elizabethan love-songs, oblivious of the fact (for Mr. Keel's modesty forbade him to mention it in his preface) that the accompaniments bear no relation whatever to the original tablature, having been *entirely composed* by Mr. Keel, complete with new basses and all.

In his final paragraphs Warlock does, however, acknowledge Fellowes's pioneering zeal, pointing out yet again the need for an editor at all times to respect the composer's intentions:

...though one cannot but admire the spirit which has prompted him to publish so much good music, one cannot on the other hand but regret that in this particular department he has not shown a little more humility and a little more reverence for the finished work of great masters...Wholesale doubling is bad enough, but wholesale decoration with twiddly-bits that the most charitable euphemism could not call counterpoints is impertinent and unjustifiable from any point of view, whether practical or critical....

It may be argued that I am unduly critical of Dr. Fellowes's improved accompaniments seeing that these are, at least, constructed upon the original basses and may be compared with the naked original which appears on the preceding page. My quarrel, it is true, is not specifically with Dr. Fellowes's accompaniments (horrible as they indeed sound...), but with the principle of tampering with fine work that is already complete in all its detail.

As befitted Fellowes's station as a Canon of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, he refrained from entering into any public debate with Warlock though a brief paragraph in his autobiography, written years later, hints at his feelings about his one-time critic:

A little later I lent my transcriptions of the book to a tenor singer named Philip Wilson for the purpose of a song recital which he was to give at the Wigmore Hall...A short time after this Wilson in co-operation with Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock), without saying a word to me, published an edition of *The Muses Garden*⁴² using my photostats at the British Museum. They would never have heard of the song-book if I had not lent my edition to Wilson.⁴³

⁴² Robert Jones (1610), Enoch English Ayres, 1923.

⁴³ Fellowes, E., *Memoirs of an Amateur Musician*, Methuen, London, 1946, p.136.

There is an interesting paragraph written by W. Gillies Whittaker in connection with the "songs of this period" which, as Warlock tells us, the O.U.P. were bringing out "in penny leaflets, for use in schools". As general editor of this series Whittaker crossed swords with Warlock over his opinions as regards the ethics of editorial practice. This incident well illustrates Warlock's unyielding attitudes as to the duties and responsibilities of an editor:

Warlock's objection to additions to original texts was the cause of a dispute he and I had some years ago. He was preparing some English Lutenist songs for a school-singing class series which I edited, and refused to add any expression marks. I pointed out that such a publication would be of no use for the intended purpose. He argued that if a teacher didn't know how to treat these songs he had no right to be using them. I suggested that one could not expect all school music-teachers to be experienced musicians, but that a large proportion of them could do excellent work with a little expert guidance. Still he was unmoved...Warlock declared that he wasn't going to have his edition turned into *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Finally, a compromise was effected: I was allowed to commit the heresy of adding a few marks, while he salved his conscience in the following note: "No indications of tempo or of piano and forte appear in the original editions; a great deal of latitude was allowed for individual interpretation, the delight of which a meticulously annotated reprint would greatly impair. Such indications as appear in this edition have been added tentatively and with reluctance, and should be ignored whenever they conflict with the teacher's personal conception of the song". Needless to say, I heartily agreed with the last clause. He also stated that transposition in certain cases "for practical use in schools" was regrettable. Yet he transposed an Elizabethan song to alter the compass from that of viols to that of modern strings!⁴⁴

Warlock obviously felt so strongly about this that he insisted on printing a shortened version of this "protest" at the bottom of the first page of the songs published in this school edition. For example the footnote to his edition of the anonymous early 17th century *A sea nymph sat upon the shore*⁴⁵ states:

There are no expression marks in the original manuscript. These suggested here may be varied at the discretion of the conductor.

Warlock had more to say about his work on early music when he wrote to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch in early December 1922. He had been hoping to receive copies of recent publications to send on to Cape Town but there had been a delay:

⁴⁴ Whittaker, W.G., *Collected Essays*, O.U.P., 1940, pp.224-225.

⁴⁵ O.U.P., 1927.

I hoped to be able to send you also vol. I of the "English Ayres: 1598-1612"⁴⁶ which was to have been ready last week - but no copies have arrived as yet. However, I hope to be able to send you one by the next mail. This vol. contains 21 of the best songs of the period - most of them never before republished even in garbled versions. In a month's time "The Muses' Garden" of Robert Jones will be ready, then the "Chromatic Tunes" of John Danyel,⁴⁷ then a privately printed volume of selected songs by Alfonso Ferrabosco,⁴⁸ to whom I am ascribing - on internal evidence mainly - the beautiful setting of "Have you seen but a white lily grow" which has hitherto been regarded as anonymous. The style is to my mind unmistakeably his.⁴⁹

Warlock must later have changed his mind or not found sufficient evidence to ascribe the song *Have you seen but a white lily grow?* finally to Alfonso Ferrabosco. When it was eventually published it was attributed to an anonymous composer. It appeared twice in print: in a volume of ten songs collected and edited by John Goss, *An Anthology of Song*⁵⁰ and separately in 1929. The volume of Ferrabosco songs appeared under the title *Eight Selected Ayres of Alfonso Ferrabosco the Younger* and were published not "privately" but by Enoch in 1925. The contents of the volume were as follows:

1. *Shall I seek to ease my grief?*
2. *Come, my Celia, let us prove* (Ben Jonson)
3. *Unconstant love, why should I make my moan*
4. *I am a lover, yet was I never loved* (Bartholomew Young)
5. *Fain I would, but O I dare not*
6. *O eyes, O mortal stars*
7. *Like hermit poor in place obscure*
8. *So, so leave off this last lamenting kiss* (John Donne)

There are more details about the latest publications of his editions of early music in a letter written to Taylor twelve days later. Together with this letter Warlock was able to send his customary Christmas gift, in this case some Cavendish part-songs. The others were to follow:

I send you also some charming part-songs of Cavendish. The first volume of "English Ayres: 1598-1612" came out last week. I have told Enoch's to send you a copy. The next - 12 songs from "The Muses' Garden" for

⁴⁶ Published by Enoch, 1922.

⁴⁷ c.1565-1630.

⁴⁸ 1543-88, Italian composer; settled in England c.1560.

⁴⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.12.1922.

⁵⁰ O.U.P., 1927.

Delights" by Robert Jones⁵¹ - will be ready the first week in January.⁵² And in the February "Musical Times"⁵³ will appear a long article on Jones, together with his amusing prefaces and dedicatory epistles. Let me know if you see the Musical Times; if not I'll send you a copy. In addition to these, the "Chromatic Tunes" of Danyel and two songs of Dowland with violin obbligato have gone to press in Vienna and will be published by Chester's, and a volume of 12 admirable but extremely bawdy songs of the same period is on the point of being sent off. This will be a limited edition of 180 copies at about 7/6 a copy, to be sold at Harold Reeves, Shaftesbury Avenue.⁵⁴

Here are the details of the other works mentioned in this letter. The five part-songs for unaccompanied mixed voices, *6 Ayres to 4 Voices*, by Michael Cavendish were published by Novello (1922):

1. <i>Wanton, come hither</i>	1408
2. <i>Say, shepherds, say</i>	MT 508
3. <i>Farewell, despair</i>	1410
4. <i>Sly thief</i>	1411
5. <i>What thing more cruel can you do</i>	1412

Details of the other works mentioned are:

Vol. I of *English Ayres 1598-1612* (Enoch, 1922)
[Twenty-one Ayres by various composers]

Jones: *Love's god is a boy*; Campian: *Love me nor not*; Greaves: *Flora, sweet wanton*; Dowland: *I saw my lady weep*; Cavendish: *Love is not blind*; Jones: *Now what is love?*; Rosseter: *Though far from joy*; Danyel: *Coy Daphne*; Corkine: *Shall a frown or angry eye?*; Anon: *Willow, willow [The poor soul sat sighing]*; Jones: *Did ever man thus love as I?* Dowland: *In darkness let me dwell*; Rosseter: *When Laura smiles*; Dowland: *Lady, if you so smite me*; Jones: *My love is neither young nor old*; Rosseter: *Ay me, that love should Nature's works accuse*; Danyel: *I die whenas I do not see her*; Rosseter: *When then is love but mourning?*; Cavendish: *The heart to rue the pleasure of the eye*; Jones: *Sweet, if you like and love me still and Go to bed, sweet muse.*

Vol. II *The Muses' Garden for Delights* - Robert Jones [1610] (Published by Enoch, 1923)

Love is a pretty frenzy; *Soft, Cupid, soft*; *As I the silly fish deceive*; *Walking by a river side*; *Joy in thy hope*; *There was a shepherd*; *The sea hath many thousand sands*; *Once did my thoughts both ebb and flow*; *I am so far from pitying thee*; *There was a wily lad*; *My father fain would have me take and All my sense thy sweetness gained.*

⁵¹ Born c.1560, English composer and lutenist.

⁵² *The Muses' Garden for Delights* - Robert Jones (1610) [Vol.II of] *English Ayres 1598-1612*, Enoch, 1923.

⁵³ *Musical Times*, 1923, pp.99-100 and pp.168-171.

⁵⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.12.1922.

John Danyel: *Chromatic Tunes* [*Can doleful notes to measur'd accents set*] (voice and piano) (Chester, 1923)

John Dowland: Two songs from *A Pilgrim's Solace* (voice and piano with violin obbligato) (Chester, 1923)

1. *From silent night*
2. *Go, nightly cares*

The tantalizing promise of "a Volume of 12 admirable but extremely bawdy songs of the same period" came to nothing.⁵⁵ Tomlinson has provided as much information as can be gleaned about this proposed project. Here are the relevant paragraphs:

While Warlock was transcribing the lutenist songs he collected the more risque items into a set which was to be sold privately in the limited edition of 180 which he wrote to Taylor about. He had evidently decided to call the compilation *Dildos and Fadings* although to his mother he neatly referred to them as the "Comic Songs" as she was evidently also expected to advance the money for their printing in Vienna.

The estimate, dated March 16 1923, was for a 20 page book (2 of preface and 16 of music) and came to 11 guineas for 300 copies.

In 1925 he wrote that the songs, "though already engraved have not yet been published, negotiations having fallen through with two different publishers. The volume contains songs by Campian, Jones, Corkine,⁵⁶ and others which, while being musically quite excellent, are associated with words unsuitable for drawing-room use, so the book has to be issued privately to subscribers".

The book was never published and the plates have not been traced. All that remains is Warlock's typed Preface, a mine of "etymologicopornographic research", for which he entered into correspondence with Havelock Ellis.

It may be noted that Warlock's *bête noir*, Dr. Fellowes (Horoscope Phallus), amended obviously improper words - even to the extent of changing "suck" into "hush" in *My little sweet darling* - but saw no impropriety in "dildo" or "prick".⁵⁷

The title of this proposed book, *Dildos and Fadings*, needs some explanation. Both words are of obscure origin used in the refrains of seventeenth century ballads, often of an indecent character. Dildo has a double meaning, being also the colloquial

⁵⁵ Amongst Cecil Gray's papers in London, BL Add MS 57796, are typewritten notes in the form of an explanatory foreword.

⁵⁶ William Corkine, English 16th-17th century composer and lutenist.

⁵⁷ Tomlinson, *A Peter Warlock Handbook*, Vol.2, Triad Press, Rickmansworth, 1977, p.78.

name for a penis.⁵⁸ Warlock would obviously have known his Shakespeare as is shown by the following quotation from *The Winter's Tale* (1611):

He hath songs for women of all sizes. No milliner can so fit his customers with gloves. He has the prettiest love-songs for maids, so without bawdry, which is strange, with such delicate burthens of dildos and fadings, "Jump her and thump her".⁵⁹

Ben Jonson also uses the word "dildo" in a similar way in his play, *The Alchemist* (1610) (Act V, scene iii):

Here I find...The Seeling fill'd with poesies of the candle: And Madame, with a dildo, writ o' the walls.

A fading is a type of dance of Irish origin, possibly originating from the Irish word "feadan", a pipe or whistle.

The long article on Richard Jones actually appeared in the *Musical Times* in two instalments and was later incorporated as chapter 4 of Warlock's book, *The English Ayre*. Besides giving biographical details there are generous quotes from Jones's *Prefaces* and *Dedications* as well as descriptions of a number of his most distinguished songs. It is in the Preface to his Jones's first published book of songs (1600), dedicated to Sir Robert Sidney, that the phrase "none greater enemy to their own profession than musicians" occurs. This was the phrase which had made such an impression on Warlock and which he quoted on several occasions in his articles, the Dublin lecture and in letters to Taylor.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ In his typed notes entitled *Dildos and Fadings* (BL Add MS 57796) Warlock quotes the following poem by Thomas Nash, 1567-1601?, entitled *The Choice of Valentines* or *Nash his Dildo*:

A knave that moves as light as leaves by wind,
That bendeth not, nor foldeth any deal,
But stands as stiff as he were made of steel
And plays at peacock twixt my legs right blithe,
And doth my tickling swage with many a sigh;
For by Saint Runnion he'll refresh me well
And never make my tender belly swell.

⁵⁹ Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, Act IV, sc. iv, lines 190-194.

⁶⁰ Unpublished letters from Warlock to Taylor, 8.11.1916, 25.4.1918, 9.8.1918 and the Dublin Lecture given on 12.5.1918.

Warlock wrote yet again about his literary and editorial work from Eynsford in June 1925:

My work is mostly literary, or else editing old music or arranging folk-songs, etc. I've just finished a book on Gesualdo,⁶¹ in collaboration with Gray, which Kegan Paul are publishing; and I have three small books in commission for the Oxford Press - one on the English Ayres of Elizabeth - James I (completed)⁶²...The Nonesuch Press are publishing this month my anthology of songs sung at the London Pleasure Gardens (Ranelagh, Vauxhall, Sadlers Wells etc.) during the latter half of the eighteenth century.⁶³ As regards my editions of old music, I hope that the final volumes of the English Ayres will all be out this year, bringing the total number of songs issued up to 200; there will also be a volume of French Ayres of the same period and an edition of Ravenscroft's⁶⁴ complete rounds and catches....⁶⁵

The book about Gesualdo has already been discussed in Chapter 8 and of the "three small books" mentioned, only *The English Ayre* actually appeared in print. This book was dedicated to the memory of Philip Wilson and consists of some forty thousand words and 29 musical illustrations. Still regarded as a classic in its field, it contains an introductory section on early song and the lute and then deals with the various composers of ayres. There are chapters on the major composers, Dowland, Danyel, Jones, Hume (d.1645),⁶⁶ Ferrabosco, Campian (1567-1620)⁶⁷ and Rosseter, some further chapters on minor composers, MS collections as well as some further technical discussion. Warlock also included a list of the major musical and historical events between the years 1558 and 1626 and a bibliography of contemporary reprints of the ayres. Writing of this book and of Warlock's work as an editor, the author and scholar, F.W. Sternfeld⁶⁸ said:

A rival and critic of Fellowes, Peter Warlock nevertheless made an equally and important contribution to Shakespeare studies. His taste and emendations were impeccable, his assessment of attributed and anonymous compositions very good indeed. His tantalizingly short book *The English*

⁶¹ Gray and Warlock, *Carlo Gesualdo: Prince of Venosa: Musician and Murderer*: Kegan Paul, London, 1926.

⁶² *The English Ayre*, O.U.P., London, 1926.

⁶³ *Songs of the Gardens*, Nonesuch Press, London, 1925.

⁶⁴ Thomas Ravenscroft, c.1590-1633, English composer and publisher.

⁶⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.6.1925.

⁶⁶ English composer and army officer.

⁶⁷ English composer, lawyer and physician.

⁶⁸ Frederick William Sternfeld, b.1914, Austrian born scholar and educator.

Ayre (1926) is the best of its kind to appear so far, and his *English Ayres* (edited jointly with Philip Wilson, 4 vols., 1922-25; 2nd edn., 6 vols., 1927-31) is an indispensable anthology since it includes several important anonymous songs not transcribed by Fellowes.⁶⁹

The other book mentioned, *Songs of the Gardens*, was printed in 1925 by the Nonesuch Press and produced under the direction of Hubert Foss and the owner of the Press, Francis Meynell (1891-1975).⁷⁰ For this volume Warlock transcribed and edited 24 songs by Michael (1740-1786) and Thomas Arne (1710-1778),⁷¹ Joseph Baildon (? - 1727),⁷² William Boyce, William De Fesch (1687-1761),⁷³ Michael Festing (c.1690-1752),⁷⁴ Lewis Granom (?),⁷⁵ James Hook (1746-1827)⁷⁶ and Thomas Smart (1776-1867).⁷⁷ In the eight-page preface Warlock begins by saying that:

...the purpose of this book is to provide a representative selection of the songs that were sung at the London Pleasure Gardens during the latter half of the eighteenth century. The period, beginning with the close of Handel's career, embraces practically all the working years of Gluck, Haydn and Mozart and ends on the threshold of Beethoven's maturity.⁷⁸

Then follows a discussion of the period, a description of the gardens (Vauxhall, Ranelagh, Marylebone, Sadler's Wells and the Mulberry Garden in Clerkenwell) and the kind of entertainment they provided. He also makes reference to the composers who wrote music for these gardens as well as the musicians who performed there.

During this period private press books were having a surge of popularity in England. A prime example is the Golden Cockerel Press⁷⁹ with Eric Gill's (1882-1940)⁸⁰

⁶⁹ Sternfeld, F.W., *Music in Shakespearean Tragedy*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1963, p.267.

⁷⁰ Sir Francis Meynell.

⁷¹ English composer, the illegitimate son of Thomas Arne, the leading British composer of his day.

⁷² English singer and composer.

⁷³ Flemish composer, organist, cellist and violinist.

⁷⁴ English violinist and composer.

⁷⁵ English composer of the eighteenth century.

⁷⁶ English composer and organist.

⁷⁷ English conductor, composer, violinist and organist.

⁷⁸ Warlock, (editor), *Songs of the Gardens*, Nonesuch Press, London, 1925, pp.5-12.

⁷⁹ Founded 1920.

⁸⁰ English sculptor, engraver, typographical designer and essayist.

superb engravings. With its attractive layout and adorning woodcuts, *Songs of the Gardens* is more of a collector's item than a practical performing edition; the songs themselves are not really edited for practical performance, being mostly printed with figured-bass, some even written with archaic clefs. A strange fact about this limited edition is that, despite the claim made on the page following the title page that "eight hundred and seventy- five copies have been printed by the offset lithograph process at the Curwen Press", the copy in the present writer's possession states: "This copy is number 880".

Warlock's reference to the "final volumes of the English Ayres", which he hoped would be out by 1925, perhaps needs some further explanation. Enoch had been the original publishers of the first four volumes of English Ayres. Since O.U.P. were now Warlock's principal publishers, they had begun negotiating with Enoch to reissue the volumes which had previously appeared between the years 1922 and 1925 and to add to these the new volumes that Warlock had recently been editing. The contents of these four early Enoch volumes were as follows:

- Vol I *Twenty-one Ayres by Various Composers*
- Vol. II *The Muses' Garden for Delights - Robert Jones [1610]*
- Vol. III *Twenty-one Ayres by Various Composers*
- Vol. IV *Eight Selected Ayres of Alfonso Ferrabosco the younger [1609]*

After successful negotiations with Enoch, these four volumes eventually reappeared as Volumes I to III of the new Oxford series, the printing having been delayed until 1927. The remaining three volumes appeared in 1931 after Warlock's death.

The "volume of French Ayres of the same period" refers to another O.U.P. publication of 1926 which contained 24 ayres transcribed for voice and piano selected from Bataille's *Airs de different auteurs, mis en tablature de luth* [8 volumes containing over 500 songs] 1608-1618. Its full title is *French Airs from Bataille's Airs de Different Auteurs*.

Warlock's edition of Ravenscroft's complete rounds and catches (numbering one hundred) also mentioned in this letter was published by O.U.P. in 1928. Tomlinson gives some additional facts about these Ravenscroft rounds which are worth quoting for their amusement value:

PH⁸¹ transcribed all the rounds from the three Ravenscroft collections and gave his edition the title *Pammelia and other Rounds and Catches* published by OUP in 1928, in a quarto edition limited to 100 copies. At the same time, unknown to the editor, they brought out a "Schools Edition" in octavo, omitting the rounds likely to cause teachers embarrassment....

No. 71 of *Pammelia* led to a typical PH ploy. The last line is "Whip little David's bum, bum, bum, bum", the voice continuing as a ground. A footnote adds "Pronounce *boum*, not *bumm*". The Schools Edition omitted the round but not the footnote, whereupon PH persuaded friends to write to Humphrey Milford⁸² to ask "why this so superogatory *bum* should suddenly obtrude itself upon an otherwise chaste and blameless page".⁸³

There is a further fleeting and not very detailed reference to his literary and editorial work in another letter from Eynsford. It is perhaps more noteworthy for its cynical remark about his own original compositions:

I'm very busy with literary work - several books and pamphlets on hand, editions of old music...This is much more fun than writing music one doesn't believe in - and far more paying.⁸⁴

By this time Warlock was exploring other collections of early music besides those at the British Museum:

Next Tuesday I go to Oxford to copy some old MSS in Christ Church Library, and hear a performance of Monteverdi's "Orfeo"⁸⁵.⁸⁶

The background to this performance of *Orfeo* is interestingly documented in an article which appeared in *The Times* of London⁸⁷:

⁸¹ Philip Heseltine.

⁸² Sir Humphrey Milford, 1877-1952, head of the O.U.P., 1913-45.

⁸³ Tomlinson, op. cit., p.72.

⁸⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 6.8.1925.

⁸⁵ 1607, the first opera to employ a full orchestra.

⁸⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

⁸⁷ Stuart, R., *Operatic Pioneering in England 36 Years Ago*, *The Times* of London, 30.12.1965, p.4.

...in the Easter vacation of 1925, I had decided to persuade my friends to stage *Orfeo* in Oxford...I went down to London to discuss the project with and seek the advice of the late Professor E.J. Dent.⁸⁸ He advised me most earnestly to perform the opera in English and to get some musical scholar in Oxford to make a new edition following more nearly the ideas of the composer. We then visited Sir William Harris,⁸⁹ then organist at New College...The three of us decided...that Harris should conduct the work and edit the score and that I should try my hand at translating the libretto.

When Sir Jack Westrup,⁹⁰ then an undergraduate at Balliol, heard that we were thinking of staging *Orfeo* he began to make a transcript from an early printed score in the British Museum and completed it from another copy in the Bodleian...As time went on Harris, being very busy, left more and more of the editing to Westrup who finally edited and orchestrated the whole work. The realization of the continuo, however, was by Harris.

There are further references to Warlock's book on Gesualdo and *The English Ayre* in this same letter:

The book on Gesualdo should have been ready for Christmas, but it was delayed by a strike. I shall send you a copy as soon as it appears. The Oxford Press are now printing my other book, on the English Ayre. I am doing a great deal of work on old English music, transcribing and editing. This, and the writing of articles, fills most of my time....

I enclose four old songs, reconstructed as nearly as possible in the style of the period....⁹¹

The pieces which Warlock enclosed with this Christmas letter were both recent O.U.P. publications (1925):

Four English Songs of the Early Seventeenth Century

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. <i>Like to the damask rose</i> | Anon |
| 2. <i>Phyllis was a fair maid</i> | Anon |
| 3. <i>My thread is spun</i> | Anon |
| 4. <i>Sigh no more, ladies</i> | Thomas Ford ⁹² |

⁸⁸ Edward Dent, 1876-1957, English scholar, teacher and author.

⁸⁹ 1883-1973, English organist and composer. During the period that Harris was Organist and Master of the Choristers at St. George's Chapel, Windsor (1933-61) and Director of musical studies at the Royal School of Church Music (1956-61) the present writer was one of his students.

⁹⁰ 1904-75, English teacher, scholar, writer and conductor.

⁹¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

⁹² c.1580-1648, English composer and lutenist.

Warlock inscribed this copy with the words, "CT from P with good wishes for Christmas 1925". It can be found in the University of Cape Town College of Music Library.⁹³

Warlock's final references to his editing work are in a letter of February 1927 when he wrote in ecstatic terms about a sixteenth-century song that had been recently published

Here are my "Sorrow's Lullaby" and an Elizabethan song⁹⁴ which is surely one of the best songs ever written. The original version is for solo voice, but the piano part of the present edition is an absolutely literal transcription of the string parts (which are, by the way, now published - with the score - together with 21 other songs, all originally composed for voice and string quartet between 1560 and 1600⁹⁵ - by the Oxford Press.⁹⁶

Some detective work was necessary to identify the other song that Warlock enclosed together with this letter, the one he described as being "surely one of the best songs ever written". As Taylor had given his Warlock sheet music collection to the S.A. College of Music Library it was likely to be somewhere on the shelves there. Fortunately there were a few clues: it was a solo song, originally with string accompaniment which Warlock had transcribed for the piano. It had been published separately by the O.U.P. in 1927 and Warlock had stated that there was a complete edition of "21 other songs, all originally composed for voice and string quartet between 1560 and 1600 - by the Oxford Press". Investigation revealed that Warlock was here referring to three volumes containing 22 *Elizabethan songs originally for voice and viols, transcribed for voice and string quartet* which Oxford had printed in 1926 and that three items from these volumes had also been printed separately: Edwardes: *When May is in his prime* (voice and piano) 1927; Ravenscroft: *Pammelia and other Rounds and Catches* (two editions) 1928 and Anon: *Have you seen but a white lily grow?* (voice and piano) 1929. As the work

⁹³ Cape Town, UCT Library, TPB 780.29 WAR.

⁹⁴ *When May is in his prime*, words and music by Richard Edwardes, c.1523-66, O.U.P., 1927.

⁹⁵ *Elizabethan Songs originally for voice and viols, transcribed for voice and string quartet*, published in three volumes by O.U.P., 1926.

⁹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.2.1927.

mentioned by Warlock was a solo song this ruled out the Ravenscroft *Rounds and Catches*. *Have you seen but a white lily grow?* was not one of the 22 included in the above-mentioned volume nor had it ever had a string accompaniment. This left only one possibility, *When May is in his prime*, which was on the shelf where it had been ever since Taylor gave it to the library by Taylor in 1962. It was easily identifiable as the song in question for Taylor had written his name on the front cover, adding the words "from Peter Warlock 1927". It is now housed in the library's special collections.⁹⁷

To conclude this chapter here is an appropriately light-hearted quotation from the last section, *Some Technical Considerations*, from his book, *The English Ayre*:

...an editor's sole business is to produce a clear and accurate *text* of his subject; if the performer wants to embellish that text, he is at liberty to do so....

If, when we are presented with a plain and accurate text of some old music by an acknowledged master, we find that it offends our ears, we may be very sure that it is our ears that are at fault, and not the old master; to publish the work of an old master with modern additions and "improvements" is nothing short of an insult to his memory.

There is an admirable poem by Samuel Butler on this subject, and it is pleasant to think of Butler in Elysium, conducting a choir of all the composers of the past whose works have been maltreated by irresponsible editors, in a choral setting of these lines (which were originally prefixed to Butler's cantata "Narcissus"⁹⁸), slightly adapted to suit the requirements of the particular circumstances:

May he be damned for evermore
Who tampers with a printed score;
May he by poisonous snakes be bitten
Who writes more parts than we have written
We tried to make our music clear
For those who sing and those who hear.
Not lost and muddled up and drowned
In turgid "pianistic" sound;
So kindly leave the work alone
Or do it as we want it done.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Cape Town, UCT Library, TPA 780.3 62/483.

⁹⁸ A comic cantata in the style of Handel.

⁹⁹ Warlock, op. cit., p.135.

CHAPTER 12

EPILOGUE

I always thought that [Philip] had the greatest capacity in himself for Beauty which any man could possibly possess - Perhaps, it would seem, almost too great - too intense a beauty...I cannot bear there to be any bitterness about him anywhere. He was so fine and generous and great-hearted...¹

In the course of this thesis Peter Warlock has been placed under the microscope and thoroughly dissected. His life, his personality, his relationship with friends and family, his attitudes, his likes and dislikes, music, writings and scholarship have all been fragmented and studied in detail. During such dissection an attempt has been made to highlight important details about his life, music and writings and to trace patterns that run throughout his letters and in his published works.

In the preceding pages there surfaces constantly a rebelling against society reflected primarily in his eccentric and bizarre life-style and at times anti-social behaviour. To many, such as the music-critic Ernest Newman, he appeared "egoistic, very intolerant, and very unreasonable"² whilst the composer, Frederick Austin, found him "distasteful to the point of nausea".³ The truth, in fact, seems that to those he admired and respected he showed the greatest kindness and loyalty.⁴ This is perfectly summed up in the first letter Warlock wrote to Taylor when he thanked him for all he had done for him at school. Taylor in turn described him in later

¹ Unpublished letter from Elizabeth Poston to Edith Buckley Jones, 13.2.1931, London, BL, Add MS 54964.

² Letter from Ernest Newman to Warlock, 19.11.1919, quoted by Copley, op. cit., p.16.

³ Tomlinson, "Photocopies of Letters to PH from various writers". Attachment to *Peter Warlock Society Newsletter*, March 1977, no.20, n.pag. Copies of letters sold at Sotheby's in 1965.

⁴ Sir Richard Terry wrote of him: "With his passing England lost...in the literal sense of a much abused term, a gentleman". Gray, op. cit., p.273.

years as "the most delightful of companions...noted for his sympathy and generosity...[and] the manner he gave lavishly and selflessly to all in distress or need"⁵and Bruce Blunt, his close friend of the last years talked not only of this generosity but also of his "great charm"⁶ and modesty.

His letters to Taylor especially bear testimony to this modesty with their constant underplaying of his achievements as composer or writer. In fact this modesty soon becomes dangerously self-deprecatory as in phrases such as:

I am ashamed to inflict any more rubbish upon you but I am sending you a little ditty that I have just finished, in the hope that you may look at it, and give me your opinion about it...⁷

I feel guilty of...filling page after page with bastard offspring of Chappell-Boosey & Puccini!⁸

I have no illusions about the value of such little works as I have already done.⁹

Early in his career his uncompromising integrity and ceaseless self-criticism strengthened his resolve to compose only the finest music:

...please criticise every point you don't like - however small - as I am anxious to let nothing mediocre appear under my name...¹⁰

and seldom does he ever seem satisfied with his creative achievements. Only once, when referring to his song-cycle, *The Curlew*, does he for a moment express some sense of satisfaction with one of his compositions:

My "Curlew" cycle was performed on November 23rd [1922] - and for the first time in my life I really felt pleased with something I have written.¹¹

⁵ Taylor, op.cit., p.10.

⁶ Bruce Blunt in a broadcast talk, 16.12.1944, quoted by Copley, op.cit., p.26.

⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 9.2.1912.

⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.11.1917.

⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 13.6.1918.

¹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 8.11.1917.

¹¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.12.1922.

and critics and his oft-repeated remark that the worst enemy of music was the professional musician.

These feelings of resentment often found their expression in violently anti-establishment remarks and eccentric behaviour. He was here rebelling against his upper middle-class background, against Eton and Oxford (with its "enervating, depressing influence"¹⁴ as he described it) as well as his family in particular. In this regard the influence and attitudes of his mother must be held responsible. Throughout their correspondence it is patently clear that she was more concerned with manipulating him than with either his happiness or welfare. She was a powerful and dominating figure and he was never really able to break the strong filial bonds which caused endless anguish and frustration throughout his life. This has appeared consistently in the preceding chapters and there are frequent reminders that, despite her often insensitive handling of situations, he still showed a strong sense of loyalty and affection for her. His last letter to her and her guilt- and grief-stricken letter to Jelka Delius after his death clearly illustrates this. In fact the mother-son relationship must have played a large part in his often chauvinistic attitude to women and especially in the tempestuous relationship with Minnie Channing. The following excerpt from a letter to his mother gives one further insight into the torment of guilt and indecision about his family:

I know you are unsympathetic about this and think me mad...Perhaps I am mad...for in spite of everything I cannot give up Puma and I can never live happily without her. You see, a great part of the reason for the failure of the past years with her lies in the fact that I have always been a sort of vagabond, with no real home, making no money and continually being hard up...but you don't know the sense of disruption and separation...hurts me like a long ache in my heart...I would give my life for a little peace and security...Please do not think hardly of me, dearest Mother.¹⁵

¹⁴ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.4.1914.

¹⁵ Unpublished letter from Warlock to his mother, 25.7.1921, London, BL. Add MS 57961.

He wrote in similar vein to his friend, Robert Nichols, though even here he qualifies his enthusiasm for his own work in usual cynical fashion:

I am very well pleased with the work - it sounds the depths of desolation and despair, so of course people don't take it seriously but speak of pose and the "luxuriousness" of Celtic melancholy.¹²

But such moments were rare and generally self-doubt was a far more typical emotion. As he wrote to Nichols some years later:

I am not by nature an artist at all. I have no real desire to create anything whatsoever...¹³

Posterity has, however, chosen to judge his music differently and many of his compositions, particularly his songs, have come to be regarded as masterpieces in their own right. Songs such as *Sleep*, *Yarmouth Fair*, *Sweet and Twenty* and *Captain Stratton's Fancy*, to mention but a few, have long since entered the realms of the classics while carols such as *Balulalow* and *Adam lay ybounden* have as recently as the past two years been heard by millions of listeners in the service of Nine Lessons and Carols broadcast by the BBC world service from King's College Cambridge on Christmas Eve. It is difficult too to imagine the repertory of the string orchestra without the popular *Capriol Suite*.

As has been noted earlier much of this lack of self-esteem stemmed from the fact that he felt threatened because he had had no real formal musical education and because much of what he knew about music was self-taught and largely intuitive. This would account for his general suspicion of and constant clashes with musicians

¹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Nichols, 15.1.1923, London, BL, Add MS 57795.

¹³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Nichols, 7.10.1928, London, BL, Add MS 57795.

The problems with his mother were no doubt further compounded by the fact that his father had died while Warlock was very young. Throughout his life there are clear signs that he was continually looking for a father-figure, be it in his music teacher, Colin Taylor, or in the two composers he idolized, Delius and van Dieren and whose peculiar idioms greatly influenced his own music. His energetic and almost obsessive devotion to them and his attempts to promote their music in unceasingly generous ways appears at times very like a young child eager to win his father's approbation and affection.

His intelligence and integrity permeated every aspect of his writings and is nowhere better displayed than in the unyielding principles of honesty in his considerable achievement in the field of musical scholarship.

In his enthusiasms and dislikes of composers and their music he is often wide of the mark. Here history has proved him wrong in a number of instances. But throughout his writings there burns an enthusiasm which is refreshing and wholly convincing. His recognition of the worth of men such as Schönberg, Bartók and Kodály are examples of his forward-looking and astute perception. His style of writing in books, articles and letters is unerringly felicitous and, even if the reader must choose at times to disagree with the contents, the prose and choice of words is admirable. His burning and zealous commitment to numerous causes shone like many beacons throughout his brief career. For this trait alone he demands attention and admiration.

Warlock and his contemporaries have often been called the "Lost Generation".¹⁶ They lived at a time between the wars when values had been overturned and

¹⁶ See article by Pirie P.J., "The Lost Generation: (on British Composers between the Two World Wars)". *Music and Musicians*, May 1972, no.237, v.20, no.9, pp.36-40.

distorted by materialism and the horrors of the Great War of 1914-1918. It was a time when few could see the direction in which English and, indeed, European music, was heading.

Amidst all this uncertainty Peter Warlock constantly railed against the hypocrisy and materialism of his generation. Almost as if aware of the short time allotted to him he set about his tasks as composer, critic, journalist and writer with a feverish and formidable energy. And as he sped forward on his course of apparent self-destruction he scattered jewels in the form of songs along his path. His perception of Beauty as revealed in his own music was in miniature forms but nonetheless intense, his compositions often reflecting a frustrated and melancholy search for the unattainable. Without these gems the history of 20th century English music would indeed be the poorer.

Wildheart is dead. Plumage of heavenly hue,
Bright eye, bold wing; ardour and grief and rage;
Some snatches of sweet song - all, all too few! -
Then the dead feathers dulling in the cage...

Wildheart is dead and the vehement wings at rest
Battered so hard against the wire and wood.
Wildheart is still. He has whistled his brave best.
Wildheart, dear Wildheart, lie where you should
Gathered, heart's brother, to your poet's breast.¹⁷

¹⁷ Nichols, R., *Elegy for Philip Heseltine*, 17.12.1930, quoted in Copley, op.cit., p.19.

APPENDIX A
PETER WARLOCK'S DUBLIN LECTURE

As has already been seen, the so-called "Irish" year (August 1917-August 1918) was a particularly fruitful one for Warlock. From this period dates the composition of some of his earliest published songs, his meeting with the poet, Yeats, his two months on an remote, unidentified island in the Atlantic learning the Irish language and the bagpipes, the writing of several essays for a projected book, his dabblings in the occult and his one and only attempt at public lecturing.

In his correspondence with Taylor during that year he wrote at great length about this particular lecture, which had proved a highly significant occasion in his musical and personal development. This lecture gave him the opportunity of gaining self-confidence before an audience, an experience which previously would have filled him with nervous anxiety. This particular event took place at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin at 8.15 p.m. on Sunday, 12 May 1918 and was announced as a lecture followed by a short programme of music (Stalls 1/- and 6d.; Balcony and Pit 3d.).

Part of the script of this lecture is housed in the British Library¹ and, although only the first three pages have survived, it makes very interesting reading. As well as these few pages there are also detailed descriptions of the lecture in Warlock's letters to Taylor and Delius. Using these as well as Gray's account of the lecture,² a good deal of information about this unusual event can be pieced together.

Warlock first makes mention of the idea of presenting a lecture in a letter written to Taylor soon after his return from a remote island off the coast of Ireland. Here he must have had ample opportunity to decide what options were open to him and what course of action he should take on his return:

¹ Nigel Heseltine Papers, London, BL, Add MS 57967.

² For his account of the lecture see Gray, *Peter Warlock: A Memoir*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1934, pp.159-160.

As a result of this long period of exile, I have come back to Dublin and to musical work with quite a new enthusiasm and vigour - which I think I shall at last be able to turn to some practical - to some dynamic account! At any rate I am going to launch out and give a very revolutionary lecture on "What Music is" at the Abbey Theatre in two or three week's time, and follow it up with a very revolutionary programme of music!...I want to tell you about this plan in some detail, for it is the first step towards a scheme which occurred to me some time ago, in which - if it appeals to you - we might co-operate at some not too future date to our mutual profit - both musical and financial. I believe there is a real demand and appreciation for illustrated lectures on musical subjects. And it has occurred to me that you and I might be able to fix up a very interesting and profitable tour some day, which would serve the double purpose of waking up the younger generation to the truth about music, and of bringing in the bawbees to boot!!...Dublin is a grand place to begin at, since it is musically starved and hence quite uneducated. A concert which might pass unnoticed in London would draw the whole city here, even if they came only to scoff...Anything of a novel and controversial nature is bound to stir up a great deal of discussion, and there will probably be a "press" as vastly entertaining as that of Vandieren's [sic] concert!....

The first lecture will be a kind of address to the public such as the British Medical Association's agents used to deliver in Hyde Park on the subject of "secret remedies" - though, of course, I shall not confine my attention to the "professional gentlemen". I have tried to outline, in a few pages, the whole theory and practise [sic] of music from the appreciator's point of view - taking the appreciator into one's confidence, as it were, over the heads of the hierophants! All the fundamental ideas contained in the essays which you read will be embodied - in a simplified and untechnical form - together with a considerable quantity of new matter, the whole concluding with a rapid summary of the history of European music (with a glance at the East, of which - important discovery! - Ireland forms a part, musically speaking) from its birth in the 10th century to its age of puberty in the 20th - the whole point being that music has only just reached the threshold of maturity!

All this has been condensed into about ten thousand words - Heaven knows. it may prove indigestible enough, but it is apparently intelligible to the few non-musicians who have read it - the musicos cannot be expected to understand, though if they only fume I shall be satisfied! The musical programme will be necessarily short. One cannot hope to provide systematic "illustrations" to a subject of such a general and far-reaching character: so I want to give...a programme of really vital modern stuff which no one will have ever heard before. It must, of course, be kept on the simple side - but that is fairly easy to manage. First of all, an Irish-speaking singer will sing traditional songs in the traditional manner - (which, incidentally, seems to be absolutely unknown in England, and practically impossible for any non-Irish speaker to master: hence many hideous misconceptions about Irish music, which I won't enter into at the moment). Then an Indian will follow, with traditional folk-songs in his traditional manner. The similarity - which has, I believe, never been publicly demonstrated before - will be very striking. (Yeats has approached the subject, some years back, I am told, but from a slightly different angle). After this, a normal European singer will deliver some quite simple melody - say of Schubert - to demonstrate the difference between the fixed scale of the west and the fluid scale of the east - if you see what I mean - following it with one or two songs of Mussorgsky and - if I can get the MSS over - one or two of Delius and Vandieren [sic]. I propose to contribute half-a-dozen Bartók pieces and a few, on similar lines, of Vandieren [sic]: a second

pianist will give a Chopin étude - or, if it can be learnt in time - Scriabin's "Vers la flamme"³ - and, to ensure at least one really popular item - we shall co-operate, à quatre mains, in Ladmirault's Gaelic Rhapsody⁴...It sounds a wild scheme, doesn't it??

Now the question is: have you got my copy of Bartók's 10 easy pieces⁵ and the Bagatelles,⁶ or did you return them to me in London? I cannot remember: if they are in London, they are inaccessible and there seem to be no copies to be had from Chester's library. If you have them and would send them over, I would be infinitely grateful. I still have your volume of "Pro Deti"⁷ - children's pieces - which I know I ought to have returned ages ago - but perhaps you'll let me keep it till after the concert? It has interested many people here. If the lecture succeeds, I hope to be able to repeat it in other centres. For the purpose of our tour, it would have to be curtailed a good bit, so as to divide the evening more evenly between lecturer and player - but it would really be better to split it up into half-a-dozen - especially if the audience were of a kind that might be expected to understand the particularities of the subject. Here one has to take no previous knowledge for granted - and that is, by the way, an advantage seeing that it compels one to define carefully every term one employs, to leave nothing - not even the most elementary point - unclear or vague...I could ramble on, expatiating on details, for ages and ages: we have a practically unlimited field before us! But I will desist for the present and wait till I hear what you think of the broad lines of the scheme.⁸

The essays mentioned in this letter were first referred to in a letter to Taylor from Dublin the year before⁹ and had titles such as *The Function of Music, Critic and Creation, The Scope of Opera* and *Intuition and Instruction*. Taylor responded swiftly to Warlock's urgent request and sent the Bartók piano pieces on as soon as he could. Warlock's reply is filled with an air of nervous excitement as he writes about the forthcoming lecture, only a week away:

Thanks ever so much for the Bartók pieces: you are very good - I am infinitely grateful. Oh, how I wish you could come over to play them for me! As it is, I simply dare not attempt any of the more interesting ones - any, in fact, in which it would be in any way possible for me to go astray. My nerves, in the presence of a throng, make all but quite childish simple things impossible - notes swim before me and I collapse utterly. However we'll do some grand lectures together in England later on. For this one I can't get any sort of programme together: we shall just have our traditional singers - the little group of Bartók and Van Dieren pieces - perhaps another piano group by another player - and, for a frankly popular conclusion, Ladmirault's Variations sur des airs de biniou, à 4 mains¹⁰ - Voilà tout.

³ Op.72.

⁴ 1909.

⁵ 1908.

⁶ 1907.

⁷ 1908-1909.

⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 25.4.1918.

⁹ 24.9.1917.

¹⁰ 1906.

The lecture is fixed for next Sunday evening - the 12th - rather sooner than I had expected, but - by a rather humorously fortunate disposition of providence, this is the week of the Feis Ceoil¹¹ - the great competition festival of all Ireland at which all the professional musicians of the country gather together! As this beano doesn't end till Saturday night, we shall probably have a full house on Sunday! I am very pleased with this somewhat malicious move of chance. In the present series of lectures, the Chairman is in the habit of inviting "discussion" at the close: this will be vastly entertaining!¹²

When Taylor met Peter Warlock's son, Nigel, during a visit to South Africa sometime in the 1970s he and Warlock's cousin, "Sonny" Heseltine, persuaded him to present the collection of his father's papers to the British Library which he duly did in June 1973. Contained in this important collection of significant letters and documents are the first three pages of this lecture, *What Music Is*. Some comments on the original manuscript have obviously been added at a later date: on the first page the date is incorrectly given as 12 May 1919 and across the top are pencilled the words, in larger script: "Rewrite all! This needs much revision".

It is unfortunate that the lecture is incomplete and ends so abruptly just as Warlock was getting into his stride, about to define what, in his opinion, music was. Even though only these few pages survive, it is important that it be documented here, for it is not available in print anywhere else. When reading it, it is important to remember that Warlock was only 23 at the time and also to note the heartfelt plea for an honest and unprejudiced approach to music, something which he fought for throughout his life. The lecture is written in a lucid, direct manner with clear logic and employing images that would have easily been understood by the average layman in the audience. It is interesting to note the inclusion of one of his regular hobby-horses - that the worst enemy of music is the professional musician, a theme echoed in the writings of the early English composer, Robert Jones,¹³ which Warlock frequently used:

¹¹ Irish folk festival featuring games and competitions together with traditional Irish music and dancing.

¹² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 5.5.1918.

¹³ Jones, R., dedication of his *First Book of Songs and Ayres*, Peter Short, London, 1600.

I should like to dispel at the very outset the impression which some of you may have formed, in anticipation, of the nature of this discourse - an impression that before coming to the real music of the evening, you will have to endure a tedious half-hour of technicalities addressed by a specialist to his fellow-specialists in the art in question. This is not the case. I do not come before you as a specialist nor as a professional musician: I do not come before you to uphold the claims of the specialist or the professional musician, or to extol their virtues. On the contrary, I believe that at present the Art of Music has no greater enemy than the specialist, the professional musician.

If this statement astonishes you, I hope that before the evening is over I shall have done something at least to mitigate your astonishment, if not dispel it entirely.

The specialist, in nine cases out of ten, confines himself to the letter of his subject and he takes the spirit for granted - which generally means that he ignores it altogether. One may well ask - What do they know of music that only music know ?

I do not want to say much about the Letter of Music - about the technique of music; most of you would be profoundly bored if I did and not in the least edified. So I shall confine myself almost entirely to the Spirit of Music - for that, after all, is What Music Is. Spirit, I know, is a vague word - I shall endeavour to define it more explicitly later on - but it stands as a symbol of the very basis of all Art, for no art can be based upon its own technique. One needs no technique to love music and understand it: but the greatest technician may lack both understanding and love. It is absolutely necessary to seek first the Kingdom of God within ourselves - and all subsidiary things will be added unto us afterwards.¹⁴

This simple and fundamental direction will no doubt provoke the same kind of superior sneer in the modern "intellectuals" as Elisha provoked in that captain of the hosts of Syria whom he bade go and wash seven times in the river Jordan if he would be made whole.¹⁵ Prescribe them a course of the heaviest and obtrusest textbooks and they will pursue it eagerly, even if it lead them nowhere: but bid them listen for the still small voice¹⁶ of the unknown within them and they will jeer at you as an impractical imbecile.

This, however, is only to be expected of the type of mind which rejects the Bible as an old wives' tale, the Bhagavad-Gita¹⁷ as the nebulous rhapsodising of half-civilised maniacs, and acclaims as its prophet an individual of the name of Wells¹⁸ who, having temporarily exhausted the interest of the English suburbs, now deigns to apply his great mind to the "problem" of God. I, for my part, could wish for no higher compliment than the derision of this kind of "advanced" and "intellectual" person.

¹⁴ cf. Matthew 6: 33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you".

¹⁵ II Kings 5: 1-14.

¹⁶ I Kings 19: 12.

¹⁷ One of the great religious classics (c. A.D.400). It is to Hinduism what the Sermon on the Mount is to Christianity.

¹⁸ H.G. Wells, 1866-1946, English novelist, journalist, sociologist and popular historian. Here Warlock refers to Wells's wartime writings when he turned temporarily to a belief in the transcendental, producing *God, the Invisible King* in 1917. In the early 1900s Wells had written a number of novels about lower middle-class life hence Warlock's dismissive remarks.

Now I have often observed amongst people interested in the arts in general that while they take a keen delight in discussing and appraising literature, painting or sculpture - and are quite able to do so with natural insight and intelligence - they adopt quite another tone when they come to deal with music. When the subject is mentioned they at once assume an attitude of extreme humility and almost superstitious deference, as of the uninitiated before a mystery. They "know what they like" but they are bashful about delivering an opinion of it, pleading lack of sufficient knowledge of music. Now what can this mean? If we were to ask anyone his opinion of a novel or a book of verse it is unlikely that he would say - "I am not a literary man, and therefore have no right to form an opinion on it one way or the other". If he had read the book, he would doubtless give us his opinion without any further ado or apology. It might be that, having no very comprehensive knowledge of literature, he would lack the comparative standard of criticism: but that is by no means a sine qua non of literary judgments. Indeed, excessive cultivation of this standard may lead us so far astray that at length we can perceive only the relative value of different works, and are made blind to the absolute worth and intrinsic significance of any single one.

Books are not written for literary persons, nor music for musicians. Art is for the world at large - he who hath ears to hear, let him hear.¹⁹

Professional criticism, in all the arts, is inclined to dwell overmuch upon the means and methods of the creative faculty to the neglect of the created thing itself. Thus the code comes to be considered more important than the message, the sign than the thing signified.²⁰ And in this way a great barrier has been interposed between the creative artist and the public to whom he would appeal - a barrier unreal and unsubstantial enough, it is true, but which maintains its existence by sheer virtue of its being believed in. The mystery once established, it is natural that those responsible for its perpetuation should turn it to their own pecuniary advantage, arrogating to themselves the sole right of lifting the veil - in return for money, of course. And it is equally natural that, with the passage of time and the continuance of this practise (sic), the veil should become heavier and heavier!

One is reminded of the people who enclose within high walls some ancient monument, or some spot of great natural beauty - and charge sixpence for admission where all should be free. It is my object to try and show up the absurdity of this bogey of technical knowledge, to expose some of the machinery of its manipulation, to try and make people understand that they are free - to use their own ears and to form their own tastes. I hope also to be able to indicate briefly what education can and can not do with regard to music.

It will be as well to begin at the very beginning, to be quite precise in the definition of every term we employ. I hope thus to render unnecessary the habitual question "Do you like Music?" which one stranger will ask another without having the least idea what either himself or the other means by Music - as also that equally fatuous question which invariably follows an affirmative answer to the first - "Then what instrument do you play?"

¹⁹ Mark 3: 9.

²⁰ cf. Warlock's unpublished letter to Taylor, 27.9.1917: "The Christian churches are more remote in spirit from their Founder than the Jewish church was in his own day. The letter has prevailed over the spirit, the sign over the thing signified...."

It is necessary to frame a definition of music, to state what is its nature, its function, its scope: and to determine what it is that we require of music - what we turn to music for, that we cannot find elsewhere. And in this enquiry we must be guided not only by the

And here, sadly, is all there is of this lecture, page 3 ending in mid-stream. Frustrating as this may be, there is at least Warlock's very full report of the proceedings of that Sunday evening in a letter to Taylor written two days after the lecture. It makes interesting reading even though there are strange contradictory remarks about the audience's reaction; first of all they applaud "everything indiscriminately" and then they applaud "intelligently at the right points":

The lecture was carried through on Sunday with apparent success - I say apparent because there was no means of ascertaining the precise temper of the audience who applauded everything indiscriminately. The Abbey Theatre is not large, but it was practically filled; and the mechanisms of the stage enabled us to improve just a little on the usual concert-room atmosphere. During the lecture and the piano-playing, we had green and amber top-lights - during the songs green only - very dim - no footlights at all and the auditorium in complete darkness throughout. The lecture itself took about three quarters of an hour. I was quite pleased with it - it was strong and bitter - far more so than the articles I sent you - and the audience applauded intelligently at the right points. The Indian singer was superb - a revelation to myself - and made a great success: the Irishwoman was nervous and not so good - still, very interesting. In order to preserve some kind of unity in the brief musical programme (which, as I pointed out, was not meant to "illustrate" the subject of the lecture, since that would require a series of concerts in itself - "which I should be most happy to give if I were assured that they were wanted" (loud applause!) - I confined myself entirely to the folk-songs and piano works based on folk-songs (carefully explaining the important difference). So, of Bartók, I merely played no. 4 of Bagatelles, Nos. 6 and 8 of 10 leichte Klav[ierstücke] and two from the Children's book - and four exquisite arrangements of Dutch melodies by Van Dieren [sic] - concluding with two numbers of the Rhapsodie Gaélique and two Breton dances by Paul Ladmirault - for 4 hands. The "discussion" fizzled out poorly. There was no indignation - only a few fatuous and harmless questions. I think and hope that the "intellectuals" (who are more hopelessly clique-y and static here than in England even) were hurt and insulted by various remarks in the lecture. As a further blast against them, I induced the wonderful Old Man of the Mountains I told you about to come and make a short speech - which he did, with great effect, saying that to restore the ancient Irish tradition in music we must all go out into the mountains and live with the sun and the fairies, as the founders of that tradition had done. This was just the kind of speech I wanted him to make, and it was greeted with tumultuous applause...Even if no great effect was made by the whole thing, I am very glad to have brought it off. One has to begin some time and this was a good opportunity of getting a hall and performers and a ready-made audience (since the lectures are becoming an "institution") all for nothing. At any rate I have surmounted the initial bogey of nervousness at appearing for the first time on a public platform. I think you and I might very profitably make a tour of the English schools - you could easily fix up engagements at Eton

and such places, where we should be paid for doing it, and have no expenses. And you could wear a false beard and call yourself Burton-on-Trent - in case the R.A.M.²¹ should sack you - or, in view of your connection with that venerable institution, why not - with exquisite irony - adopt the pseudonym Roger A. Ramsbottom!!!²²

The significance of the reference to the town, Burton-on-Trent, famous for its beer, is lost without the information that Taylor had published some popular ballads, "pot-boilers", as he called them, under the pseudonym, Cecil Trent, around that time.

In conclusion it is interesting to quote what Gray has to say about the lecture in this paragraph written in his memoir of Warlock some years later:

In addition he actually delivered a lecture, with musical illustrations, on 'What Music Is', at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. This must have been a strange affair, and I would have given a good deal to have been present. Clad in a sumptuous flowing African medicine-man's robe, purple with green facings, and adorned with a large and unruly beard which he has now grown for the first time, he delivered a long, erudite, and fantastic discourse on the whole theory and practice of music from the tenth century to the twentieth. This was succeeded by a group of traditional Irish folk-songs sung by a native singer in the traditional manner, and a group of traditional Indian folk-songs also sung by a native singer in the traditional manner, showing the fundamental similarity which Philip had imagined himself to have perceived, underlying the two traditions. Then an ordinary European singer contributed a song of Schubert in order to demonstrate the difference between the fixed scale of ordinary European music and the fluid scale of Indian and Irish music, following it up with one or two of Moussorgsky, Delius, and van Dieren. After that Philip himself played some Béla Bartók, and another pianist a Chopin Étude and Scriabin's *Vers la Flamme*. During all this the platform, or stage, was lit with dim green and amber top-lights, with no foot-lights, and the auditorium was plunged in complete darkness. Finally, a peculiar person, with flowing locks and a beard eighteen inches long, called 'The Old Man of the Mountains' - formerly a prosperous commercial traveller who had suddenly turned hermit and had lived seven years of monastic solitude and austerity in a little round house which he had built himself with a domed roof so that the light might reach him at every hour of the day - got up and made a speech exhorting the audience to go out into the mountains and live with the sun and the fairies.

Dublin audiences are presumably more used to that kind of thing than audiences elsewhere, for the famous theatre seems to have been crowded and the audience enthusiastic - though what they can have made of these strange proceedings one cannot conceive.²³

²¹ Royal Academy of Music.

²² Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.5.1918.

²³ Gray, op. cit., pp.159-160.

Gray seems to have based this slightly patronising and inaccurate account of the Dublin lecture mostly on the Taylor letters (to which he had access when writing the memoir) as well as from some other unidentified source. First of all he confuses Warlock's initial ideas for the musical content of the lecture (see the letter to Taylor of 25.4.1918 where Warlock mentions a few works for the lecture) with the programme as it was finally presented. In this final programme there were no songs by Mussorgsky or Delius, nor were there piano pieces by Chopin or Skryabin as Gray incorrectly states.

Gray also quotes from a letter written to him by Warlock which contains a further reference to this Dublin lecture:

I have done a considerable deal of work lately in connection with problems concerning the function of art, and I actually went so far as to deliver a lecture in the Abbey Theatre some weeks ago on 'What Music Is' (though it was primarily concerned with art in the abstract). It was a startling and necessarily sketchy discourse to which - as also to a fine Indian singer and some piano pieces by Bartók and van Dieren - some 400 persons listened with respect and - as I discovered from certain questions put to me at the close - scarce a grain of understanding! However, I propose to persist in this possibly quixotic course, with lectures on the function of art, the possibilities and limits of musical education (which I am endeavouring to work out very fully), musical history and a few - very few - individual composers. These discourses may ultimately see the light in book form but I shall keep them back until they have been given out in what I really think is a more efficacious manner.²⁴

Where then did Gray get his information about the extravagant garb Warlock allegedly wore, "the sumptuous flowing African medicine-man's robe"? Certainly not from Warlock's letters to Taylor nor in the letter from Warlock to Gray himself for that matter, the very places one would have expected to find it. And why, if Warlock should write about the strange speech of "The Old Man of the Mountains", should he not also mention his own eccentric garb as well? Was this part of the Gray tendency to extravagant extrapolation or was it perhaps a later addition to the story by Warlock himself as simply some kind of a joke or attempt to add more colour to the occasion? It seems very unlikely that Warlock would have attired himself thus if

²⁴ Letter from Warlock to Gray, 30.5.1918, quoted in Gray, *ibid.*, p.187.

he had wanted to put across the comparatively straightforward message of the lecture. Surely dressing up in such fantastic garb would not only have alienated the audience but also have been at odds with the whole reasoning behind the lecture?

Whatever the truth of this story Warlock himself should be left to have the last word. He wrote to Delius about this lecture in rather serious and philosophical vein:

It is wonderful how much more clearly one can think about music when one is right away from it than one possibly can do when in the whirl of a concert-season. I have done a great deal of work at the philosophy and history of music while I have been in this country. The wilderness is the best place for meditation, and I have spent a considerable time in the most desolate and solitary region of the West coast. I believe it is necessary to be sure of one's first general principles before proceeding to formulate any ideas about particular examples in art that I have spent most of my time lately in attacking the most comprehensive question of all, in music - namely, *What Music is* - in all its aspects; and I really feel I have arrived at results which - at any rate as a beginning of new discoveries - are of some value. Last Sunday evening I made my first public appearance and gave a lecture at the Abbey Theatre, taking simply 'What Music is', as my title. It was certainly of a startling and revolutionary nature, but it was listened to with attention and even enthusiasm by an audience of nearly five hundred. which was encouraging for a first attempt.²⁵

²⁵ Letter from Warlock to Delius, 15.5.1918, quoted in Gray, *ibid.*, pp.175-176.

APPENDIX B

Poem by the young Warlock (aged 11) included in a letter to his mother, 1.5.1904, BL, Add MS 57958.

In castles and old mansions too
 There oft are haunted rooms a few.
 Where hands appear and strangle men
 All bloody & with fingers ten
 For instance once a man was told
 That ghastly fingers would appear,
 Which in the dark would seem quite clear,
 That they would rise above his bed
 Until their nails should pierce his head
 So then he two revolvers got
 So that these fingers might be shot.

* * * * *

The night approached: he went to bed
 And stayed up in his nightshirt red.
 All was quite silent in the dark
 He heard not e'en a dog to bark -
 When suddenly! - O gracious my
 Two hands appeared - so with a cry
 He snatched up the revolvers two
 A ghastly scream [sic] - what did he do
 Alas! it was no ghostly foe
 For he'd shot off his own big toe.

MORAL So if with Lux you wash your sheet
 You'll never these disasters meet.

APPENDIX C

A List of Warlock Association Music and Manuscripts in the Libraries of the University of Cape Town.

During the last years of his life Colin Taylor made several generous donations of music and personal papers to the University of Cape Town Libraries. These are housed in the Colin Taylor Collection in the Manuscripts and Archives Department of the University of Cape Town Library and in the S.A. College of Music Library. In this collection there is a large amount of material relating to Peter Warlock in the form of letters, articles, pamphlets and music, both published and in manuscript.

During his lifetime Warlock gave or sent copies of his newly published works to Taylor, and many of these copies were among those presented by him to the Libraries. As up to now full details of these important association copies have not been available to Warlock scholars, here is a complete list of the Warlock collection together with all the relevant details. This is possibly one of the largest collections of Warlock association copies, connected with one particular person, assembled together anywhere in the world.

The music falls into four sections:

- (1) Works by Bernard van Dieren copied out by Warlock. These are the only MSS in Warlock's handwriting in the University of Cape Town collections.
- (2) Printed music by Warlock inscribed to Colin Taylor and, in some cases, containing annotations in the composer's hand.
- (3) Copies given to Colin Taylor but without inscription.
- (4) Copies sent by publishers to Colin Taylor, probably at Warlock's request.
- (5) Copies of Warlock's music and writings formerly in Colin Taylor's possession which fall into none of the above categories.

(1) MSS of Bernard van Dieren's music copied out by Peter Warlock.

(a) *Ten Dutch Melodies.*

UCT Jagger library, Manuscripts and Archives.

TPA 781.4 VAN 7265)

Warlock copied out ten of these melodies which he sent to Taylor in 1918: "I am copying out for you the ten Dutch melodies by van Dieren, which you will love".¹

These melodies occupy nine pages of a small music manuscript book, measuring 29.5 x 23.5 cm.

When O.U.P. published twelve of these in 1927 the title was changed to *Netherland Melodies* and one of the original ten was discarded. Thirteen of the originals are extant.

(b) *Slow movement from Quartet (no.4) for two violins, viola and double- bass.*

Colin Taylor Collection, uncatalogued.

On the top right hand corner of the first page is written "presented to Colin Taylor in memory of our mutual friend Philip. B. van Dieren. 1931". The manuscript was given to Taylor by Bernard van Dieren when the two men met late in 1931.²

This is a two-stave reduction of the slow movement of Op 16, composed in December 1923 and covers two and a half sides (18 lines) of music manuscript paper measuring 35 x 26 cm.

¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 14.5.1918.

² See unpublished letter from van Dieren to Taylor, 6.8.1931, Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection, BC 76.

On the bottom right hand side of the last page Taylor has written: "This is transcribed by Peter Warlock (Philip Heseltine)". Attached to this last page is a note in Taylor's handwriting: "Out of dozens - this is the only score in Warlock's hand that I still possess. Where are all the rest, including a four-hand arrangement of my Prelude Russe that he made? C.T. 1968".

Tomlinson writes as follows:

In these days of instant photographic reproduction we tend to forget that in those days scores had to be copied by hand unless they achieved publication. The British Music Society were interested in this quartet and had the composer's fair copy. At the same time there were negotiations for it to be published in Paris. The publisher's copyist made another score from van Dieren's rough pencilled draft and sent it to Warlock to correct. This he started to do and in fact he wrote a copy of the score himself but the draft was too rough even for his intuition and he had to resort to van Dieren's neat score for a final check:

"I received the very beautiful autograph of the fourth quartet and have duly checked the French copy and sent it back to Sliwinsky.³ Your own MS, if you are in no urgent need of it, I should very much like to keep a little longer for further study. It seems to me to be as perfect a work as even yourself has ever done, and it will certainly prove a most alluring introduction to you for those who meet you for the first time in its printed pages". (Warlock to van Dieren, 22.4.1924).

Recovered from a broken leg and back in Chelsea, Warlock lost no time in organizing some friends into rehearsing the quartet:

"...I believe you only got the clean copy after you had tried to correct from the rough sketch, and I am amazed already that you were able to make as many corrections as you did from that very slightly written first score. I am being pressed on both sides for the two copies of the 4th now, but on the other hand I could not tell you with sufficient emphasis how grateful I should be for an opportunity of hearing it myself and if you could arrange for the players you mentioned to run through it in the course of this week I would be very deeply indebted to you"....(van Dieren to Warlock, 8.12.1924).

Surprisingly, after all this activity and in view of the fact that this quartet was possibly performed more than any other in the composer's lifetime (in spite of needing an exceptionally fine double-bass player), it was never published. Along with the first, an incredibly complicated work, it remains in MS. The van Dieren pencilled draft was sent to M.D. Calvocoressi in 1932 and is now in the British Library [add MS 50498]. His fair copy was sent to Hans Kindler (strangely, considering it is his only string quartet not needing a cello) and is now in the Library of Congress. Warlock's copy still

³ Jan Sliwinski, 1884-1950, Polish singer, librettist and musical organizer.

exists, with some van Dieren annotations, and yet another fair copy was made, apparently by a copyist. (This cannot be the French one referred to above as there are no alterations.)....⁴

(2) Printed music by Warlock inscribed to Colin Taylor and, in some cases, containing annotations in the composer's hand.

(a) DELIUS, Frederick *North Country Sketches* Four Orchestral Pieces transcribed for Piano Duet by Philip Heseltine. (Augener, London, 1922)

TPB 781.6 DEL 2293

Gray quotes from a letter written to him by Warlock from Cefn Bryntalch referring to this Delius transcription:

But Wild Wales alone holds an enchantment for me stronger than wine or woman, and intimately associated with music. In these admirable and tranquil surroundings I can work more quietly and steadily than I have ever been able to before...I have had a number of Delius piano scores to do lately, and several others to revise, make fair copies of and prepare for printing - and this has taken up most of my time, even though I work on an average six or seven hours a day. The "North Country Sketches" (piano duet) and "Hassan" (piano solo) have reached the proof stage.⁵

In a letter to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch Warlock promised to send him a copy of this transcription:

I will send you in a day or two a copy of...my piano duet arrangement of Delius' four "North Country Sketches" for orchestra which Augener has at last brought out.⁶

Warlock evidently needed his memory jogged, for two months later he wrote to Taylor as follows from Wales:

Your postcard reminded me of my unfulfilled promise - as I now send you the "North Country Sketches"....⁷

⁴ Tomlinson, *Warlock and van Dieren*, Thames, London, 1978, p.28.

⁵ Letter from Warlock to Gray, 19.11.1921, quoted by Gray, op. cit., pp.242-244.

⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 20.4.1922.

In the top right hand corner of the cover of this copy is the inscription: "CT from P. 1922", while on the bottom right hand of the page Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from Philip Heseltine 1922. (Peter Warlock)".

(b) WARLOCK, Peter *Corpus Christi*. An old English Carol set for contralto and tenor soli and chorus of mixed voices. (Curwen, London, 1921)

TPB 780.47 WAR 62/472

There are several references to this carol in Warlock's letters to Taylor. He first mentions it a letter from Cefn Bryntalch:

I will send you in a day or two a copy of my carol....⁸

Then again two months later:

Your postcard reminded me of my unfulfilled promise - as I now send you...the carol (which the Oriana choir under Kennedy Scott, have sung five or six times at various concerts in and around London)....⁹

On this copy Warlock has pencilled in the following comments: above the words "contralto solo" on the first page he has written "perhaps soprano wd. be better - or mezzo-sop" while on page 2 he has written the following comment in the bottom left-hand corner with a line pointing to the top stave of the piano reduction in bar 10: "this idiotic transcription in the bass clef is not my doing. Playing it on the piano one must of course play it an octave higher".

⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 15.2.1922.

⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 20.4.1922.

(c) WARLOCK, Peter *Mr. Belloc's Fancy* (Sir J.C. Squire) (Augener, London, 1922)

TPB 780.3 WAR 62/449

Warlock referred to this song and to *Captain Stratton's Fancy* in a letter to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch:

Augeners have in the press two extremely vulgar drinking songs of mine - or as I describe them "Two true toper's tunes to troll with trulls and trollops in a tavern" - entitled respectively "Captain Stratton's Fancy" (RUM), poem by John Masefield, and "Mr. Belloc's Fancy" (BEER), poem by J.C. Squire. Curwens accepted the former months ago before I found them out for the stinking swindling swines they are, but as the agreement was not actually signed I had the satisfaction of being able to snatch the MS from the very jaws of their press and send it to Augeners who will no doubt do much better with it.¹⁰

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from P.W. 1922" together with an additional note: "N.B. Pencilled notes within are in the composer's hand". This copy of the song has the words "professional copy" printed on the top left hand corner of the cover. The following are Warlock's pencilled annotations:

- (i) At the end of bar 40, above the voice part: "With immense heartiness!"
- (ii) In the accompaniment in bar 49: "Keep the pace up! Chords very crisp and hard".
- (iii) At the beginning of bar 58, above the voice part: "Top note whenever possible!"
- (iv) At the very end of the song: "P. Cefn Bryntalch. November 1921"

(d) WARLOCK, Peter *Piggesnie* (Anon. 16th Century) (Augener, London, 1922)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/456

Together with a letter written to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch in December 1922 Warlock included a number of songs identified only as "little Peterisms". The song, *Piggesnie*, was probably one of them:

¹⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.2.1922.

Here are some more "little Peterisms" for you, with all good wishes for a pleasant Christmas!¹¹

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from P.W. Xmas 1922". This copy of the song has the words "Professional Copy" printed on the top left hand corner of the cover. Over the beginning of the first full bar of the piano accompaniment Warlock has written in pencil: "till ready!!!"¹²

(e) WARLOCK, Peter *The Curlew* (for tenor solo, flute, cor anglais and string quartet (William Butler Yeats) (Stainer and Bell, London, 1924, for the Carnegie Trust)

TPB 782.6 WAR 62/493

On the inside front cover is Warlock's inscription: "Colin Taylor with love from Peter Warlock, Chelsea - June 1924" and was one of the pieces of music which Warlock gave to Taylor during the latter's visit to England in that year.

On the first page of music it is interesting to note that a small slip of paper with the printed words "To Cecil Gray" has been stuck just above the music where it is printed in later copies of this work. As this song-cycle was originally dedicated to Gerald Cooper, with whom Warlock later had a disagreement, this slip of paper has been pasted over the original dedication in this particular score which makes it of especial interest and rarity value - a kind of *Eroica* Symphony among Warlock's works.

(f) WARLOCK, Peter *Call for the Robin-redbreast and the Wren*. Dirge for unaccompanied female voices (John Webster) (Winthrop Rogers, London, 1926)

TPB 780.48 WAR 62/473

Warlock refers to this copy in a letter to Taylor from Eynsford written in 1925:

¹¹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 7.12.1922.

¹² See reference to this annotation in Tomlinson, Introduction to Warlock's *Sociable Songs*, Thames, London, 1982, p.6.

I had hoped to be able to send you in time for Christmas the two remaining numbers of my choral triptych from the plays of John Webster; you have the first - "All the flowers of the spring", for mixed voices: the other two are "Hark, now everything is still" - that grisly poem from "The Duchess of Malfi", for male voices, and "Call for the robin-redbreast and the wren", for 4-part female chorus, this last being dedicated to you, the more appropriately because your delightful Madonna songs were the first examples I ever saw of good music for this rather troublesome combination. I have passed the proofs, and copies may arrive any day.¹³

On the top right hand corner of the cover is Warlock's inscription: "To Colin, with much love from Peter Warlock. February 1926".

(g) WARLOCK, Peter (transcribed and edited) *Four English Songs of the Early Seventeenth Century* (O.U.P., London, 1925)

*Like to the damask rose
Phyllis was a fair maid
My thread is spun
Sigh no more, ladies*

TPB 780.29 WAR 10914

These songs are referred to in a letter Warlock wrote to Taylor from Eynsford in 1925:

I enclose four old songs, reconstructed as nearly as possible in the style of the period....¹⁴

On the top right hand corner of the cover is Warlock's inscription: "CT from P with all good wishes for Christmas 1925".

(h) WARLOCK, Peter *Sorrow's Lullaby* for soprano and baritone solo and string quartet. (Thomas Lovell Beddoes) (O.U.P., London, 1927)

TPB 780.3 WAR 62/459

This copy is referred to in Warlock's letter to Taylor from Eynsford in February 1927:¹⁵

¹³ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 4.12.1925.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ Cape Town, UCT Library, Colin Taylor Collection, BC76 C1.2.88.

Here are my "Sorrow's Lullaby", and an Elizabethan song which is surely one of the best songs ever written.¹⁶ [See EDWARDES, Richard: *When May is in his prime*. TPB 780.3 62/483]

On the top right hand corner of the cover is Warlock's inscription: "For CT with love from P. Eynsford February 1927"

(i) EDWARDES, Richard (transcribed WARLOCK, Peter) *When May is in his prime*, (Richard Edwardes) (O.U.P., London, 1927)

TPB 780.3 62/483

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from Peter Warlock 1937". See references in letter of 3.2.1927 to (h) *Sorrow's Lullaby* above.

(3) **Copies given to Colin Taylor but without inscription.**

(a) WARLOCK, Peter *Captain Stratton's Fancy* (John Masefield) (Augener, London, 1922)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/453

Warlock first referred to this song in a letter to Taylor on 7.2.1922 (see comments on *Mr. Belloc's Fancy*, 2(c) above). The copy referred to here was actually despatched to Taylor on 20.4.1922.

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from PW 1922". This copy of the song has the words "professional copy" printed on the top left hand corner of the cover.

(b) WARLOCK, Peter *Good Ale* (Anon. 15th Century) (Augener, London, 1922)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/450

¹⁶ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 3.2.1927.

Warlock makes mention of this song ("the third which has a more rollicking tune") in a letter to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch:

...I now send you...two pot-house songs which will shortly be followed by a third which has a more rollicking tune than either, each verse concluding with the chorus:

"And bring us in good ale
For Our blessed Lady's sake
Bring us in good ale!"¹⁷

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from P.W. 1922". This copy of the song has the words "Professional Copy" printed on the top left hand corner of the cover.

(c) WARLOCK, Peter *The Bachelor* (Anon. 15th Century) (Augener, London, 1922)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/451

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from P.W. Xmas 1922". This copy of the song has the words "Professional Copy" printed on the top left hand corner of the cover.

(d) WARLOCK, Peter *Hey, trolly loly lo* (Anon. 16th Century) (Augener, London, 1922)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/452

On the cover Taylor has written; "Colin Taylor from P.W. Xmas 1922". This copy of the song has the words "Professional Copy" printed on the top left hand corner of the cover.

(e) WARLOCK, Peter *To the Memory of a Great Singer* (R.L. Stevenson) (Augener, London, 1923)

TP 780.3 62/457

¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 20.4.1922.

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from P.W. May 1923". This copy of the song has the words "Professional Copy" printed on the top left hand corner of the cover.

- (f) WARLOCK, Peter *Folk Song Preludes* for piano (Augener, London, 1923)
TP 781.4 62/446

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor 1923".

- (g) DOWLAND, John (ed. WARLOCK, P. and WILSON, P.) *Two Songs from "A Pilgrim's Solace"* (1612) Transcribed for voice and piano with violin obbligato (Chester, London, 1923)

TP 780.3 DOW 1141

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from P.W. London 1924".

- (h) WARLOCK, Peter *Saudades* Along the stream (Li Po) Take, O take (Shakespeare) Heracleitus (trans. Cory) (Chester, London, 1923)

TPA 780.3 62/458

This song cycle is of particular importance as the third song, *Heracleitus*, is dedicated to Taylor in memory of Hugh Sidgwick, a life-long friend of Taylor, who was killed in the First World War. Warlock refers to this song as early as 1917 in a letter written to Taylor from Dublin:

I am dreadfully grieved to hear of Hugh Sidgwick's death: it is terrible - and I know how deeply you must feel it. There are so very few friends who can stand the test of even a few years, but each one of those few is like a part of oneself....

That you found a little sympathy in my tunes pleases me more than anything that could be said about them. Yesterday brought back to my mind the lovely little Greek poem on the death of a friend...and immediately it seemed to fit itself to music, so I am sending you the outcome which I hope you may like.¹⁸

¹⁸ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 1.10.1917.

Two months later Warlock wrote again to Taylor from Dublin asking him to make a few corrections in the MS copy which he had sent him. It is an important letter as it gives us some idea of the fastidious way in which Warlock treated his compositions:

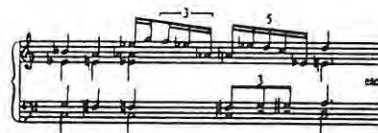
I have a great horror of submitting any MS of mine to the judgment of anybody who will be likely to regard it through the spectacles of technical prejudice. Anyone who is likely to be perplexed by the mere surface sounds will certainly not be able to discover any meaning in a work and had much better not see it at all. While on the subject, will you please make the following corrections in your copy of "Heracleitus":-



("My dear old Carian guest, a handful of grey ashes long long ago at rest....")
(no change in the voice part)

In the first chord C sharp replaces an E (R-H) and the A is no longer tied over. From "handful - - rest" the redundant doubling of the voice part in the piano is cut out which gives greater weight and effect to the voice.

At the word "awake" the semiquavers should be played thus:-



(the first group 2 and 3, the second 5, played very distinctly, without ped. or the lower E flat held as in your MS).¹⁹

There is yet another reference to this song in a much later letter written to Taylor from Cefn Bryntalch in 1922 at the time when Warlock was arranging for the printing of the *Saudades*:

¹⁹ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 10.12.1917.

Five publishers have turned down this song [i.e. *Chopcherry*, no.1 of the first set of *Peterisms*] - which I consider the best light song I've done - so I am having it printed in Vienna (with the "Saudades" of 1917, a new cycle of 5 songs called "Lillygay" and some others) and it will be obtainable at Chester's some time during the spring.²⁰

Warlock was able to give the printed copy of this song in the *Saudades* song cycle when the two men met in 1924. Taylor wrote on the cover: "Colin Taylor from P.W. London 1924" as well as the words "see dedication of No.iii". Inside there are a number of interesting annotations in Taylor's handwriting:

- (i) On the title-page: "Colin Taylor see dedication p.6".
- (ii) On page 6 at the top of the page next to the printed dedication "To Colin Taylor": "Written for C.T. on the death in war (1916) of his life-long friend A.H. Sidgwick author of 'The Promenade Ticket'".
- (iii) At the bottom of the page: "In these words (but original Greek) A.H. Sidgwick dedicated his little book 'The Promenade Ticket' to me. C. T."

(h) WARLOCK, Peter *Candlelight*²¹ (Anthology of Nursery Rhymes) (Augener, London, 1924)

How many miles to Bethlehem
I won't be my father's Jack
Robin and Richard
O my kitten
Little Tommy Tucker
There was an old man
I had a little pony

TP 780.3. WAR 62/448

On the cover Taylor has written: "from Peter Warlock London June 1924". The words "Professional Copy" are also printed on the cover.

²⁰ Unpublished letter from Warlock to Taylor, 19.12.1922.

²¹ Tomlinson suggests that these songs were written for Warlock's seven-year old son, Nigel. Tomlinson, Preface to *Peter Warlock Songs* Vol.5 (1923-1924), Thames, London, 1989, p.5. Copley confirms this, op.cit., p.106.

(i) WARLOCK, Peter *Two Short Songs: I held love's head, Thou gav'st me leave.* (Robert Herrick) (Boosey & Hawkes, London, 1924)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/455

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor from P.W. London 1924.

(4) Copies sent by publishers to Colin Taylor, probably at Warlock's request.

(a) WARLOCK, Peter *Away to Twiver* (Anon. 16th Century) (O.U.P., London, 1927)

TP 780.3 62/464

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor 1927". The copy is also stamped "Complimentary Copy".

(b) WARLOCK, Peter *And wilt thou leave me thus ?* (Sir Thomas Wyatt) (O.U.P., London, 1929)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/462

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor 1929". The copy is also stamped "Complimentary Copy".

(c) WARLOCK, Peter *Jillian of Berry* (Beaumont and Fletcher) (O.U.P., London, 1927)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/469

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor 1927". The copy is also stamped "Complimentary Copy".

(d) WARLOCK, Peter *Chanson du Jour de Noël* (Clement Marot) (Winthrop Rogers, London, 1926)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/460

This copy is marked "For Review".

(e) WARLOCK, Peter *Robin Goodfellow* (Anon. 16th Century) (O.U.P., London, 1927)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/470

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor 1927". The copy is also stamped "Complimentary Copy".

(f) WARLOCK, Peter Two Songs *A Prayer to Saint Anthony of Padua, The Sick Heart* (Arthur Symons) (O.U.P., London, 1928)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/465

On the cover Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor 1925"

(g) WARLOCK, Peter (transcribed and edited)

Three Volumes of Elizabethan Songs
originally for voice and viols, transcribed for voice and string quartet

Volume I TP 780.29 WAR

Volume 2 TP 780.29 WAR 61/89

Volume 3 TP 780.29 WAR 65/396

All volumes have written on the covers by Taylor: "Colin Taylor 1927" and score and parts are marked with the additional instructions: "Return without fail to Colin Taylor". All three volumes are marked "Complimentary Copy".

(g) WARLOCK, Peter (Transcribed and edited)

A sea nymph sat upon the shore
(Anon. early 17th Century from Add MS 34800 British Museum) (O.U.P., London, 1927)

TP 780.45 WAR 62/490

This copy is stamped "Complimentary Copy". It is no.375 of the series "Oxford Choral Songs from The Old Masters", the general editor. of which was W.G. Whittaker. (See chapter 11)

(5) Copies of Warlock's music in Colin Taylor's possession which fall into none of the above categories.

(a) WARLOCK, Peter *After two years* (Richard Aldington) (O.U.P., London, 1931.)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/466

On the cover of this copy Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor 1931 published posthumously".

(b) WARLOCK, Peter *The Fox* (Bruce Blunt) (O.U.P., London, 1931)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/462

On the cover of this copy Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor 1931 (Posthumous)".

(c) WARLOCK, Peter *The Frostbound Wood* (Bruce Blunt) (O.U.P., London, 1931)

TP 780.3 WAR 62/461

On the cover of this copy Taylor has written: "Colin Taylor (Posthumous)".

(d) WARLOCK, Peter *English Ayres. Elizabethan and Jacobean* (O.U.P., London, 1932)

T 784.3942 WAR

This was a posthumous publication, compiled from various prefaces written by Warlock for O.U.P. anthologies of early music which he had transcribed or edited. This copy has Taylor's name written on the cover.

APPENDIX D

A List of Compositions by Colin Taylor

VOCAL:(solos)

Gifts	Thompson	Stainer & Bell	1911
A Pastoral	N.Gale	Stainer & Bell	1911
A Visit from the Sea	R.L. Stevenson	Stainer & Bell	1913
In a Devonshire Lane	F.Sidgwick	Stainer & Bell	1913
The Downs	J.Galsworthy	Curwen	1919
Cotswold Love	J.Drinkwater	Stainer & Bell	1919
The Hill	J.Stephens	O.U.P.	1925
The Windmill	Anon.	O.U.P.	1925
Barbara Allen	Trad.	O.U.P.	1926
O Can Ye Sew Cushions?	Trad.	O.U.P.	1926
(Also with accompaniment for string orchestra)			
The Green Lady	F.Macleod	Stainer & Bell	1926
Afternoon Tea	C.Mew	O.U.P.	1930
Joan of Arc	E.Farjeon	Arnold	1938

VOCAL DUO:

A Christmas Song	Anon.	Stainer & Bell	1912
The Rainbow	C.Rossetti	Boosey & Hawkes	1912

CHORAL MUSIC:

Unison

The Three Ships	A.Noyes	Novello	1909
A Pageant of the Months	C.Rossetti	Novello	1911
(Fourteen unison songs in one book or separately)			
Slumber Town	A.L.H.	Novello	1918
The Robin	W.Allingham	Arnold	1918
Come, my little Children	R.L. Stevenson	Arnold	1926
John Gilpin (Cantata)	W.Cowper	Novello	1927
(for unison voices with piano, two violins and percussion)			
The Clock Shop	V.Hall	O.U.P.	1928
A Child's Prayer	Anon.	O.U.P.	1929
Grasshopper Green	Anon.	O.U.P.	1929
Pretty Cow	J.Taylor	O.U.P.	1929
The Windjammer's Race	E.Farjeon	O.U.P.	1929
The Footpath Way	W.Shakespeare	O.U.P.	1930
A Child was born	O.R.Bridgman	Outspan	1931
Christopher Wren	H.Chesterman	Boosey	1933
A Wakening Song	W.Thorley	Arnold	1934
Shame!	M.S.Gardiner	O.U.P.	1934
The Fire of London	H.Chesterman	Arnold	1934
The Little Red Calf	W.Gibson	Arnold	1934
Christopher Columbus	E.& H.Farjeon	Arnold	1938
David Livingstone	E.& H.Farjeon	Arnold	1938
Joan of Arc	E.& H.Farjeon	Arnold	1938

Robin Hood	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	1938
Sir Philip Sidney	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	1939
The Duke of Wellington	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	1939
The Veld is fill'd	O. R. Bridgman	Outspan	1941
Child's Song in Summer	G. Grant	Novello	1945
Oliver Cromwell	E. & H. Farjeon	Novello	n.d.
Aconite	J. Struther	Arnold	1946
Boadicea	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	1946
Frosty Night		Arnold	n.d.
George I	E. & H. Farjeon	Novello	n.d.
George Washington	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	1946
He and She		Arnold	n.d.
Leisure	W. H. Davies	Arnold	n.d.
The Chow	P. Keale	O. U. P.	n.d.
The Dachshund	P. Keale	O. U. P.	n.d.
The Pug	P. Keale	O. U. P.	n.d.
The Lord Protector	H. Chesterman	Arnold	n.d.
To be or not to be	Anon.	Arnold	1949
The Clucking Song	A. Hawkshaw	Curwen	1959

TWO-PART

A Song of Trees	E. Nesbit	Boosey	1912
The Rainbow	C. Rossetti	Boosey	1914
Tom tit	H. Kennedy	Novello	1914
Joy and Woe	W. Blake	Arnold	1918
The Lost Kite	W. Thorley	Arnold	1933
The Old Roads	W. H. Ogilvie	Arnold	1933
King Ethelred	H. Chesterman	Arnold	1935
Mr. Caxton	H. Chesterman	Arnold	1935
Night	W. Thorley	Arnold	1935
Nelson	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	1938
Alexander the Great	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	1946
Canterbury Bells	W. Thorley	O. U. P.	n.d.
Sir Francis Drake	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	n.d.
The Duke of Marlborough	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	n.d.
Timour the Tartar	E. & H. Farjeon	Arnold	1946
William and Mary	E. & H. Farjeon	Novello	n.d.
Native Girls (Southern Africa) (Piano and Percussion)		n.d.	

THREE-PART, female

Dream-pedlary (acc.)	Beddoes	Novello	1917
The Desire	K. Tynan	Curwen	1918
Is it not the tear		Arnold	n.d.

FOUR-PART:

The World's May-Queen (mixed,unaccompanied)	A.Noyes	Boosey	1907
Bright is the ring (mixed, unaccompanied)	A.Noyes	Stainer	1909
The Three Ships (mixed, with orchestra or piano)	A.Noyes	Novello	1909
Three-slumber Songs of the Madonna, for female voices, unaccompanied	A.Noyes	Novello	1910
[a] See what a wonderful smile			
[b] In the warm blue summer weather			
[c] Sleep, little baby			
So Sweet is Shee	B.Jonson	Curwen	1913
(Male, unaccompanied, dedicated to Philip Heseltine)			

INSTRUMENTAL

1. Piano

Five miniatures	International	1912
Five Easy Pieces	Lengnick	1914
Three Tuneful Pieces	Lengnick	1915
The Crescent Moon (3 pieces)	Lengnick	1916
A Morning Song and Barbara Allen	Williams	1919
Waltz in G	Williams	1919
Marionettes	Williams	1919
Prelude	Williams	1920
Four Cameos	O.U.P.	1923
Puck	O.U.P.	1923
Patsey's Pieces (2 pieces)	O.U.P.	1924
Capricietto	O.U.P.	1925
Holiday Hearts (4 pieces)	Augener	1925
Last Touch (from Holiday Hearts)	Augener	1925
Powder and Patches (3 pieces)	O.U.P.	1925
Bubble and Squeak (6 pieces)	O.U.P.	1926
Waltz Reverie (from Bubble & Squeak)	O.U.P.	1926
Little Moon Man (5 pieces)	O.U.P.	1927
Jigs and Jingles (4 pieces)	O.U.P.	1927
Two Short Pieces	O.U.P.	1927
Scaramouche	Augener	1927
Happy-go-lucky	Williams	1932
Barren Woods	Augener	1932
Pantomime	Augener	1932
Beside the Idle Summer Sea	Augener	1932
Four Little Sketches	Lengnick	1933
Three Short Pieces	Rogers	1933
Birthday Pieces (7 pieces)	Lengnick	1934
June	O.U.P.	1934
November	O.U.P.	1934
Two Preludes	Augener	1934
The Haven of Peace (Dar-es-Salaam)	Augener	1935
First Toccata	O.U.P.	1935
Three Bagatelles	Williams	1939
Three Fables	Rogers	1939
Cheeky Boy	Curwen	1955
Four Dedications	Curwen	1955

Sea Joys (3 pieces)	Lengnick	1955
An Echo from the Romantic Age	Associated Board	n.d.
Anne-Marie's piano book (4 pieces)	Novello	1957
Chit-chat (5 pieces)	Curwen	1956
Four Preletudes	Novello	1959
Four Impressions	Keith Prowse	1960
Four Preletudes (Second set)	Novello	1960
Jennifer's Piano Book	MS	1960
Four Whimsies, for Adolph Hallis	Boosey & Hawkes	1961
A Dance for Dulcie	Novello	1962
Francesca's Piano Book	Chappell	1962
Winter Landscapes	Novello	1962
Imp	Augener	n.d.
Sad Sue	Williams	n.d.
Saucy Sue	Williams	n.d.
Toccatina	Augener	n.d.
Step Gaily	Banks and Co.	1964
Three Trifles	O.U.P.	1964
Linden's Piano Book	MS	1966
Raindrop Waltz	Franz Moeller	n.d.
Four Whimsies	Boosey & Hawkes	1972
(These were issued in proof but scrapped)		

2. Piano Duet

The Realm of Youth (Bk.1, 2 pieces)	O.U.P.	1928
The Realm of Youth (Bk.2, 2 pieces)	O.U.P.	1928
Novelette	Lengnick	1938

3. Two pianos

Three Impromptus	Lengnick	1928
[a] Popinjay		
[b] Lyric		
[c] Sumer is icumen in		
Companion Pieces	Elkin	1940
(Solo, or in conjunction with Burgmüller, Op.100)		
Waltz in G	Williams	1955

4. Transcriptions for two pianos

Gipsy Rondo (Haydn)	Curwen	1940
Nocturne (Borodin)	Elkin	1944
Barcarolle (Liszt)	Augener	1949
Canzonetta (Mendelssohn)	Augener	1949
Scherzo (Schubert)	Augener	1949
La Campanella (Liszt)	O.U.P.	n.d.
Promenade (Heller)	Augener	1957
Valse in G (Colin Taylor)	Williams	n.d.
Valse Oubliée (Liszt)	O.U.P.	n.d.
Overture for two oboes (Bach)	MS	n.d.

5. Violin

Newcastle (Old English)	O.U.P.	1928
The Little Red Lark (Irish folksong)	O.U.P.	1928
Valse Humoreske	O.U.P.	1928
Where be going? (Cornish folk-tune)	O.U.P.	1928
Rosemary	O.U.P.	1928
A Sea Shanty	Augener	1935
Le Caquet (Dandrieu)	Augener	1935
Three Short Fiddle Tunes	Augener	1935
[a] Greeting		
[b] Mischief		
[c] Remembrance		

6. Transcriptions for violin

Humoreske (Schumann), for violin and piano	MS	n.d.
Various Piano Pieces (Brahms), for violin and piano	MS n.d.	

7. Cello

As Once She Danced	Augener	1949
Pantaloon	Augener	1949
Threnody	Augener	1949

8. Orchestra

Prelude and Fugue IX (Book I) (Bach) for string orchestra	MS	1927
Prelude and Fugue XXII (Book 1) (Bach) for string orchestra	MS	1927
Prelude and Sarabande	O.U.P.	1930
Sunset Spires (oboe & strings)	MS	1935
A Sea Shanty (oboe & strings)	MS	1935
Serenata Elegiaca (clarinet and strings)	MS	n.d.
Four Cameos, for full orchestra	MS	1935
Nocturne, for full orchestra	MS	n.d.
Nothing Serious, for full orchestra	MS	1956
Old Scottish Lullaby (O can ye sew cushions) for violin and strings	MS	
n.d.		
Pastoral, for flute and strings	MS	n.d.
Powder and Patches (for full orchestra)	MS	1959
Serenata Sentimentali, for string orchestra	MS	n.d.
The Realm of Youth (Suite) full orchestra	MS	n.d.
Three Bach Chorales, for string orchestra	MS	n.d.

Three Small Pieces, for full orchestra	MS	n.d.
[a] Prelude a la Russe		
[b] Valse in G		
[c] Marionettes		
Threnody for string orchestra (scored from cello work)	MS	n.d.
9. Ballet		
A Chinese Idyll, for piano strings, clarinet, oboe and percussion	MS	1936
10. Plays with Music		
King Quaint	libretto A.J.A. Wilson	MS
Discontented Peter		MS
		n.d.
		n.d.

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Add MS 54197	Letters from Warlock to Taylor
Add MS 54390-54391	Galliard Collection (MS of Songs)
Add MS 57794-57803	Cecil Gray Papers
Add MS 57958-57970	Nigel Heseltine Papers
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